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The lived experience of post-war multi-storey council housing: reassessing Sheffield's Park Hill and Manchester's Hulme.

Isabelle Prudence Carter

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sheffield
Faculty of Arts and Humanities
Department of History

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Abstract

This thesis explores the lived experience of multi-storey council housing through a case study analysis of two post-war estates: Park Hill in Sheffield and Hulme in Manchester. It uses local government documents, press coverage, and oral history to shed light on the intersections between the perspectives of tenants, policymakers, and the press, to argue for a relational approach to understanding lived experience. In so doing, it provides a framework for the study of multi-storey council housing that acknowledges, but is not confined by, the trajectory of its 'rise and fall'. Offering a bridge between the existing dichotomy of state-led and grassroots accounts, the thesis shows the extent to which personal narratives of multi-storey council housing are entwined with its political and cultural construction.

Park Hill and Hulme have each come to symbolise aspects of the 'rise and fall' of post-war multi-storey council housing. According to this historical framework, a period of early success rapidly gave way to one of failure, characterised by material, social and economic decline. The thesis offers a more complex account, using local case studies to unpick broader histories of multi-storey council housing. It borrows from work into multi-storey council housing undertaken from an urban studies, geographic and sociological perspective to highlight the specificities of the architectural design, management, and cultural reception that shaped the multi-storey environment, as well as the effects of these factors upon everyday life. It is divided into four chapters that analyse housing policy, cultural representations, tenants' socio-spatial practices and tenants' social identity, but the focuses of each are interrelated. The thesis views tenants as agents of their own narratives, contending that this recognition involves the incorporation of their testimonies into existing historical accounts told from a range of perspectives, rather than their use to tell separate, 'alternative' histories of multi-storey living.

Declaration

I, the author, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

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I also want to extend a special thank you to my undergraduate Special Subject tutor at the University of Leicester, Professor Simon Gunn. I was part of the first cohort of students to take the module "How Soon is Now?' A Social History of Urban England' and it opened my eyes to a whole new area of research. A fleeting mention of Park Hill during those seminars sowed the seeds of curiosity that eventually led to this project. Simon's generous references in support of my MA and PhD applications, and helpful advice about the shape of this project, have been greatly appreciated. I hope this tops the essay I wrote about the Sex Pistols in third year.

This thesis would simply not have been possible without the financial support of the AHRC, WRoCAH and the University of Sheffield. I would have thought twice about pursuing postgraduate study at all had it not been for the WRoCAH and Faculty of Arts and Humanities Doctoral Academy scholarship that I received to study my Masters at the University of Sheffield. Being given the opportunity to do something that I love for just over five years is a privilege for which I am very grateful.

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Introduction

This thesis explores the lived experience of multi-storey council housing in Sheffield and Manchester from the 1950s to the 1990s. Taking a comparative approach to two well-known case studies, Park Hill in Sheffield and Hulme in Manchester, it seeks to complicate polarised understandings of the initial 'success' and later 'failure' of this form of housing. Its approach to lived experience as relational, rather than forged organically independent of wider discourses and developments, underpins the analysis. The architectural design, political management and cultural representations of estates had the power to shape both the spatial practices and life histories of tenants. Yet their influence did not constitute a purely top-down imposition. The thesis challenges typical accounts of multi-storey council housing by illuminating tenants' interactions with the forces that shaped their lives. In so doing, it interrogates some of the tropes common to this topic: the architects blindly pursuing utopian forms of design; the planners intent on multi-storey construction no matter the social cost; the tenants victimised by circumstances beyond their control, or apathetic to the deprivation caused by exposure to this particular built environment. These ideas have come to dominate depictions of multi-storey council housing in post-1945 England, feeding a history that legitimises stereotypes not only damaging to tenants, but to ongoing attitudes towards multi-storey council housing stock. Understandings of multi-storey council housing's rise and fall continue to underpin approaches to urban renewal in the present, with the interplay between historic political and cultural representations and tenants' perceptions of their homes largely invisible to policymakers confronted with material deprivation.[1] The reassessment of this form of housing is therefore long overdue, with a more complex account of its history essential to creating more sustainable approaches to its present-day management.

That is not to say that the thesis offers a rosy picture of multi-storey estates. This study is not an attempt to find the 'positives' in a story overwhelmingly centred on 'decline'. That focus has endured for a reason, and this thesis asks why. Instead, in exploring the interrelationship between architectural, political, cultural, and personal perspectives, the thesis highlights the complexities currently masked by partial accounts of multi-storey council housing. This was not always the approach taken in this project. It began with a recognition of the superficiality of the framework of 'rise and fall' ascribed to the history of multi-storey estates, and set out to challenge it through a focus on the opinions of tenants over those of policymakers, architects, planners, and

[1] Paul Watt, 'Social Housing and Urban Renewal: An Introduction', in Paul Watt and Peer Smets (eds), *Social Housing and Urban Renewal: A Cross-National Perspective* (Bingley, 2017), p. 8.

the media. Used selectively to reinforce the legitimacy of the respective 'success' and 'failure' of council housing over time, the opinions of tenants remain largely absent from the historical record, and seemed to hold the key to its amendment. However, as the research progressed, this approach to lived experience became increasingly difficult to reconcile with the intricacies not only of tenants' perspectives, but also of the political and cultural representations of the case studies, with different source types eschewing a straightforward narrative. It became apparent that to posit tenants' accounts as entirely divorced from those of the institutions that governed estates, and the media that represented them, would be to deny the ways in which these perspectives intersected to underscore shifting understandings of the lived experience of multi-storey council housing during the post-war period. The tenant voice is not a tool to be deployed selectively to tell an insular, 'alternative' history. The tenants who participated directly or indirectly in this research represent agents of their own narratives, active, rather than solely reactive, participants in wider discourses of their homes.

To respect this agency, the thesis thus incorporates a plurality of perspectives to argue for a dialogic approach to lived experience. This approach necessitates the use of a range of sources. Architects' plans, council reports, social surveys, and meeting minutes; articles and images from the press; and residents' testimonies told through oral history, inform this account of lived experience. While the thesis maps the connections between these perspectives, in addressing different aspects of multi-storey housing, each source type contains information absent from another, helping to build a more complete picture of these spaces. The incorporation of different sources constitutes an attempt to create a bridge between accounts of state-led developments and those concentrating on everyday life. It fulfils the thesis's core aim not to privilege one perspective over another, but to examine how the disparate elements that shaped the material, political, and cultural environment of multi-storey council housing entwined to underpin the development of its late twentieth-century history.

This history may initially seem uncomplicated. Heralded in the early post-war years as a success by residents, local politicians, and the press, multi-storey council housing has since become shorthand for community breakdown, anti-social behaviour, and deprivation. The post-war period saw local authorities across England embark on multi-storey construction. Stemming from earlier planning initiatives such as the garden city movement and the rise of suburban house-building, from the 1950s, cities sought radical solutions to the housing crisis exacerbated by bombing during the Second World War. The construction of housing to greater heights and densities formed a key element of the subsequent reimagining of urban England, marrying architectural ideals with housing function to facilitate modern, healthy ways of living for a growing and increasingly mobile

population. However, multi-storey council housing achieved only short-lived success. From the 1970s, the rejection of high flats and modernist design saw declining standards of construction, investment and maintenance, alongside the use of multi-storey estates as homes for 'problem' tenants.[2] With design flaws leading to concerns for tenants' safety, and flats becoming increasingly difficult to let, multi-storey blocks became synonymous with deprivation before their almost inevitable demolition. Although often amalgamated into historical analyses of council housing more broadly, the material, political and cultural landscape of multi-storey council housing rendered it distinct from its low-rise counterparts. While constituting a marked difference from traditional forms of housing, high flats have come to represent more than just a shifting approach to the built environment. In the immediate post-war years, they symbolised the modernity of the welfare state and seemingly new ways of living, while in the final decades of the twentieth century, they epitomised the failures of social democracy. This has cultivated a mythology specific to multi-storey council housing. The analysis of certain estates independently of other forms of council housing is therefore essential to exploring the effects of this particular context upon lived experience.

The estates the thesis focuses upon – Park Hill and Hulme – already occupy a place in existing scholarship. Both have functioned in some way as shorthand for housing success or failure, but neither have been the subject of in-depth study across their lifespans. Their respective notoriety has meant that each is well-known and well-documented. Often the subject of articles in the post-war press, memories of both have also since generated online communities that made locating initial participants for oral history interviews more feasible. There is a sense of hyperbole that permeates accounts of Park Hill and Hulme, each estate having attracted elements of the stigmatisation associated with multi-storey council housing. However, the thesis does not attempt to salvage the estates' reputations, but to avoid compartmentalising their histories into dichotomous categories that do little to shed light on aspects of their lived experience. Its choice of two well-known estates is therefore deliberate, with the comparative, case study approach helping to complicate the chronology of decline attached to multi-storey estates on a national scale through a local historical analysis. The provincial, northern setting shifts the focus of existing studies from London, with the capital having dominated case study analyses of high flats in post-war England.[3] These accounts have tended to use London case studies alone to draw a national

[2] Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius, *Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland* (London, 1994), p. 112.

[3] See Logan Nash, 'Middle-Class Castle: Constructing Gentrification at London's Barbican Estate', *Journal of Urban History*, 39/5 (2013), pp. 909-932; Michael Romyn, 'The Heygate: Community Life in an Inner-City Estate, 1974-

picture of multi-storey council housing, but the stories of these estates must extend beyond the capital to encompass different perspectives of their lived experience. Moreover, as historians have argued, the industrial heritage of northern cities like Sheffield and Manchester had a direct bearing upon constructions of class and local identity distinct from those of cities in the south of England.[4] The London-centric view of housing in post-war England obscures the significance of housing developments further afield. Sheffield's Park Hill was the first deck-access development in the country, with its study offering a unique opportunity to interrogate the initial discursive construction of this type of housing. Built over a decade later but to a very similar design, Manchester's Hulme reveals the commonalities and distinctions of multi-storey estates in a later historical context. Their joint study highlights the importance of complicating the overarching and generalised frameworks attached to multi-storey council housing.

Historiographical debates

The thesis draws upon an interdisciplinary body of literature to develop its analysis of multi-storey housing. From an overview of the design, construction and management of 'tower blocks' across Britain in the 1990s, recent studies have sought to illuminate how the particularities of this domestic environment have shaped everyday life and conceptions of the 'home' in both the past and present day. From a geographic perspective, Richard Baxter argued that the 'vertical practices' of high-rise living, played out in spaces such as high windows, underground car parks and walkways, 'make a unique home…that differs from more horizontal forms of dwellings'.[5] For Baxter, the focus on the 'home' rather than the typical framing of high-rise 'housing' allowed for the study of identity and belonging in relation to the material environment beyond accounts of failure or decline. 'Home has always been marginal to the literature on residential high-rises', Baxter remarked, 'which is perhaps surprising given that they were built for people to live in'.[6] Baxter's work contributed to the 'vertical turn in human geography', in which scholars such as Stephen Graham, Lucy Hewitt and Andrew Harris have attempted to reassert the importance of 'urban verticality', exploring how high-rise spaces are 'imagined, normalised, built or contested'.[7] By integrating tenants' thoughts and feelings about their homes with aspects of their architectural

2011', *History Workshop Journal*, 81/1 (2016), pp. 197-230; Michael Romyn, *London's Aylesbury Estate: An Oral History of the 'Concrete Jungle'* (London, 2020).

[4] Ian Taylor, Karen Evans and Penny Fraser, *A Tale of Two Cities: Global Change, Local Feeling and Everyday Life in the North of England: A Study in Manchester and Sheffield* (London, 1996), p. 80.

[5] Richard Baxter, 'The High-Rise Home: Verticality as Practice in London'*, International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 41/2 (2017), pp. 334-352.

[6] *Ibid.,* p. 335.

[7] Stephen Graham and Lucy Hewitt, 'Getting off the ground: on the politics of urban verticality', *Progress in Human Geography,* 37/1 (2013), p. 74; Andrew Harris, 'Vertical urbanisms: opening up geographies of the three-dimensional city', *Progress in Human Geography*, 39/5 (2015), p. 602.

design and cultural stigmatisation, this research aligns with efforts to develop both "critical geographies of home" and "critical geographies of architecture".[8] These approaches aim to recognise the political forces, cultural attitudes, and emotions that make high-rise spaces more than just buildings. Considering the tragic events at Grenfell Tower and the disproportionate effects of multiple lockdowns upon multi-storey tenants without access to gardens during the COVID-19 pandemic, these reassessments of multi-storey living from a present-day perspective have taken on an added significance.

In historical studies, research has sought to interrogate commonly-held assumptions about the success and failure of multi-storey council housing. Joe Moran characterised the prevalent historical reputation of tower blocks in post-war Britain as an 'anti-mythology', noting that the simplicity of their 'universally awful reputation' has masked a more complex story of the political and cultural values ascribed to the housing market.[9] Incorporating a literary perspective, Emily Cuming has used fiction and non-fiction texts to explore the cultural representation of post-war housing estates. While not exclusively focusing on high flats, her analysis highlighted how the visibility and 'utopian ideals' associated with tower blocks in particular led to their disproportionate use as 'an effective metonym for the apparent failure of one of the central pillars of the welfare state: good housing for all'.[10] In part of his book on the state's attempts to manage urban deprivation from the late 1960s to the 1970s, Peter Shapely explored the role of multi-storey housing in widespread programmes of reform undertaken in the mid-twentieth century, using Park Hill as a fleeting example of this work in practice.[11] Recent research has shifted to focus on multi-storey housing as a lived space, reassessing residents' perspectives of slum clearance and rehousing, and exploring contested memories of multi-storey and 'residential decline' in post-war Glasgow.[12] This work used residents' accounts to highlight 'the limits of any universalising history of residualisation', unearthing the 'submerged histories' of high-rise estates in post-war Glasgow to challenge those typically offered by architects, policymakers and the media.[13]

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[8] Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling, *Home* (Abingdon, 2006), pp. 253-268; Loretta Lees and Richard Baxter, 'A 'building event' of fear: thinking through the geography of architecture', *Social & Cultural Geography*, 12/2 (2011), p. 108.

[9] Joe Moran, *Reading the Everyday* (London, 2005), p. 141.

[10] Emily Cuming, *Housing, Class and Gender in Modern British Writing, 1880-2013* (Cambridge, 2016), pp. 167-168.

[11] Peter Shapely, *Deprivation, state interventions and urban communities in Britain, 1968-79* (London, 2018), p. 45.

[12] Ade Kearns, Valerie Wright, Lynn Abrams and Barry Hazley, 'Slum clearance and relocation: a reassessment of social outcomes combining short-term and long-term perspectives', *Housing Studies*, 34/2 (2019), pp. 201-225; Barry Hazley, Lynn Abrams, Ade Kearns and Valerie Wright, 'Place, memory and the British high rise experience: negotiating social change on the Wyndford Estate, 1962–2015', *Contemporary British History* (2020), pp. 1-28.

[13] Lynn Abrams, Ade Kearns, Barry Hazley and Valerie Wright, *Glasgow: High-Rise Homes, Estates and Communities in the Post-War Period* (Abingdon, 2020), pp. 113-114.

The thesis's focus on local housing case studies follows a similar approach to historians such as Michael Romyn, Logan Nash, Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor. Romyn's work on the Heygate Estate in London's Elephant and Castle, and later its neighbouring Aylesbury Estate, used a local framing to challenge straightforward assumptions of the inherent decline of social housing estates in post-1945 Britain. Drawing on personal testimonies through oral history, as well as representations of the estates in the media and through local policy, Romyn demonstrated how national developments mapped onto specific working-class populations.[14] In another London-centric analysis, Logan Nash used the Barbican Estate to interrogate the development of discourses of gentrification over the post-war period. Both Romyn and Nash highlighted the ways in which residents at times opposed and endorsed representations of their homes, arguing for a more complicated social history of certain residential spaces.[15] Unlike these historians, Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor focused on estates in the provincial city of Norwich to explore how intersections between class, community and social identity interacted with place.[16] Using in-depth life histories, Rogaly and Taylor's work 'attempted to turn attention back to the categorizations' that shaped the stereotypes and everyday lives of estate residents, to better understand how 'people of all classes variously shape, appropriate and resist them'.[17] This attention to tenants' agency is the thread that connects these local studies, and acted as the impetus behind the thesis from the start.[18]

In revising the frameworks of 'rise and fall' and 'success and failure', the research builds on the work of historians who have sought to unpick the political, architectural, and cultural forces that shaped urban Britain. Putting the material environment centre stage, such studies have examined its development through the lenses of reconstruction, modernism, and social democracy. Otto Saumarez Smith has traced interactions between central government directives and local authority policies to better understand political approaches to redevelopment from the late 1950s

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[14] Romyn, 'The Heygate'; Romyn, *London's Aylesbury Estate*.

[15] Nash, 'Middle-Class Castle'.

[16] Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor, *Moving Histories of Class and Community: Identity, Place and Belonging in Contemporary England* (Basingstoke, 2011).

[17] *Ibid.,* p. 216.

[18] Geographical, sociological and urban studies – of which some referred to the historical context of certain estates – also shaped my understanding of a more complex picture of tenants' agency through connections between accounts of identity, experience and societal discourses. See Jane M. Jacobs, Stephen Cairns and Ignaz Strebel, "A Tall Storey…but, a Fact Just the Same': The Red Road High-rise as a Black Box', *Urban Studies*, 44/3 (2007), pp. 609-629; Mike Savage, 'Working-Class Identities in the 1960s: Revisiting the Affluent Worker Study', *Sociology*, 39/5 (2005), pp. 929-946; Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 215-236; Paul Watt, "Underclass' and 'ordinary people' discourses: Representing/re-presenting council tenants in a housing campaign', *Critical Discourse Studies*, 5/4 (2008), pp. 345-357; Mark Featherstone, 'Being-in-Hull, Being-on-Bransholme: Socio-economic decline, regeneration and working-class experience on a peri-urban council estate', *City*, 17/2 (2013), pp. 179-196; Tom Slater and Ntsiki Anderson, 'The reputational ghetto: territorial stigmatisation in St Paul's, Bristol', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 37/4 (2011), pp. 530-546.

to the mid-1960s.[19] Guy Ortolano's work has mapped how governments, planners and public sector actors translated shifting ideas of the welfare state onto post-war cities and new towns, using this focus to reframe linear accounts of the development of modernism.[20] In relation to the latter, Simon Gunn shifted the focus of earlier analyses away from London to assess how far the changing implementation and reception of modernist ideas in British urban planning influenced the physical landscape of industrial cities like Bradford.[21] Peter Shapely and Tom Hulme explored the role of redevelopment plans and governance in shaping understandings of civic pride and citizenship, in their respective reassessments of twentieth-century political and urban culture.[22] These studies have shed light on the importance of ideas of power, periodisation, and local context to understanding post-war urban Britain. They complicate several of the discourses and developments that punctuate the histories of multi-storey council housing, outlining a vital backdrop to the study of Park Hill and Hulme's construction, management and political reception over the course of the late twentieth century.

Nevertheless, this literature is largely informed by an institutional perspective of urban Britain. To navigate this, the thesis looks in more depth to those analyses that take a socio-spatial approach. James Greenhalgh's understandings of governance and the uses of space highlighted the importance of considering not only the plans and policies of the city, but their impact at the grassroots. In revising straightforward interpretations of post-war reconstruction, Greenhalgh exposed the ambiguities inherent to re-imaginings of British cities in the mid-twentieth century by studying the limits of their governance in relation to their everyday functionality.[23] David Adams took a similar approach when he used oral histories to '[reassemble] narratives of planning' through a case study of post-war Birmingham, while Stephen Brooke used an emotions history perspective to illuminate the social tenets of the spaces of 1980s London.[24] More recently, Sam Wetherell has

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[19] Otto Saumarez Smith, 'Central government and town-centre redevelopment in Britain, 1959-1966', *The Historical Journal,* 58/1 (2015), pp. 217-244; Otto Saumarez Smith, *Boom Cities: Architect Planners and the Politics of Radical Urban Renewal in 1960s* (Oxford, 2019).

[20] Guy Ortolano, 'Planning the Urban Future in 1960s Britain', *The Historical Journal,* 54/2 (2011), pp. 477-507; Guy Ortolano, *Thatcher's Progress: From Social Democracy to Market Liberalism through an English New Town* (Cambridge, 2019). For a broader history of British modernism, see John R. Gold, *The Practice of Modernism: Modern Architects and Urban Transformation, 1954-1972* (London, 2007).

[21] Simon Gunn, 'The Rise and Fall of British Urban Modernism: Planning Bradford, circa 1945-1970', *The Journal of British Studies,* 49/4 (2010), pp. 849-869.

[22] Peter Shapely, 'Civic pride and redevelopment in the post-war British city', *Urban History,* 39/2 (2012), pp. 310-328; Tom Hulme, *After the Shock City: Urban Culture and the Making of Modern Citizenship* (Woodbridge, 2019).

[23] James Greenhalgh, *Reconstructing Modernity: Space, Power and Governance in Mid-Twentieth Century British Cities* (Manchester, 2018).

[24] David Adams, 'Everyday experiences of the modern city: remembering the post-war reconstruction of Birmingham', *Planning Perspectives*, 26/2 (2011), p. 238; Stephen Brooke, 'Space, Emotions and the Everyday: The Affective Ecology of 1980s London', *Twentieth Century British History,* 28/1 (2017), pp. 110-142.

used everyday spaces like the shopping precinct, council estate and business park to trace the effects of broader political, economic and societal changes to the built environment over the course of the twentieth century.[25] These analyses argue for a social historical study of the urban to illuminate the lived experience of space.

Recent understandings of the 'inner city' are also essential to this approach. Both Park Hill and Hulme were classed as 'inner city' estates, a categorisation with political and cultural connotations equal to, or if not more influential than, its arbitrary geographic parameters. This project conceptualises the 'inner city' as a primarily lived space to follow an emergent approach in the current historiography. Michael Romyn, Kieran Connell, Camilla Schofield and Ben Jones have explored how the political and cultural construction of the inner city has shaped the lived experience of inhabitants, serving to marginalise, racialise, and often criminalise, certain urban spaces.[26] Research into the political management of inner-city areas provides important context to understanding the complexities behind this particular term, illuminating how the language and policies of the 'inner city' encapsulated understandings of deprivation and decline in much the same way as multi-storey council housing towards the end of the twentieth century.[27] The interrelationship between high flats and the inner city explored in subsequent chapters, demonstrates yet another way in which discourses of multi-storey council housing consistently absorbed the socio-spatial connotations embedded within much broader understandings of post-war urban England.

The discourses of the 'fall' of multi-storey council housing that this thesis seeks to complicate aligned with other, 'declinist narratives' pervasive across aspects of twentieth-century society.[28] The 1970s especially have gained a reputation as a tumultuous decade, characterised by oil crises, high levels of inflation, industrial strikes and the widespread political instability felt during the 'troubles' in Northern Ireland.[29] This also marked the point at which the 'inner city' became

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[25] Sam Wetherell, *Foundations: How the Built Environment Made Twentieth-Century Britain* (Princeton, 2020).

[26] Michael Romyn, "London Badlands': The Inner City Represented, Regenerated', *London Journal*, 44/2 (2019), pp. 133-150; Kieran Connell, *Black Handsworth: Race in 1980s Britain* (Oakland, 2019); Camilla Schofield and Ben Jones, "Whatever Community Is, This Is Not It': Notting Hill and the Reconstruction of 'Race' in Britain after 1958', *Journal of British Studies*, 58/1 (2019), pp. 142-173.

[27] Aaron Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation, the Inner City, and the Fracturing of the Welfare State: Glasgow, c. 1968-78', *Twentieth Century British History*, 29/4 (2018), pp. 605-624; Alistair Kefford, 'Disruption, destruction and the creation of 'the inner cities': the impact of urban renewal on industry, 1945–1980', *Urban History*, 44/3 (2017), pp. 492-515; Otto Saumarez Smith, 'The Inner City Crisis and the End of Urban Modernism in 1970s Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 27/4 (2016), pp. 578-598; Shapely, *Deprivation*, pp. 275-318.

[28] Jim Tomlinson, 'A 'Failed Experiment'? Public Ownership and the Narratives of Post-War Britain', *Labour History Review,* 73/2 (2008), pp. 228-243; Jim Tomlinson, *The Politics of Decline: Understanding Postwar Britain* (Abingdon, 2014).

[29] Lawrence Black and Hugh Pemberton, 'Introduction. The benighted decade? Reassessing the 1970s', in Lawrence Black, Hugh Pemberton, and Pat Thane (eds), *Reassessing 1970s Britain* (Manchester, 2013), p. 4

an instrumental feature of urban policy.[30] As Colin Hay argued, discourses of the 1970s involved 'the mapping together of a range of disparate events' to form a 'meta-narrative' of crisis.[31] Nevertheless, historians have begun to reassess such perspectives. These revisions explore the development of the memories, stories and discourses that have enabled understandings of its association with 'decline' to endure. For Jon Lawrence and Stefan Ramsden, part of this process has involved the re-evaluation of ideas of 'community' breakdown since the end of the Second World War.[32] For Mark Clapson and Ben Jones, it has engendered a re-examination of slum clearance and suburbanisation.[33] This research centres social identity to acknowledge the subjectivity of housing experiences, something often overlooked by analyses of state-led plans and policies.

To assess the 'experience' of this period, historians have explored the ways in which individuals interacted with the representations of 'community', class and gender – so often used to underscore political, social and economic developments – to shape ideas of selfhood.[34] The thesis incorporates aspects of this scholarship throughout in its conceptualisation of experience and social identity. Preconceptions of the social and housing needs of working-class people underscored aspects of the development of Park Hill and Hulme to different degrees. The thesis argues that understandings of class played a pivotal role in shaping cultural representations, the material environment, and tenants' narratives of multi-storey living. Research has suggested that the post-war period witnessed the growing irrelevance of class as a marker of identity. This interdisciplinary body of scholarship has argued not for the disappearance of class inequalities, but for the declining tendency of individuals to articulate a sense of belonging to, or solidarity with, a particular class by the end of the twentieth century. Such studies point to deindustrialisation, the waning power of trade unions, the rising living standards experienced by some due to 'affluence', and the loss of a political foundation for working-class people cemented by New Labour, to

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[30] Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation', p. 608.

[31] Colin Hay, 'Narrating Crisis: The Discursive Construction of the 'Winter of Discontent'', *Sociology*, 30/2 (1996), p. 266.

[32] Jon Lawrence, *Me, Me, Me: The Search for Community in Post-War England* (Oxford, 2019); Stefan Ramsden, *Working-Class Community in the Age of Affluence* (Abingdon, 2017).

[33] Mark Clapson, *Invincible Green Suburbs, Brave New Towns: Social Change and Urban Dispersal in Postwar England* (Manchester, 1998); Ben Jones, *The Working Class in Mid Twentieth-Century England: Community, Identity and Social Memory* (Manchester, 2012).

[34] Emily Robinson, Camilla Schofield, Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, Natalie Thomlinson, 'Telling Stories about Post-war Britain: Popular Individualism and the 'Crisis' of the 1970s', *Twentieth Century British History,* 28/2 (2017), p. 279.

explain weakening connections between class and social identity.[35] Developments like these eroded aspects of the social, economic and material environment associated with uncomplicated, 'traditional' forms of working-class identity, but they did not engender its disappearance entirely. Social and cultural markers of class resonated amidst the intersectional identities of individuals throughout the late twentieth century, while the language of 'classlessness' served to obscure enduring inequalities.[36]

Historical reassessments conceptualise the relationality of class and identity; an approach followed in this thesis. Rogaly and Taylor have highlighted the dialogic nature of self-identification and categorisation in how people experience class, arguing for its conception as a shifting, rather than static, aspect of social identity. Using the life stories of two women, Rogaly and Taylor traced a process of 'class making', through which the interviewed women reconciled the ways in which they were 'classed' by others with their feelings of belonging to a particular class, both against a backdrop of the 'entrenched structural inequalities' they had encountered over the course of their lives.[37] Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite has reframed changes in class identities as evidence for the 'decline of deference' over the course of the twentieth century but especially during the post-war years in Britain. Sutcliffe-Braithwaite argued that discourses of classlessness have developed alongside the privileging of notions of 'authenticity' and 'ordinariness' instead.[38] These conclusions built on those made by Mike Savage's reassessment of the 'Affluent Worker' study of the 1960s, with Savage finding that individuals increasingly used language other than class to describe themselves during the post-war period, identifying as 'ordinary' to break ties with 'a stigmatised, pathologized identity', while simultaneously distancing themselves from a comparatively elite, 'privileged position'.[39] Savage's work highlighted the importance of different perspectives of class in assessing its significance to identity, with the researchers behind the 1960s study taking a view of the structural, economic dimensions of class at odds with the social experiences of participants.[40]

Jon Lawrence exposed a similar gap in a re-examination of the field notes of Michael Young and Peter Willmott's influential 1950s study of Bethnal Green and Debden, emphasising

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[35] For an overview of this literature, see Anthony Heath, John Curtice and Gabriella Elgenius, 'Individualization and the Decline of Class Identity', in Margaret Wetherell (ed.), *Identity in the 21st Century: New Trends in Changing Times* (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 21-24.

[36] Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference in England, 1968-2000* (Oxford, 2018), p. 206.

[37] Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor, "I don't want to be classed, but we are all classed: Making liveable lives across generations', in Margaret Wetherell (ed.), *Identity in the 21st Century: New Trends in Changing Times* (Basingstoke, 2009), pp. 41-58.

[38] Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference,* p. 7.

[39] Savage, 'Working-Class Identities', p. 938.

[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 936-937.

differences between the sociologists' ideals of family and community and the more complex picture of working-class culture apparent in the discarded narratives of some interviewees.[41] As Lawrence contended, the enduring mythologisation of working-class community has ultimately circumscribed recognition of the agency of 'working people' since the 1950s, feeding class-based stereotypes precariously grounded in lived experience.[42] While Lawrence demonstrated the complicated roots of the relationship between class and community, Savage stressed the links between class and social identity, stating that 'the idea of class is a necessary, although shadowy, concomitant of people's individualism'. As Sutcliffe-Braithwaite concluded, rather than necessarily taking root in politics and industry, working-class identities most often revealed themselves in the ongoing 'cultural value-judgements' of individuals and claims to 'heritage' in the late twentieth century.[43] More recent research has indicated the significance of the latter, demonstrating how historical conceptions of working-class identity in relation to manual labour continue to frame the activism of male workers in an increasingly post-industrial society.[44] Ideas of class are present to some extent across the sources used in the thesis. While apparent in different ways, the thesis argues that class remained integral to the lived experience of multi-storey council housing throughout the post-war period, and it forms a key component of the analysis that follows.

Sources and approach

The thesis uses a range of sources to explore the lived experience of multi-storey council housing. Rather than privileging individual stories of resilience for juxtaposition with a national picture of deprivation and decline, this varied source base sheds light on the tensions and contradictions that make up life histories and their associated political and cultural discourses. It argues that a key element of acknowledging the agency of tenants is the amplification of different perspectives; creating space for voices that respectively challenge, reinforce, or fall somewhere in between existing polarised accounts of multi-storey council housing. The sources drawn upon throughout the analysis therefore correspond directly with its approach to understanding lived experience. This represents a divergence from the tendency to valorise 'experience' as recounted by council tenants, at the expense of its critical analysis. For example, Baxter has argued that only a focus on 'ordinary' estates can challenge discourses of failure, using examples of research concentrating on

[41] Jon Lawrence, 'Inventing the "Traditional Working Class": A Re-analysis of Interview Notes from Young and Willmott's *Family and Kinship in East London', The Historical Journal,* 59/2 (2016), pp. 567-593.
[42] Savage, 'Working-Class Identities', p. 943.
[43] Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference,* pp. 203-205.
[44] Jim Phillips, Valerie Wright and Jim Tomlinson, 'Being a 'Clydesider' in the age of deindustrialisation: skilled male identity and economic restructuring in the West of Scotland since the 1960s', *Labor History,* 61/2 (2020), pp. 151-169.

the 'most marginalised' developments in the US and Europe to highlight how such analyses have skewed perceptions of multi-storey housing.[45] Although Baxter's advocation of the study of 'ordinary' estates indicated his commitment to transcending restrictive discourses of 'decline', it carries implications of an organic history of multi-storey housing untainted by its wider academic or cultural representation.

Baxter is not alone in taking this approach to understanding lived experience. In his recent work, John Boughton focused upon 'actual estates and lived experience' to challenge the 'conventional narrative' of the rise and fall of council housing more broadly. As Boughton asserted, this approach suggested 'a far more mixed and, generally, far more positive' account of council housing than typically understood.[46] Spanning the entirety of the twentieth century and the opening years of the twenty-first, Boughton's study highlighted the 'positive' alongside the damning, telling a side of the story often obscured by wholly critical histories. However, it is this positioning of residents' perspectives as another, separate side to a story, that limits Boughton's attempts to reconcile the experience of council housing with its discursive construction. Implying some degree of its insulation from wider political and cultural representations, Boughton's understanding of lived experience reflected that of earlier drafts of this thesis. While aspects of personal testimonies suggest the existence of the more 'positive' narratives of council housing for which Boughton argued, this approach to lived experience is problematic.

Considering residents' perspectives in isolation from the discursive construction of multi-storey council housing denies the fluidity of social identity and its susceptibility to the categorisations of others, as well as the ways in which these categorisations shape the stories council tenants tell about their homes.[47] In addition, this approach to lived experience confers a considerable degree of expertise and authenticity upon tenants with little scrutiny. Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius noted the impatience sometimes felt with architectural history, rhetorically posing the question, 'who cares about the polemical excesses of critics and historians?', before offering this response: 'it's the 'users', after all – the women and men, adults and children – who really count!'[48] Having directly interacted with the material spaces of estates, tenants

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[45] Baxter, 'The High-Rise Home', p. 336. Baxter's categorisation of 'ordinary' is not, however, entirely clear, particularly as his work focuses on the Aylesbury Estate in London, which has provided the site of an extensive oral history project by Michael Romyn and formed a large part of a feature documentary and a lengthy article in *The Guardian*, albeit after Baxter's publication. For more, see Romyn, *London's Aylesbury Estate*; *Dispossession: The Great Social Housing Swindle* [film], directed by Paul Sng (Velvet Joy Productions, 2017); Andy Beckett, 'The fall and rise of the council estate', *The Guardian,* 13 July 2016.

[46] John Boughton, *Municipal dreams: the rise and fall of council housing* (London, 2018), p. 7.

[47] On identity and 'social categorisations' see Rogaly and Taylor, *Moving Histories,* p. 9.

[48] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 326.

certainly have insightful perspectives to offer to the history of multi-storey council housing. Moreover, their relative exclusion from planning practices throughout this period represents a continued tendency to underestimate the value of their experiences to redevelopment work, which should be corrected. Tenants can illuminate undocumented aspects of council housing, providing a picture of everyday life missing from official records of the management of estates. The recognition of this can lend agency to a typically stigmatised and marginalised group of people.

Yet their narratives of lived experience are not separate from broader developments. The tenants' experiences upon which Boughton drew did not form organically or objectively. Instead, they reflect the ways in which people have and continue to position themselves in relation to wider discourses of council housing. In documenting their experiences in the written record of local organisations and publications, or telling them as part of an oral history interview, tenants integrated their perspectives as individuals with a more public account. This interplay is especially apparent in relation to multi-storey council estates like Park Hill and Hulme, with both occupying a prominent place in the popular and academic history of post-war urban redevelopment. The extent of their renown and cultural over-saturation has cultivated an aura of knowability around Park Hill and Hulme. With the lifespans of these estates so very public, it follows that personal testimonies of their lived experience would interact with broader, collective accounts beyond the those of the individual. As the analysis of subsequent chapters shows, this proved the case.

The thesis therefore makes use of a variety of sources to support a more nuanced analysis. In the opening chapter, it draws upon material from local archives, with the records left by Sheffield and Manchester City Councils documenting specific moments in the histories of Park Hill and Hulme. Architectural proposals and development plans indicate the social, economic, and material objectives behind the multi-storey designs, while also revealing the extent to which such ideas translated into the estates' construction. Frank Mort has warned against the interpretation of city and development plans as policy. Using evidence for their performativity as part of the urban and social fantasies espoused by planners of the interwar period, Mort asserted that plans often contained competing ideas that proved difficult to reconcile through implementation.[49] There is certainly evidence of this in the plans for Park Hill and Hulme during the post-war period, a feature of their authorship masked by subsequent accounts. The records of the Housing Committee and Policy Committee meetings of each local authority offer a picture of multi-storey living after

[49] Frank Mort, 'Fantasies of Metropolitan Life: Planning London in the 1940s', *Journal of British Studies,* 43/1 (2004), p. 150.

construction, illuminating tenant demographics; their use of space inside and outside the dwelling; and the effects of changing political attitudes towards this form of housing through policy.

Residents' perspectives form the basis of many of these sources, although mediated by the interpretation of a council official. There are distinctions between the approaches of each local authority to accessing the tenant voice at different points. The management of Park Hill's early years is especially well-documented thanks to Sheffield City Council's close monitoring of levels of the estate's 'success'. This engendered reports on residents' behaviour and responses to the material environment of Park Hill from sociological, architectural, and policymaking perspectives. The *Park Hill Survey* of 1962, authored by the estate's resident welfare worker, is a particularly useful source of information, albeit not in its intended function; primarily illuminating as it does the preconceptions of managerial attitudes towards tenants rather than providing any concrete evidence as to the nature of everyday life. There is also a wealth of archival evidence that demonstrates Manchester City Council's attempts to survey Hulme tenants, especially during the years in which the estate's future remained uncertain from the mid-1980s. The local authority's appointment of the 'Hulme Project' meant that representatives had a permanent base on the estate during these years, and attended meetings with tenants' associations and the council to assess residents' housing needs. While the reports of social surveys contain similar limitations to those of Park Hill, ultimately tracing only the contours of everyday life, unlike the Sheffield estate, the archival record for Hulme comprises documents authored by tenants. Issues of the Hulme tenant magazine, produced over the middle years of the 1980s, have documented tenants' interactions with the council, local press, and one another, through articles and letters to the editor. Concentrating on the late 1980s, the Hulme Study collection contains pamphlets and reports written by and for tenants, demonstrating their stance on redevelopment plans and levels of local consultation. These sources coalesce around the estate's final years, but materials created by Manchester City Council help to fill some of the gaps. Council meeting minutes and reports outline shifting approaches to multi-storey construction, housing allocations, and the maintenance of deck-access blocks from the late 1950s to the early 1990s, which – when taken together – present a longer-term view of Hulme's management than those focused solely on construction and demolition.

The structure of some material, such as meeting minutes, meant that events were often discussed outside of their wider context, and more generally the sources' predilections towards some form of intervention highlight a chronology of each estate that reinforces the trajectory of 'rise and fall' the thesis sets out to complicate. The view of multi-storey council housing captured by this material is partial without the supplementation of other forms of evidence. Yet, these

documents offer something missing from national collections. By revealing how councils responded to developments set in motion by central government policy, locally archived sources help to undermine homogeneous depictions of multi-storey flats and council housing more broadly. They demonstrate the value of a local contextual account to asserting the individual elements that made up different estates, tracing the ways in which national directives played out at a micro level. These types of sources do contain traces of the familiar stories that have underlined enduring perceptions of Park Hill and Hulme, but this is why their study is essential to unpicking the stereotypes of multi-storey design, construction, and management that have contributed to the sense of knowability surrounding the history of each estate. Moreover, they offer an insight into the ways in which individual estates became tied to wider urban discourses relating to crime, families in high flats and the inner city.

The thesis also studies articles and images published in the press. It uses local and national newspapers to understand the reception of Park Hill and Hulme in relation to broader trends in the cultural representation of multi-storey council housing across post-war England. The press functioned as a key site of representation for these estates because it drew on both political approaches to management and residents' narrated experiences to produce stories about multi-storey living. In this sense, the press acted as a kind of representational bridge between policymakers and tenants, communicating ideas about estates to the wider population. However, the thesis does not treat the press as a mirror for the views of either tenants, policymakers, or the public. Instead, its analytical approach to the press is underpinned by the idea of frames of representation, with newspapers selective in their amplification of certain stories and capable of packaging them in ways that limited the range of interpretation between readers.[50] While recognising that readers did not absorb content without question, the thesis argues that the reliance of the press upon particular images, language and themes, which newspapers reframed according to the type of coverage, led to the construction of prevalent discourses of multi-storey council housing's success or failure.

The press is therefore a vital source for understanding the changing meaning of multi-storey council housing across the post-war period, demonstrating the shift from deferential

[50] On the process of news selection, see Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill, 'What is News? Galtung and Ruge revisited', *Journalism Studies*, 2/2 (2001), pp. 261-280. On the construction of meaning through a 'preferred reading' of newspapers, see James Curran and Colin Sparks, 'Press and popular culture', *Media, Culture & Society*, 13/2 (1991), pp. 228-230. On the role of newspaper images in conveying a preferred meaning, see Shirin Hirsch and David Swanson, 'Photojournalism and the Moss Side Riots of 1981: Narrowly Selective Transparency', *History Workshop Journal,* 89/1 (2020), pp. 221-245; Patricia Holland, 'News photography: 'The direct appeal to the eye?' Photography and the twentieth-century press', in Adam Briggs and Paul Cobley (eds), *The Media: An Introduction* (Harlow, 1998), pp. 412-425.

reporting in accordance with the views of politicians, architects and planners in the context of post-war reconstruction, modernity and 'affluence' in the 1950s and 1960s, prior to the more interrogative and sensationalised approach to producing news following the rise of the tabloid press from the 1970s.[51] While tenants' opinions remained central to evaluations of multi-storey estates to some extent throughout the post-war period, their perspectives were subjected to narrow confines, with newspapers largely fuelling simplistic images of tenants as either the victims or architects of the growing sense of decline ascribed to these places.[52] Tenants' narratives of lived experience communicated through oral history interviews suggest the importance of understanding how the press represented Park Hill and Hulme, with participants interacting directly with aspects of coverage to construct their life histories.

There are a broad range of source types like films, novels, and documentaries that offer examples of the cultural representation of this particular built environment. Newspapers provide both a textual and visual account, with their analysis allowing for the tracing of different forms of representation and how these changed over time. As an historical source, the press is multi-dimensional. It tells a history of multi-storey council housing that connects to key themes of mid- to late twentieth-century society, such as class, gender and the inner city. The press maintained close connections with popular culture, acting as a facilitator of, and contributor to, social and cultural change in the latter half of the twentieth century.[53] As Martin Conboy has argued, to understand the merits of studying cultural trends through the popular press is to view newspapers and their readers 'as part of the continuum which links economic structure to cultural consumption in all areas of contemporary cultural life'.[54] Moreover, a focus on the press shows the extent to which Park Hill and Hulme specifically appeared in coverage from the 1950s to the 1990s, proving richer in scope than other sources. Nevertheless, the press demonstrates similar limitations to archival documents in the sense that newspapers tended to focus on specific points in the estates' lifespans perhaps separate to their everyday function; privileging 'newsworthy' stories about budgets, construction work, tenant protests and plans for demolition and redevelopment. Yet, an

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[51] On the development of the tabloid in the twentieth century, see Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the present* (Oxford, 2015).

[52] On stigmatisation and representations of marginalised housing tenants in the press more broadly, see Ade Kearns, Oliver Kearns, and Louise Lawson, 'Notorious Places: Image, Reputation, Stigma. The Role of Newspapers in Area Reputations for Social Housing Estates', *Housing Studies*, 28/4 (2013), pp. 579-598; Jo Dean and Annette Hastings, 'Challenging Images: Housing Estates, Stigma, and Regeneration', *Policy and Politics,* 31/2 (2000), pp. 171-184; Annette Hastings, 'Stigma and social housing estates: Beyond pathological explanations', *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19/3 (2004), pp. 233-254; Frank Wassenberg, 'Large Social Housing Estates: From Stigma to Demolition?', *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment,* 19/3 (2004), pp. 223-232.

[53] Adrian Bingham, 'Ignoring the first draft of history? Searching for the popular press in studies of twentieth-century Britain', *Media History,* 18/3-4 (2012), pp. 317-320.

[54] Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London, 2002), p. 2.

analysis of newspapers allows for the tracing of the roots of the trajectory of decline associated with Park Hill and Hulme, demonstrating how specific estates became integral to representational moulds of multi-storey council housing irrespective of their individual contexts.

The final two chapters of the thesis draw on 18 oral history interviews, conducted between June 2018 and January 2021.[55] Interviews followed a semi-structured, life history format. Through this approach, I hoped to situate tenants' experiences of Park Hill and Hulme in relation to broader housing and social trajectories; accessing aspects of their life stories that did not necessarily fit into a purely place-based framing. Each interview began with a question about when and where the participant was born, with subsequent questions following a largely chronological order. I prepared questions that requested basic but key pieces of information to aid my analysis between interviews, such as the dates in which people moved to and from each estate, whereabouts they lived on each estate, and where they moved to afterwards. I also asked every interviewee to describe their homes, but descriptions of flat interiors took far less precedence for interviewees than those of the exteriors of Park Hill and Hulme. Past tenants tended to describe their flats sparingly, listing details as to the layout and number of bedrooms, but often spoke of their homes in relation to the spaces outside of the dwelling, such as the street decks. While the semi-structured format enabled participants to direct the conversation as they saw fit, this focus on the estate over the home indicates the extent to which participants interpreted the interview framing thematically. Despite the intentions of my life history approach, they connected Park Hill and Hulme to the broader ideas of community, class and stigmatisation explored in the final two chapters of the thesis, rather than their personal experiences alone.

In analysing the interviews, the thesis considers the testimonies of participants as 'narratives' of lived experience. It follows Lynn Abrams's distinction between discourse and narrative in oral history, with Abrams arguing that discourse represents 'the cultural world in which we live', and thus constitutes the context within which personal narratives are informed, framed and contested.[56] The analysis of the final chapters focuses on this interrelationship to contextualise the historical contributions made by the oral history interviews, rather than to verify their truthfulness or validity as a source of evidence. Overall, this approach recognises that these life

[55] Most of the Park Hill interviews took place in February 2019, while the Hulme interviews took place between February and March 2020, following calls for participants on social media. Interviews outside these time frames were mainly the result of recruitment via word of mouth or, in the case of the January 2021 interview, a response to a post on the Manchester Forum website published over a year earlier.

[56] Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Abingdon, 2010), pp. 110-113.

histories did not constitute a straightforward retelling of the past, with memories and narratives of multi-storey living interacting with cultural scripts that remain relevant to present-day society.[57]

Nevertheless, Chapters Three and Four take slightly different approaches to the analysis of oral history interviews. Chapter Three draws on aspects of oral history theory to present a primarily evidence-based account of tenants' narratives of their socio-spatial practices. Chapter Four adapts this focus, taking a more theoretical approach to the study of narrative construction to discuss its implications for assessing how far tenants' personal testimonies represented the rewriting of existing histories of marginalised multi-storey council estates. It draws on oral history theory to understand how interviewees positioned themselves as the subject of both individual and collective narratives, and the contradictions this caused in the telling of their lived experience.[58] The chapters thus balance 'documentary' and 'textual' approaches to oral history analysis, considering the content of interviews as well as their narrative form in an attempt to '[make] sense of both the experiential and the subjective, the documentary and the textual, expressed in an interview'.[59] Despite minor fluctuations in their approach, both chapters explore how far tenants' narratives of lived experience act as supplements to, rather than straightforward contradictions of, elements of the political and cultural discourses considered in the first chapters of the thesis. The interviews constitute retrospective accounts susceptible to reframing over time, but this does not make them any less valuable as historical sources. As Penny Summerfield argued, 'there is never a clear space from which to view ourselves'. Instead, the process of memory making and narrative construction in articulating a sense of self remains ongoing.[60]

Despite ideas as to the over-consultation of places like Park Hill, former tenants across both estates showed an enthusiasm for participating in the project. Undertaking her Urban Studies PhD in the early 2010s, Harriet Bell had initially intended to include tenants' perspectives in her research. However, the organisations with whom she spoke about the estate's regeneration –

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[57] *Ibid.,* p. 107.

[58] Penny Summerfield, *Histories of the Self: Personal Narratives and Historical Practice* (London, 2018), pp. 115-122; Lynn Abrams, 'Liberating the Female Self: Epiphanies, Conflict and Coherence in the Life Stories of Post-war British Women', *Social History*, 39/1 (2014), pp. 14-35; Penny Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History', *Cultural & Social History,* 1/1 (2004), pp. 65-93; Mark Crosher, 'Composing poverty: remembering charity work in post-war Manchester', *Oral History*, 45/1 (2017), pp. 91-99. On the interviewees' positioning as an individual or member of a collective, the later chapters also draw on debates relating to different perspectives of memory. See Graham Smith, 'Beyond Individual/Collective Memory: Women's Transactive Memories and Conflict', *Oral History*, 35/2 (2007), pp. 77-90; Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory': Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, 32/2 (2004), pp. 35-44.

[59] Linda Shopes, '"Insights and Oversights": Reflections on the Documentary Tradition and the Theoretical Turn in Oral History', *The Oral History Review*, 41/2 (2014), p. 268.

[60] Summerfield, *Histories of the Self,* p. 109.

Urban Splash and Sheffield City Council – advised her of a sense of 'Park Hill fatigue' among former tenants who felt that they had been sought out for questioning too often.[61] Based on this information, Bell grew concerned that the same tenants would put themselves forward for interviews to replicate responses given as part of previous consultations. Although practical implications prevented Bell from visiting the estate as frequently as she had hoped at first, she also asserted that the views of Park Hill tenants were already well-known in the public sphere, especially concerning the focus of her research on the regeneration project.[62] Yet, as Matthew Hollow has indicated, due to the widespread practice of disregarding tenants' opinions that did not fit with the language of architects and planners, 'appraisals of Park Hill were, and continue to be, conveyed by a variety of professionals, experts and journalists based upon an equally varied assortment of criteria'.[63] Most previous consultations therefore represented the efforts of 'official' organisations, with little regard for the personal details and life stories central to oral history, with interviews offering former tenants the opportunity to insert their individual experiences into a broader account of Park Hill, as well as Hulme. That earlier research has discounted the inclusion of tenants' perspectives based on impressions of their existing visibility, indicates how far the inscription of political and cultural attitudes towards multi-storey council housing can appear to speak for tenants without amplifying their voices. Most of the people who participated in this project certainly did not feel that tenants' opinions of Park Hill and Hulme were well-known, and sought to use the interview as a chance to make their stories heard.

Each participant brought a different perspective to this research that would otherwise have proved inaccessible. What should be noted, however, are the tensions that arose in former tenants' retellings of the past due to perceptions of their expertise through lived experience; their attitudes towards the academic study of Park Hill and Hulme; and their impressions of myself as an interviewer. Unsurprisingly, many considered their roles as former tenants and participants in this project as evidence for their expertise in matters relating to the two estates. There were exceptions, with some participants noting that they spoke from personal experience only and did not want to assume the views of other tenants, but despite this, their accounts often blurred between an individual and collective perspective, as the final chapter explores in more detail. For other interviewees, this sense of expertise extended to issues of housing and the history of the twentieth century more broadly. Not only did these participants discuss their memories of Park Hill and

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[61] Harriett Bell, 'Values in the conservation and regeneration of post-war listed public housing: a study of Spa Green, London and Park Hill, Sheffield', PhD thesis (University of Sheffield, 2012), p. 145.
[62] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[63] Matthew Hollow, 'Governmentality on the Park Hill estate: the rationality of public housing', *Urban History,* 37/1 (2010), p. 133.

Hulme, they situated their experiences within the context of wider developments, from the industrialisation of Manchester in the nineteenth century to the Right to Buy in 1980. This helped to demonstrate how participants saw themselves and structured their life stories in relation to broader historical processes, even ones that seemed to have only a tangential association to their narratives.

However, this approach to narrative construction also revealed something about participants' perceptions of myself as the interviewer. Despite the background to the project provided before the interview, which outlined information about the use of interviews as part of PhD research, as well as discussions prior to the recording itself about how the project stemmed from a Masters dissertation on Park Hill, some interviewees assumed that I had no pre-existing knowledge of the area or period I study. This was most apparent when interviewees explained to me what slum clearance meant and how the Right to Buy worked. In taking this approach, these interviewees highlighted their expertise by experience relative to mine as the interviewer and, by extension, an observer. While my age and gender no doubt reinforced assumptions of my lack of knowledge, my distance from the subject material and – perhaps paradoxically – the project's status as part of a University degree, also consolidated this imbalance. Discussions with participants led to the identification of what one former Hulme tenant referred to as the 'goldfish-bowl' approach taken during past studies of Park Hill and Hulme.[64] While not necessarily accusing academics specifically, tenants did express their unease with aspects of their categorisation by external actors more broadly.

In some interviews, it became apparent that participants did not seem to regard me as part of this process. Some assumed that my efforts to speak with former tenants stemmed from an attempt to rewrite previous histories entirely, making this project distinct from others.[65] In one instance, my status as a student – someone still working towards a qualification –contributed to an interviewee's perception of myself as an 'insider'. In a discussion about her 'working class' identity, a former Hulme tenant called Jenny stated, 'I am a worker, working class. I do, I go to work. I'm proud of what I've achieved, and I sometimes think, how the hell have I done that? But I know it's through hard slog, like yourself'.[66] Here, Jenny associated me and my research with her working-class identity, despite my having offered no direct indications of my own positioning in

[64] Jason Shaw, interview with author (3 March 2020). All participant names are pseudonyms except for Lee-Ann Igbon, who specifically requested during the interview that her name be used in any subsequent analyses. Lee-Ann Igbon, interview with author (24 November 2019).
[65] Paul Brown, interview with author (22 June 2018); Lisa Crossley, interview with author (6 March 2020); Jason Shaw interview.
[66] Jenny Young, interview with author (24 February 2020).

relation to class. As Abrams noted, even during the initial phase of recruiting participants, researchers present 'traits' of their 'subjective self', however unconsciously, that influence how potential interviewees respond to the research and construct their narrative.[67] Even if Jenny did not explicitly consider me to be 'working class' as such, she still saw my work in alignment with her own (classed) values. Jenny saw our dynamic as an interviewer and interviewee as on a more equal footing than comments about the 'goldfish bowl' approach suggest, stating that she 'wanted to help' with the project, and remarking towards the end of the interview: 'it's a pleasure for me, to support you, in your research'.[68]

Antoinette Errante used the notion of an 'interpersonal bridge' to characterise the ways in which ideas 'flow' back and forth between an interviewer and interviewee. Errante found that the relationship built between the two over the course of the oral history event influenced the narrative that she constructed based on her interpretation of participants' stories.[69] This recognises that no narrative is communicated without mediation.[70] The first two chapters of this thesis discuss how far the tenant 'voice' translated into the records of local authorities and representations of the press. In the third and fourth chapters, I act as the mediator of these voices, telling stories that fit with my interpretation. The interactions between myself as an interviewer and past tenants as interviewees are examined more closely in Chapter Four, but an awareness of this process is maintained throughout the sections of oral history analysis.[71] In several cases, I have maintained contact with interviewees, and most have expressed an interest in reading this work.[72] While the thesis represents an attempt to convey their testimonies as faithfully as possible, oral history forms one part of a broader analysis, so parts of their stories have gone untold.

In terms of the interview sample, most participants were aged between 50 and 65 at the time of their interview, with the interviewees from Hulme tending to be younger than those from Park Hill. This means the narratives considered in this thesis represent the voices of people who lived at Park Hill and Hulme predominantly as children and young adults. For the most part, these

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[67] Abrams, *Oral History Theory,* p. 60.

[68] Jenny Young interview.

[69] Antoinette Errante, 'But sometimes you're not part of the story: Oral Histories and Ways of Remembering and Telling', *Educational Researcher*, 29/2 (2003), p. 20.

[70] On the contradictions and mediations of narrative and their bearing upon understandings of 'truth' in oral history, see Alessandro Portelli, 'The Peculiarities of Oral History', *History Workshop*, 12 (1981), pp. 96-107.

[71] On the importance of reflecting on how the interviewer constructs a 'second-level' narrative from the 'original', see Katherine Borland, "That's not what I said': interpretative conflict in oral narrative research', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds.), *The Oral History Reader* (London, 1998), pp. 320-332.

[72] In an attempt to reconcile any discomfort felt in drawing conclusions from participants' testimonies that perhaps do not sit well with the sense of self they sought to communicate – particularly after having established a good rapport with them – I followed the reflective questions outlined in, Valerie Yow, '"Do I like Them Too Much?": Effects of the Oral History Interview on the Interviewer and Vice-Versa', *The Oral History Review,* 24/1 (1997), p. 79.

interviewees had spent several years, even decades, living in multi-storey council housing with their families. Their accounts therefore help to complicate dominant discourses of the inherent transience of these spaces towards the end of the twentieth century, but do little to address the everyday lives of those tenants whose experiences were defined by similar markers of deprivation. Considering the demographics of the interview sample in terms of race and ethnicity, interviewees from Hulme largely reflected the diversity of the estate's local population, with a 1971 report by Manchester City Council indicating that increasing numbers of people had moved to the Moss Side and Hulme areas from the West Indies, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh in the previous decade.[73] During their interviews, past tenants spoke of their Jamaican, Nigerian, Pakistani and Irish heritage to reinforce narratives of unity, racial tolerance, and belonging in Hulme, as explored in the final two chapters.

By contrast, the interviewees from Park Hill were all white British. David Hey argued that by the 1990s, Sheffield as a city remained 'remarkably inward-looking' and 'self-contained', having experienced lower levels of post-war immigration relative to other northern cities.[74] Yet the council's records reveal their increasing attempts from the 1960s to promote social cohesion between white British members of the local population and those communities who had migrated to the city from the West Indies, Pakistan and Bangladesh, while recent research has identified considerable levels of South Asian migration to Sheffield prior to the Second World War.[75] Considering the size of the estate and the gradual movement of its first generation of families to housing elsewhere from the mid-1970s, it seems unlikely that Park Hill was not also home to residents of black and minority ethnic backgrounds like Hulme. If interviewees discussed race and ethnicity explicitly, it was in relation to changes to the population of the wider city over time, and not Park Hill itself. The perspectives of residents of different ethnic backgrounds therefore also warrant further study in relation to the Sheffield estate.

The thesis chiefly follows Glendinning and Muthesius's approach to identifying 'multi-storey' housing as any building over six storeys high.[76] However, it uses this term in reference to both medium- and high-rise housing, particularly as some parts of Park Hill and Hulme were closer

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[73] Working Class Movement Library (hereafter WCML): 36024427/AG/Race-Box 1/A: Manchester City Council, Community Relations, *Coloured Families in Council Houses: Progress and Prospects in Manchester* (1971).

[74] David Hey, 'Continuities and Perceptions', in Clyde Binfield, Richard Childs, Roger Harper, David Hey, David Martin and Geoffrey Tweedale (eds), *The History of the City of Sheffield, 1843-1993: Volume II: Society* (Sheffield, 1993), p. 16.

[75] William Hampton, 'Optimism and Growth, 1951-1973', in Clyde Binfield, Richard Childs, Roger Harper, David Hey, David Martin and Geoffrey Tweedale (eds), *The History of the City of Sheffield, 1843-1993: Volume I: Politics* (Sheffield, 1993), p. 140; David Holland, 'The Social Networks of South Asian Migrants in the Sheffield Area During the Early Twentieth Century', *Past & Present,* 236/1 (2017), pp. 243-279.

[76] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 2.

to the ground than others. The thesis argues that deck-access housing represents a distinct form of multi-storey housing that warrants study independently of high-rise tower blocks. As the subsequent chapters discuss, aspects of the architectural design, political management, and cultural representation of Park Hill and Hulme set the estates apart from other forms of multi-storey housing. In the 1950s and 1960s, planners and politicians treated deck-access schemes as architecturally and socially distinct. Local authorities saw this type of housing as a useful compromise between the low-rise, two-storey norm and tower blocks. The deck-access approach still enabled the construction of high-density housing over a small area, but its street decks appeared to offer a solution to the social problems already associated with high-rise living by the late 1950s. The intended balance between communal and private spaces discussed in relation to Park Hill in Chapter One demonstrates how far the layout of deck-access housing specifically presented architects and policymakers with opportunities to both maintain and adapt 'traditional' ways of living for working-class people. The scope of this socio-spatial reworking was not available to the architects of tower blocks.

When attitudes towards multi-storey council housing began to shift in earnest from the mid-1970s, deck-access housing bore the brunt of negative representations. While architectural critics broadly attached understandings of deterministic design to high-density, multi-storey council housing in theory, in practice, the sheltered walkways and stairwells of deck-access estates came to epitomise these ideas. This is apparent in the application of 'defensible space' to their material and political management, and their cultural depiction in the post-war press. Even when newspaper reports of multi-storey housing failure did not distinguish between different design types specifically, the language of the 'concrete jungle' and prominent images of street decks firmly tied decline to the material environment of estates like Park Hill and Hulme. This focus also translated into residents' accounts of their lived experiences in oral history interviews. Rather than concentrating on the home and their interior living spaces, past tenants situated their memories in relation to exterior spaces like the street decks to discuss ideas of community and deprivation. In this sense, the infamy of deck-access housing by the late twentieth century directly affected the content and structure of past tenants' life histories in ways that differ from oral histories of multi-storey estates built to other designs.[77] This makes an investigation of their discursive construction vital to complicating homogeneous understandings of multi-storey council housing.

[77] For example, the oral history testimonies of 'interiors' discussed in Abrams, Kearns, Hazley and Wright, *Glasgow: High-Rise Homes,* pp. 36-65.

The analysis therefore deliberately distinguishes between 'deck-access' and 'tower blocks' in some instances to focus on the distinct elements of particular estates, but I use 'multi-storey' as a catch-all term for both types of housing. Throughout, the thesis also refers to Park Hill and Hulme as 'estates'. This term is meant to encompass local amenities as well as the housing, and reflects the language used by oral history participants, but it does contain social connotations when used in this context.[78] In using the language of 'estates', the thesis does not intend to replicate the stigmatisation sometimes reinforced by categorisation, but to draw attention to aspects of Park Hill and Hulme beyond the multi-storey flats alone. In applying the term to Hulme, the thesis considers each of its five 'units' as sub-sections of one area.

[78] Rogaly and Taylor, *Moving Histories,* p. 11.

Case studies

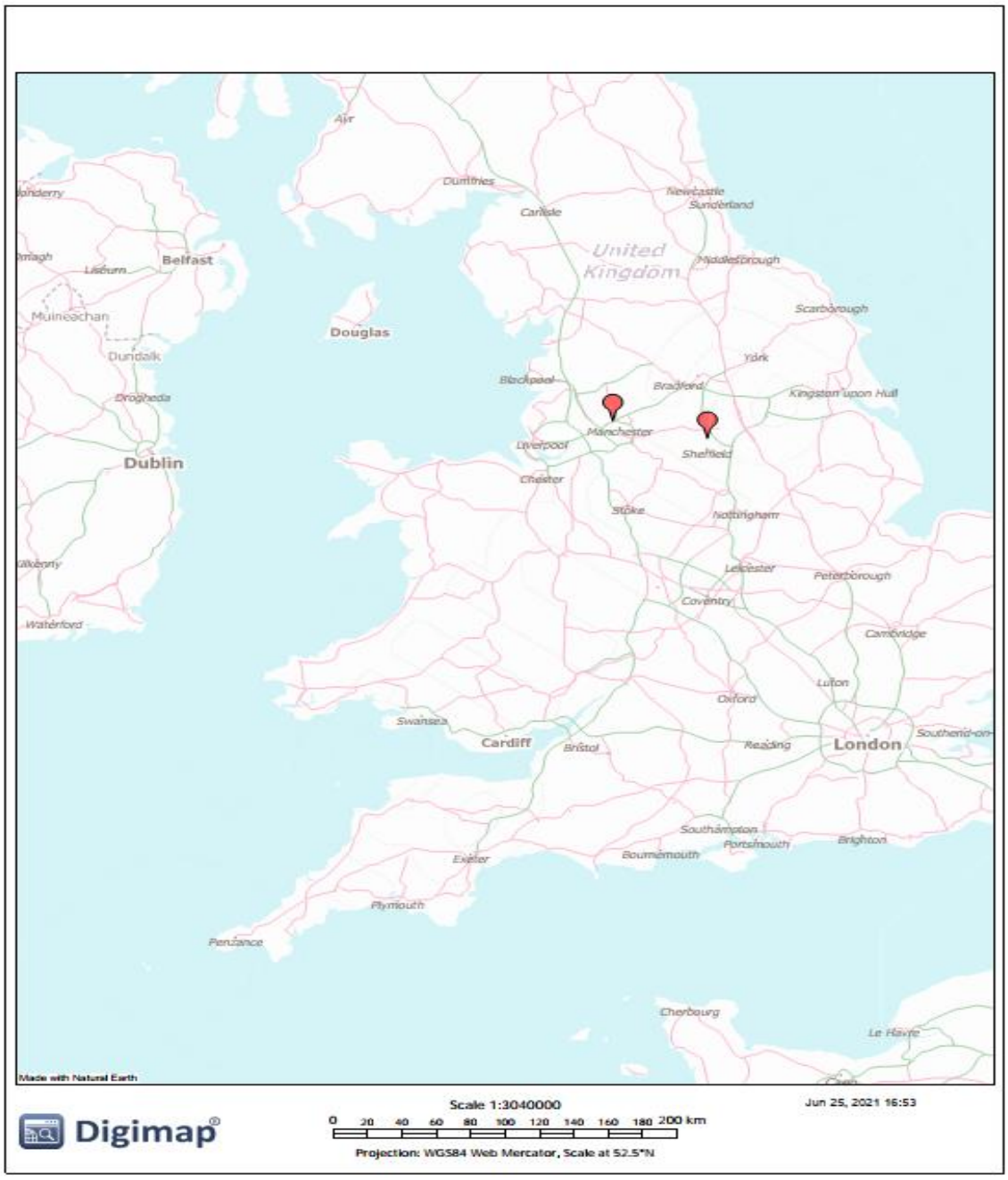

Figure 1: Map to show the location of Sheffield and Manchester in the United Kingdom. *EDINA Historic Digimap Service,* https://digimap.edina.ac.uk [accessed 25 June 2021].

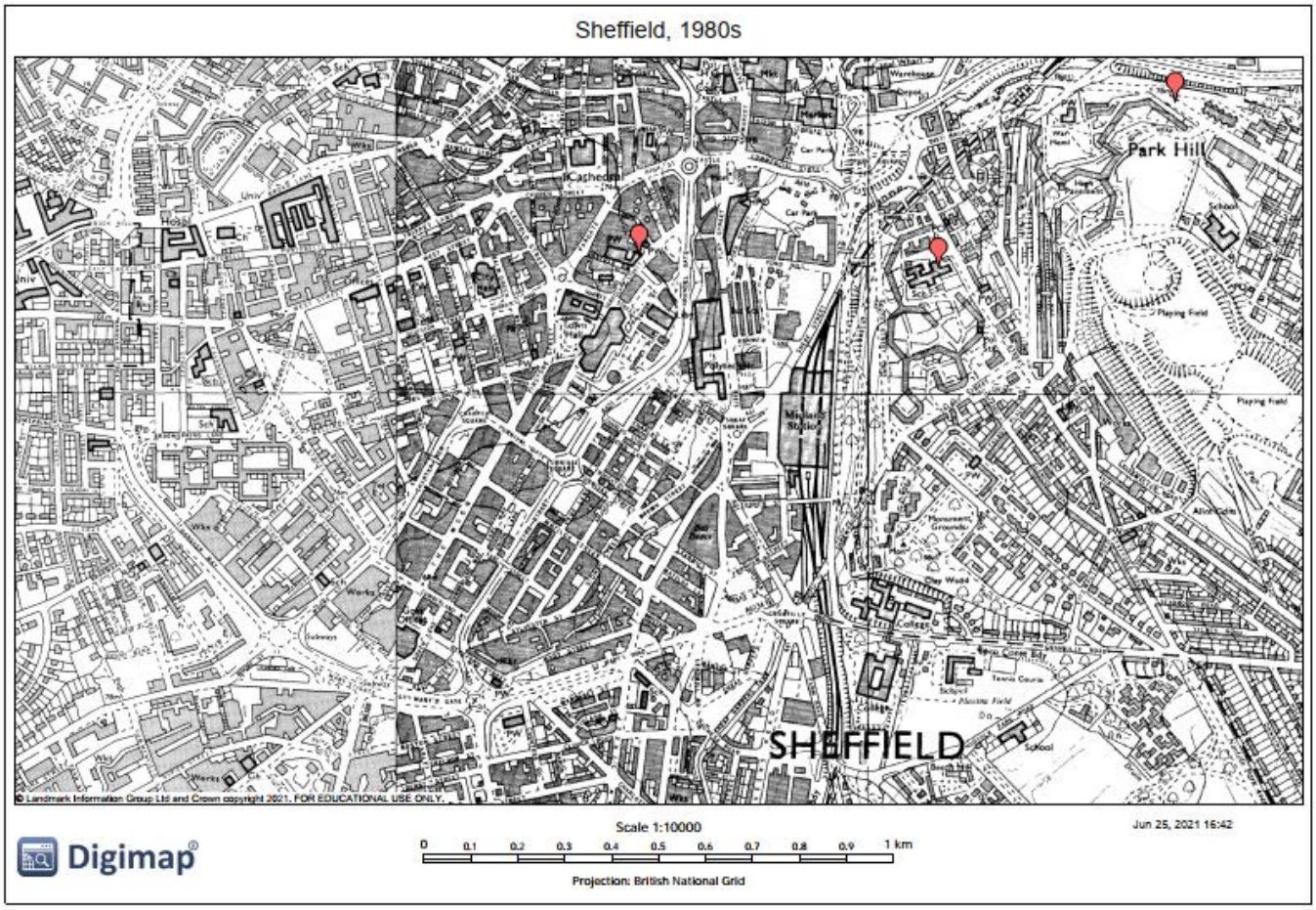

Figure 2: Map of Sheffield's inner area in the 1980s showing the location of Park Hill and Hyde Park (to the right) relative to the city centre (to the left). *EDINA Historic Digimap Service,* https://digimap.edina.ac.uk [accessed 25 June 2021].

Figure 3: J. R. James, *Park Hill, Sheffield,* c. 1970, colour photograph, The J. R. James Archive, *Flickr,* https://www.flickr.com/photos/jrjamesarchive/ [accessed 22 February 2021].

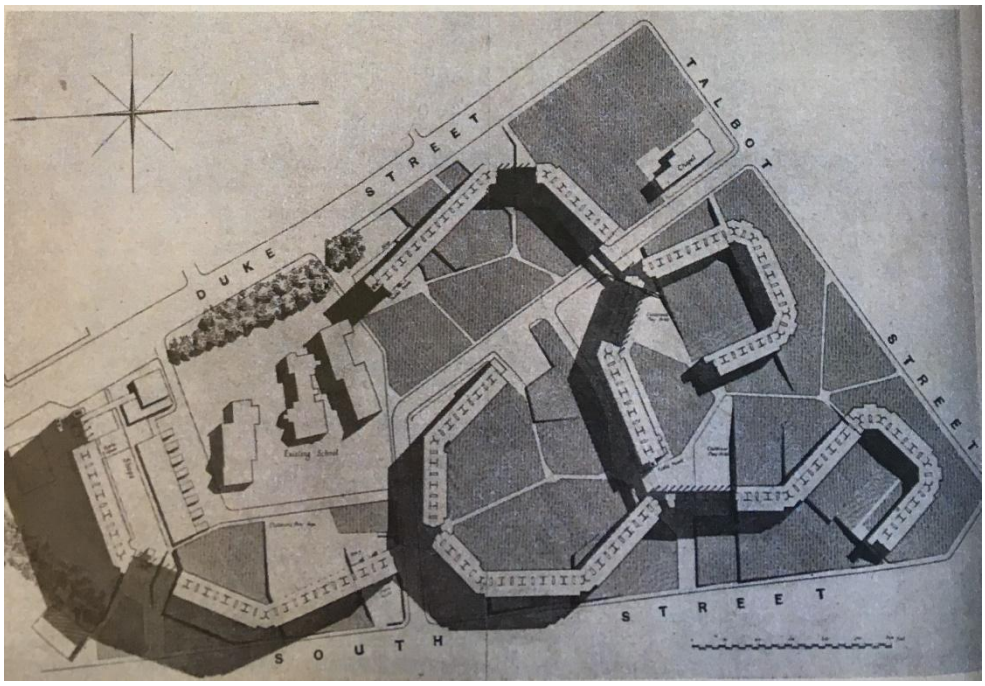

Figure 4: SLSL: PAMP 1048 S, J. L. Womersley, *Park Hill Part I Plan*, 1955, black and white print, in Sheffield City Council, *City of Sheffield Park Hill Redevelopment Proposals* (Sheffield, 1955).

The construction of Park Hill began in Sheffield in 1957. Built to a density of almost 200 people per net residential acre, the estate contained 995 flats to house approximately 3,500 tenants.[79] Reflecting the architectural style of New Brutalism – characterised by the use of unpainted concrete and raw materials – the estate followed a deck-access scheme with three-metre wide walkways on every third floor, all of which bar the very highest, pedestrians could access directly from the ground. Its architects, Jack Lynn and Ivor Smith, made Park Hill's location in the hillside just on the peripheries of the city centre work to their advantage. As the gradient of the site shifted, the roofline remained level, with blocks reaching heights of between four and thirteen storeys depending upon their position. Sheffield City Council used Park Hill to provide modern homes for members of the city's working-class population, many of whom moved to the estate as part of slum clearance programmes. The estate's architects intended for its sheltered decks to replicate the working-class street life on the ground, while providing a safe walking route for residents free from vehicular traffic. Park Hill boasted four pubs, a school, a nursery, and essential shops – all of which could be found along the estate's high street equivalent, 'the Pavement'.[80]

Sheffield City Council saw Park Hill as an opportunity to assert the city's architectural prestige on both a national and international scale. It had made earlier attempts to develop this image, having been one of the first cities in the country to receive a comprehensive development plan authored by Patrick Abercrombie in 1924.[81] However, the Abercrombie plan's association of higher densities with higher mortality rates led the council to build at lower densities than authorities in other English cities during the interwar period. Strict city boundaries and the area's challenging topography also served to limit the possibilities for residential expansion in Sheffield in the first half of the twentieth century.[82] Yet by the 1950s, bomb damage and increasing housing shortages demanded a new and far-reaching approach to redevelopment. Prior to the Second World War, Sheffield's housing had grown up primarily around industry, with its most central dwellings struggling against poor sanitation, pollution, and overcrowding.[83] The 1957 City Development Plan seemed to provide some answers. It proposed to demolish nearly 21,000 dwellings in Sheffield's residential, business, and industrial areas, and build '42,500 dwellings

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[79] Ruth Harman and Roger Harper, 'The Architecture of Sheffield', in Clyde Binfield, Richard Childs, Roger Harper, David Hey, David Martin and Geoffrey Tweedale (eds), *The History of the City of Sheffield 1843-1993: Volume II: Society* (Sheffield, 1993), p. 46.

[80] John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing, 1815-1970* (Guildford, 1978), p. 276.

[81] David Hey, *A History of Sheffield* (Lancaster, 1998), p. 220.

[82] Patrick Abercrombie, *Sheffield: a civic survey and suggestions towards a development plan* (Liverpool, 1924), p. 31; and Elain Harwood, *Space, Hope and Brutalism: English Architecture 1945-1975* (New Haven, 2015), p. 76.

[83] Alan Lewis, 'Planning through conflict: competing approaches in the preparation of Sheffield's post-war reconstruction plan', *Planning Perspectives*, 28/1 (2013), p. 29.

(Corporation and private) for some 127,500 persons' by 1972.[84] Of all the city's districts earmarked for clearance and rebuilding, the Park area was among the first.

When first announced, the local authority drew comparisons between plans for the estate's construction and similar, mass multi-storey developments in Europe.[85] Moreover, its status as the first deck-access building in England allowed the council to enhance Sheffield's reputation as a pioneering centre of urban planning, cultivating its image as a technological hub already in development thanks to the manufacturing and heavy and light industries that gave the 'steel city' its name.[86] When building work started in the late 1950s, confidence in Sheffield's economy remained high, with industrial workers expecting only rising demand across the globe.[87] Representations of Park Hill's early 'success' drew upon this context to buoy the estate's public celebration, rendering the multi-storey flats exemplary of the city's prosperity in a much broader sense.[88] Park Hill's development thus came to represent more than just a change of architectural approach for Sheffield City Council, epitomising instead the possibilities of urban futures at a time of political and social change, and the central role played by housing within these visions. In the public eye, the anticipation surrounding the flats' construction incited by the local press from the mid-1950s, as well as television reports that marvelled over the street decks' design, lent an element of fanfare and performance to Park Hill's early years. The ceremonial aspects of its official opening by Labour Leader Hugh Gaitskell in 1961 – despite the estate's housing of residents from 1959 – only added to this atmosphere.

Nevertheless, by the mid- to late 1970s, reports made by Sheffield City Council and the press began to indicate that multi-storey life at Park Hill had failed to meet its high expectations. This coincided with economic and demographic changes in the city. Between the early 1960s and the late 1970s, unemployment rates across Sheffield stood lower than the national average, with the city generally weathering changes to the manufacturing sector during this period. However, averaged figures for unemployment obscured growing geographical differences. At the time of Labour's White Paper Policy for the Inner Cities in 1977, the unemployment rate in Sheffield's

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[84] Sheffield Local Studies Library (hereafter SLSL): 914.274 SSTQ, Sheffield City Council, *Development Plan for the City and County Borough of Sheffield: Written Statement as approved, with modifications, by the Minister of Housing and Local Government on the 31st May, 1957* (Sheffield, 1957), pp. 7-8.

[85] SLSL: 728.2 SQ, Sheffield City Council, *Report of the City of Sheffield Housing Deputation: Multi-Storey Housing in some European Countries* (Sheffield, 1955).

[86] Tosh Warwick, 'Northernness, Sheffield, and the 1966 World Cup: The "Steel City" on Display', *International Journal of Regional and Local History*, 12/2 (2017), p. 94.

[87] Geoffrey Tweedale, *Steel City: Entrepreneurship, Strategy, and Technology in Sheffield 1743-1993* (Oxford, 1995), p. 334.

[88] Malcolm Keogh, "We don't live off anybody", *Daily Mirror,* 18 September 1967; Paul Kimball, 'Massive facelift marks new prosperity', *The Times*, 10 November 1969; G. R. Adams, 'The city that steel built', *The Guardian,* 19 October 1972.

inner area had reached 6.2 per cent, while the city average remained 4.1 per cent.[89] Population imbalances, tending to encompass the young and the elderly, also exacerbated problems faced by Sheffield's inner areas, with unemployment highest amongst people aged between 16 and 24.[90] From the late 1970s, Sheffield City Council's economic outlook became increasingly bleak. The city had missed out on inner-city 'Partnership' funding and although central government grants under the Urban Programme helped to target pockets of deprivation in the inner areas, the annual funds of up to £2 million for three years of support promised by the Secretary of State for the Environment in 1978 dwindled to £600,000 a year in 1979.[91]

Moreover, Sheffield City Council's broad approach to defining the parameters of the 'inner area' meant that this funding was spread thinly across different parts of the city. In taking an economic and social approach to deprivation that considered unemployment figures alongside numbers of lone-parent and large households, the council opted to outline a large inner area that encompassed, but did not necessarily prioritise, parts of the urban core regarded as more typically 'inner city'.[92] Attempts to mitigate the effects of changes to the steel industry also proved ineffective, with the council's focus on 'Industrial Improvement Areas' in the late 1970s doing little to address structural changes to the sector.[93] From 1981 through to the early 1990s, Sheffield's unemployment rate rose consistently above the national average, largely due to its former reliance on mining, steel and iron, which proved untenable as local industries struggled to cope with the compound effects of rising levels of steel production across the world and the decreasing demand for steel-based products in Britain.[94] By the 1990s, the local economy had shifted to focus on the service sector, with manufacturing jobs representing only one quarter of the city's employment base.[95]

In this socio-economic context, Park Hill's height and density facilitated the development of its reputation as a place of crime and social deprivation, with its poor maintenance due to underinvestment corresponding with a backlash against multi-storey council housing and

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[89] Roger Marsh, 'The relevance of programme status to the economic problems of the inner city with reference to the city of Sheffield', PhD thesis (Polytechnic of Central London, 1979), p. 20.
[90] SA: CA-MIN/100, Sheffield City Council, 'Statement on 1977 Sheffield Household Survey', *Sheffield Inner Area Programme* (Sheffield, 1979).
[91] Marsh, 'Economic problems of the inner city', p. 101.
[92] SA: CA-MIN/100: Sheffield City Council, '1977 Sheffield Household Survey: Summary of Report', *Sheffield Inner Area Programme* (Sheffield, 1979).
[93] Marsh, 'Economic problems of the inner city', p. 101.
[94] Patrick Seyd, 'The Political Management of Decline, 1973-1993', in Clyde Binfield, Richard Childs, Roger Harper, David Hey, David Martin and Geoffrey Tweedale (eds), *The History of the City of Sheffield, 1843-1993: Volume I: Politics* (Sheffield, 1993), p. 152.
[95] *Ibid.*

modernist approaches to city planning experienced across the country in the final few decades of the twentieth century. Despite this, the estate's status as a Grade II listed building – granted by English Heritage in 1998 – has prevented its demolition. In the twenty-first century, brutalist buildings have grown in popularity once more and in 2004, Sheffield City Council transferred the flats to private developers Urban Splash for a programme of mixed development. However, plans stalled due to the recession in 2008, with only 182 flats renovated by 2015.[96] In 2016, Urban Splash announced a five-year time scale for renovation, with further plans to start work on phases two and three of Park Hill's redevelopment approved in 2018.[97] In 2021, phase two has begun, intended to provide 'stylish' student accommodation in 'an iconic setting'.[98]

Often glimpsed fleetingly as part of broader studies, historians have connected Park Hill to ideas of architectural ambition, social improvement and decline simultaneously.[99] In their overview of multi-storey council housing in twentieth-century Britain, Glendinning and Muthesius referred to Park Hill as 'the apogee of public authority housing design in the UK', observing that, 'No project has been so fully recorded and bestowed with praise'.[100] Alison Ravetz noted something similar, describing Park Hill as 'perhaps the best example of [deck-access housing]…if only because its sloping site enabled the decks to meet ground level at various points'.[101] Of the developments across England that followed in Park Hill's footsteps, Ravetz expressed more reservations, characterising them as 'not so happily placed' as the Sheffield estate.[102] John Boughton referred to the flats as 'arguably the most significant council scheme of the era',[103] while Historic England referred to the estate as 'the most ambitious inner-city development of its time'.[104] Nevertheless, Park Hill has not escaped criticism. Throughout her analysis, Ravetz repeatedly emphasised the restrictive aspects of life on the estate, including its unsuitability for families with young children, high crime rates, and ineffective use of new technologies like the waste disposal system. Convinced of its widespread unpopularity in the 1990s, Ravetz used the

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[96] Paul Dobraszczyk, 'Sheffield's Park Hill: the tangled reality of an extraordinary brutalist nightmare', *The Guardian*, 14 August 2015.

[97] Jessica Mairs, 'Park Hill estate to be converted into student housing', *Deezen,* 1 February 2018 https://www.dezeen.com/2018/02/01/brutalist-park-hill-housing-estate-conversion-luxury-student-housing-halls-sheffield-uk/ [accessed 22 January 2021].

[98] 'Béton House', *Homes for Students,* https://wearehomesforstudents.com/student-accommodation/sheffield/beton-house [accessed 22 January 2021].

[99] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 132; Harwood, *Space, Hope and Brutalism,* p. 80.

[100] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 127.

[101] Alison Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture: the History of a Social Experiment* (London, 2001), p. 109.

[102] *Ibid.,* p. 109.

[103] Boughton, *Municipal Dreams,* p. 70.

[104] 'Park Hill', *Historic England,* https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1246881 [accessed 15 January 2021].

example of Park Hill's listing to illustrate the divide between architectural and heritage opinion and the views of council tenants. [105] In Lynsey Hanley's account of council estate life, based on her personal experiences of growing up on the Chelmsley Wood estate on the outskirts of Birmingham, she likened Park Hill to 'slums in the sky', citing the flats' design flaws, poor maintenance, and the failure of architects and local authorities to properly understand 'the needs and desires of ordinary people' in post-war England, to support her categorisation.[106]

With a focus on Park Hill's design, John Grindrod captured some of the excitement and sense of possibility that surrounded its early years, describing its development as representative of 'an architectural changing of the guard', as pre-war architectural thought gave way to post-war ideas.[107] In addition to building at greater heights and densities, these newer ideas seemed to offer greater social provision than previous housing developments, showing more sensitivity to the social and cultural networks established in local areas. The story often repeated to explain Park Hill's initial 'success' focuses on these networks, as the following quotation from Boughton's *Municipal Dreams* demonstrates. 'Old neighbours were housed next to each other, former street names were re-used, even the cobbles of the terraced streets were used to pave the pathways down to the station and city centre'.[108] Moreover, the ideals of community that shaped aspects of its design stemmed almost entirely from the assumptions of its architects, with very little research into the lives and preferences of local working-class people having contributed to the vision behind the estate.[109]

However, scholars have made attempts to re-evaluate the history of Park Hill. Elain Harwood emphasised the economic factors underpinning its construction, an aspect of the estate typically obscured by accounts of its social innovation. Harwood observed that, at £2,800 per dwelling, Park Hill was relatively cheap to build, and highlighted the practicalities of its proximity to Sheffield's industrial core in the Don Valley area to the north-east of the city, to keep and attract local workers.[110] Yet, with only a handful of pages dedicated to Park Hill in a much broader study of brutalist buildings in the twentieth century, Harwood's analysis does not offer any in-depth revisions of the estate's academic portrayal. Matthew Hollow presented a more detailed reappraisal, using Michel Foucault's theory of 'governmentality' to assess the experience of the estate through the lenses of power and supervision. Hollow's work sought to disrupt Park Hill's representation

[105] Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture,* p. 181.
[106] Lynsey Hanley, *Estates: An Intimate History* (London, 2008), pp. 104-117.
[107] John Grindrod, *Concretopia: a journey around the rebuilding of postwar Britain* (London, 2014), p. 236.
[108] Boughton, *Municipal Dreams,* p. 71.
[109] Grindrod, *Concretopia,* p. 239.
[110] Harwood, *Space, Hope and Brutalism,* pp. 76-80.

as an 'archetypal "high modernist" scheme', drawing out the contradictions between architects' attempts to liberate and prescribe ways of living on the estate to conclude that Park Hill ultimately constituted an 'ambiguous site' elusive to categorisation.[111] Despite some efforts to complicate its depiction, the estate's predominant association with community and architectural ambition has cultivated a certain mythology around Park Hill that has endured irrespective of later acknowledgements of its shortcomings. There is a tension in the literature on the development, which, in some respects, tends to reinforce the very uniqueness of Park Hill relative to other multi-storey estates that its architects once championed. Yet, especially in accounts focusing on the years from the 1970s to the 1990s, Park Hill is portrayed less as the exception than the rule. This framing of the estate's later years has seen its integration with familiar discourses of council housing in the late twentieth century, but unlike the projects that came after, Park Hill's story remains foregrounded by retellings of its initial potential. This has only reinforced understandings of its decline, rendering the estate a key example of the gulf between the ideals and realities of the projects spearheaded under the post-war welfare state.

[111] Hollow, 'Governmentality', p. 118 and p. 133.

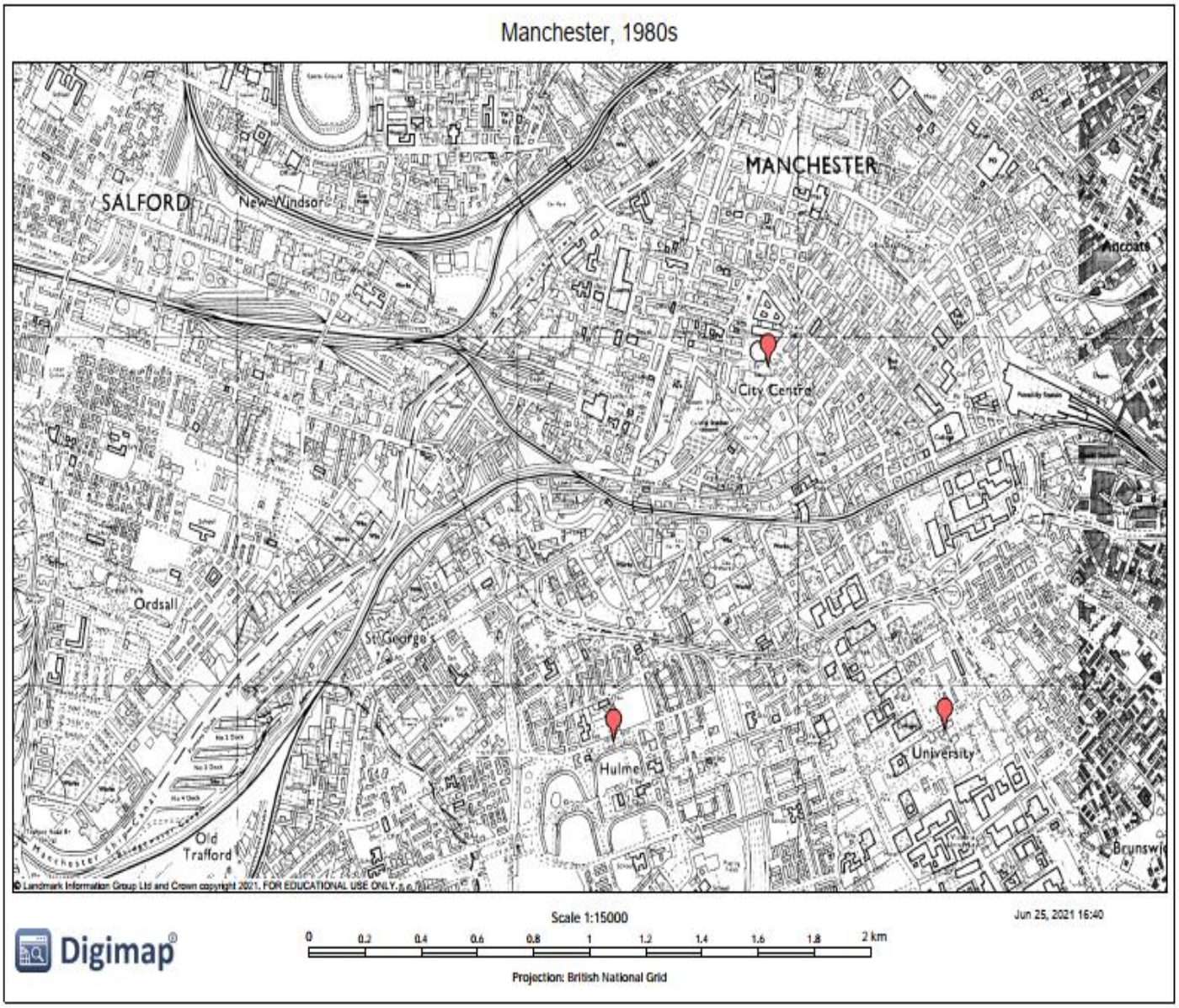

Figure 5: Map of Manchester's inner area in the 1980s, showing the location of Hulme relative to the University of Manchester and the city centre. *EDINA Historic Digimap Service,* https://digimap.edina.ac.uk [accessed 25 June 2021].

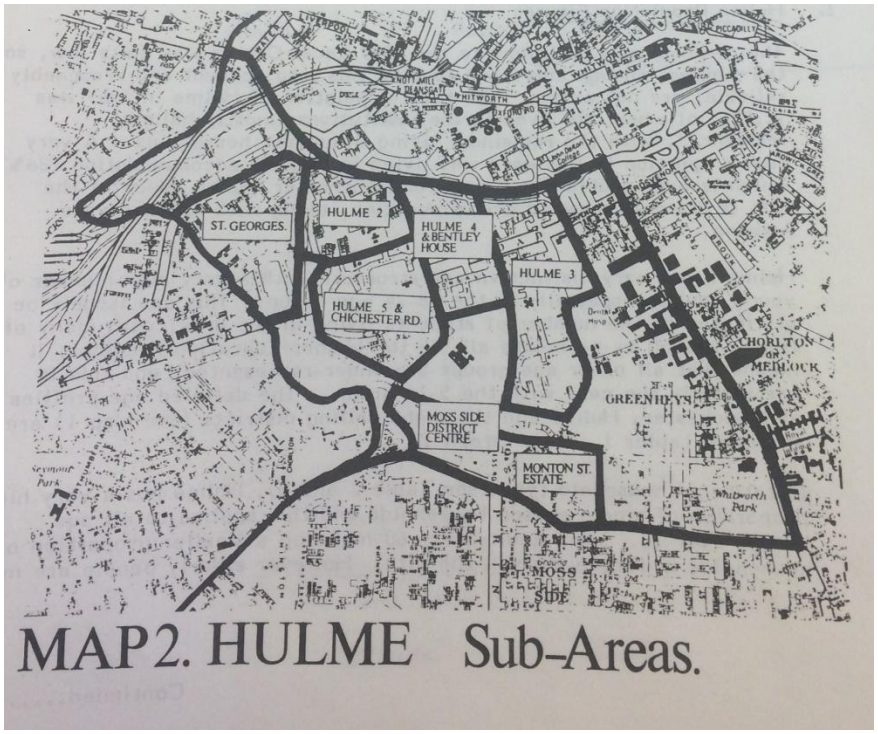

Figure 6: Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre (hereafter RRRC): GB3228.3/4/1, *Map 2. Hulme Sub-Areas*, 1985, black and white print, in Manchester City Council, Hulme Project, *Who Lives in Hulme?* (1987).

Figure 7: *Clopton Walk and the Crescents, Hulme, 1972*, 1972, colour photograph. Manchester Metropolitan University Visual Resources Centre, Manchester, *Flickr,* https://www.flickr.com/photos/mmuvisualresources/5497723797/in/photolist-8K2paN-9eQDD1-9nPgKk-rSa6ja [accessed 22 February 2021].

In Manchester, Hulme's multi-storey redevelopment began in the late 1960s. Divided into five sub-areas alike to 'neighbourhood units' – the most well-known of which were four, six-storey curved blocks called the 'Crescents' - the estate comprised predominantly deck-access housing and tower blocks, with some provision for low-rise housing. Situated to the south of the city centre, the estate rubbed shoulders with Manchester's universities and Moss Side. One of the architects who had supervised Park Hill's construction, J. L. Womersley, did the same for Hulme's Crescents, leading to some similarities in the deck-access layouts of both estates. Unlike its Sheffield counterpart, however, Hulme was built to a much larger scale. Estimates as to Hulme's overall population differ, especially in its later years when many flats were squatted or void, but a voluntary organisation based on the estate in the mid- to late 1970s stated that it was designed to house over 12,000 people.[112] The use of 'system-building' techniques at Hulme has contributed much to understandings of its swift and supposedly efficient construction as a matter solely of housing need, with no room for architectural ambitions like those attributed to Park Hill.[113] Resembling a factory process, pre-cast concrete and pre-fabricated units could be produced off-site and assembled mechanically according to different types of construction designs or 'systems'.[114] Alongside its housing, Hulme contained playgrounds and four pubs, and was located close to a school. Although the estate had some shops, the high street that had served the area previously, Stretford Road, was repurposed for the post-war redevelopment; a decision that proved unpopular with local people and that developers sought to rectify when work began again in Hulme in the early 1990s.[115]

Hulme's twentieth-century redevelopment had long been a subject of debate for Manchester City Council before its construction started. Although marked for clearance several years earlier, by the mid-1960s the low-rise Hulme had yet to be demolished. In 1930, acute housing shortages had led Manchester City Council to postpone the clearance of Hulme until new dwellings could be built for residents.[116] Adequate housing in Manchester remained scarce throughout this period, and pressure on the council to find a solution to the problem only

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[112] Manchester Archives (hereafter MA): GB127/77, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'Hulme People's Rights Centre: Preliminary Paper', *Minute Book 77: 12 April 1976-14 June 1976* (1976), p. 429.

[113] Peter Shapely, Duncan Tanner, and Andrew Walling, 'Civic Culture and Housing Policy in Manchester, 1945-79', *Twentieth Century British History*, 15/4 (2004), p. 414.

[114] MA: q363.509427SYS(008), The System Built and Tower Block Housing Project, *The System Built and Tower Block Housing Project* (Manchester, 1987).

[115] MA: q711.58HUL(055), Hulme Regeneration Ltd., *The Shape of Hulme to Come: Consultation Report* (Manchester, 1993), p. 3. Hulme Regeneration Ltd. formed as a partnership between Manchester City Council and the private national construction firm, AMEC.

[116] Charlotte Wildman, 'Urban Transformation in Liverpool and Manchester, 1918-1939', *The Historical Journal,* 55/1 (2012), p. 130.

increased as the years went by. Although the suburban estate of Wythenshawe constituted a significant housing reform of the interwar years, housing in Manchester by the end of the 1930s was in dire need of redevelopment. Despite having provided better quality accommodation to 40,000 working-class citizens by 1939, Manchester Corporation's ambitious vision of the city's housing – apparent in estates like Wythenshawe – only served to obscure the deprivation of areas closer to the city centre like Hulme.[117]

After the Second World War and up to the 1950s, Manchester continued to favour low-density, low-rise building.[118] Unlike Sheffield City Council, which in the 1950s promoted multi-storey housing to demonstrate its architectural prowess, Manchester's local authority continued to implement slum clearance gradually, and used land reserves to build traditional houses and flats.[119] The 1945 Plan outlined a slum clearance programme that involved the demolition and redevelopment of 121,000 houses, over 60,000 of which had been labelled 'unfit for human habitation' by the Medical Officer of Health.[120] However, limited by post-war austerity, the city was far from being on course to clear 121,000 houses. Just over 7,000 had been demolished by 1955 and a further 68,000 were considered below required standards.[121] Despite this, Manchester City Council refused to undertake widespread multi-storey house-building. While not the only solution to post-war housing shortages, other large provincial cities such as Liverpool, Sheffield, and Birmingham had all turned to multi-storey flats to meet inner-city demand. When the traditionally Labour-run Manchester City Council fell under Conservative leadership in 1967, however, proposals for the multi-storey Hulme began to translate into reality.[122]

Yet Hulme's reputation soon succumbed to a similar fate to Park Hill. The poor standard of its construction and the high cost of its maintenance led to damp and infestation, and during the 1980s residents began to discover asbestos in the walls of their flats.[123] From the late 1970s, the council and the press alike connected the dominance of the estate's deck-access layout to rising crime and anti-social behaviour, with tenants and the council beginning to question the suitability

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[117] *Ibid.* p. 131.

[118] MA: 711.59, Manchester City Council Planning Department, *Housing and Urban Renewal in Manchester: A Short History* (Manchester, 1977), p. 6.

[119] Shapely, Tanner, and Walling, 'Civic Culture', p. 422. On local variations in approaches to slum clearance across England and Wales, see Jim Yelling, 'The incidence of slum clearance in England and Wales, 1955-85', *Urban History,* 27/2 (2000), pp. 234-254.

[120] R. Nicholas, *City of Manchester Plan, 1945* (Norwich, 1945), p. 4.

[121] John J. Parkinson-Bailey, *Manchester: An Architectural History* (Manchester, 2000), p. 190.

[122] Peter Shapely, 'Tenants arise! Consumerism, tenants and the challenge to council authority in Manchester, 1968-92', *Social History*, 31/1 (2006), p. 69.

[123] RRRC: GB3228.3/3/3, Manchester City Council*, Hulme: A Position Statement* (Manchester, 1987), p. 18.

of high flats for young children.[124] These issues occurred during a period of socio-economic change in Manchester. Throughout the nineteenth and up to the mid-twentieth-century, the local economy had depended to a large extent upon traditional industries such as textiles and engineering, but this reliance became unsustainable in the post-war years. Between 1971 and 1984, levels of employment in the city's manufacturing sector declined by 51 per cent.[125] Alistair Kefford has stressed the role of post-war urban renewal in exacerbating this process of deindustrialisation, with the council's understanding of the 'obsolescence' of the infrastructure and locations of industrial firms proving misguided, and leading to considerable economic disruption as industries were forced to relocate from the inner city.[126] By 1981, unemployment rates in the inner city had reached 20.4 per cent, relative to an average of 11.4 per cent across the County of Greater Manchester.[127]

This rise in levels of unemployment coincided with a decline in the city's population, which fell by 27 per cent during the 1960s and 1970s due in part to the out-migration of families with young children. The demographic structure of those who remained caused some concern to the local authority. While the child population of the city declined, the proportion of young adults and the over 75s living in the city centre rose, with the inner area containing a higher number of lone-parent and large family households relative to the national average.[128] These changes were felt acutely in Hulme. By January 1986, 1,972 Hulme tenants were unemployed. 65 per cent of these were men, and while unemployment rates in wards were not differentiated by age, according to Manchester's youth unemployment figures as a whole, young men in Hulme were most likely to experience unemployment.[129] In 1987, Hulme's official unemployment rate was 45.5 per cent, more than double the city's average and the highest of any area of Manchester.[130]

Towards the end of the 1980s, the City Council began to outline plans for the demolition and rebuilding of Hulme. From 1987, Manchester's Labour-run council embarked on a project of 'municipal entrepreneurialism' to restore some of the diminishing power of local authorities amidst the neoliberal agenda of the Conservative government. Hulme's redevelopment fit with the

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[124] MA: GB147/76, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'A New Method of Administering, Determining and Meeting Housing Accommodation Needs', *Minute Book 76: December 1975-March 1976* (1976), p. 147.
[125] Christopher M. Law, 'Inner city policy on the ground: The Manchester experience', *Cities*, 6/4 (1989), p. 337.
[126] Kefford, 'Disruption, destruction and the creation of 'the inner cities'', pp. 505-508.
[127] Law, 'Inner city policy on the ground', p. 337.
[128] MA: q312.094273Ma7/c, Manchester City Council Planning Department, *Manchester's Population and Housing* (Manchester, 1981), pp. 12-14.
[129] RRRC: GB3228.3/4/1, Manchester City Council, Hulme Project, *Who Lives in Hulme? A Report on Hulme's Population based on Census Information* (Manchester, 1987), p. 5.
[130] RRRC: GB3228.3/3/11, Manchester City Council, Hulme Project, *Employment and Unemployment in Hulme* (Manchester, 1987).

project's aims.[131] The council sought to move away from the image of Manchester as a city of the industrial working classes, remodelling the area instead as a metropolitan centre that transcended class boundaries.[132] In this restructure, Hulme's redevelopment was not just about establishing a more modern image for Manchester, but represented the council's shift away from the interventionist approaches that had led to the estate's construction. As Jamie Peck and Kevin Ward have argued, Manchester attempted to rewrite its own history during this period, instigating a process that involved 'the systematic erasure of public-sector and welfarist symbols from the urban landscape'.[133] The culmination of this project was the demolition of Hulme's multi-storey flats in the early 1990s as part of the City Challenge scheme introduced by central government, with a mixture of housing to rent from private landlords and Housing Associations, built according to more traditional terraced and semi-detached styles.[134]

Hulme constituted a later chapter of the same story as Park Hill, but academic representations of the Manchester estate focus overwhelmingly on the facets of its decline. Concentrating on the decade before Hulme's demolition, Ravetz punctuated her account of Hulme with references to 'squatters and drug addicts', 'murdered bodies' and the 'near anarchy' of an 'extreme Left fringe' of young, single tenants who occupied the multi-storey flats following the widespread removal of families by the 1980s.[135] In their work on housing policy in Manchester, Peter Shapely, Duncan Tanner, and Andrew Walling alluded to the changing reception of deck-access housing by the time of Hulme's construction, describing the Crescents in particular as 'the symbol of ambitious visions turned sour'.[136] Ted Kitchen also used the Crescents to epitomise the 'fundamental problem' of system-built deck-access housing across Hulme. As Kitchen stated,

> [the] sheer ugliness of in particular the deck-access crescents…made the whole place visually a very depressing experience, which promoted in turn a lack of care for its physical environment by residents and visitors. A long list of economic and social problems could be

[131] Steve Quilley, 'Entrepreneurial turns: municipal socialism and after', in Jamie Peck and Kevin Ward (eds), *Restructuring Manchester: City of Revolution* (Manchester, 2002), p. 88.
[132] *Ibid.,* p. 91.
[133] Jamie Peck and Kevin Ward, 'Placing Manchester', in Jamie Peck and Kevin Ward (eds*), Restructuring Manchester: City of Revolution* (Manchester, 2002), p. 11.
[134] The City Challenge scheme began in 1991 and invited councils to compete for central government funding to redevelop deprived urban areas. For more on the scheme, see MA: GB3228.3/5/43, Manchester City Council Planning Department, *Hulme Baseline Study: A Portrait of Hulme Before Hulme City Challenge* (Manchester, 1993).
[135] Ravetz, *Council housing and culture,* p. 230.
[136] Shapely, Tanner, and Walling, 'Civic Culture', p. 433.

> added to this series of physical manifestations, together with the problems of stigmatisation that an estate of this kind almost inevitably experiences.[137]

Kitchen came to these conclusions in the context of a discussion about Hulme's redevelopment in the 1990s, which he saw as a successful example of localised and participatory planning processes in the inner city.[138] Like other accounts, he presented Hulme's demolition as an unequivocal – even inevitable – consequence of the estate's multi-storey housing failure. Kitchen's depiction of Hulme indicates two key features of the literature written about the estate thus far. First, it suggests a dual role played by tenants in Hulme's decline. Just as Ravetz had alluded, Kitchen held residents partly responsible for the poor upkeep of the material environment, but he also recognised the efforts of other tenants to engage with the redevelopment planning process.[139] His work did not so much acknowledge the multiplicity of tenants' attitudes towards the estate as divide them into two distinct categories: the perpetrators of a declining standard of living, connected to rising levels of crime, and the victims of poorly designed housing, which spurred tenant-led activism. Second, Kitchen's depiction demonstrates the centrality of the Crescents to representations of Hulme. Both approaches are interconnected, with matters relating to tenants of the Crescents most likely to arise in council meetings and appear in press reports, leading to the selective amplification of their experiences of Hulme in archival sources.

This focus on the Crescents, over a more complete picture of housing in the different areas of the estate, owes much to the design and construction methods used to build the four curved blocks. While the deck-access flats situated elsewhere in Hulme also provide examples of system-building, they did not reach the same density as the Crescents. Their design, linked to aspirations to emulate the Georgian crescents of Bath, also saw the blocks singled out as evidence for the estate's failure, perhaps in much the same way as notions of Park Hill's architectural ambitions seemed to exaggerate later accounts of its decline. For the press, the Crescents served as an eye-catching example of 'inner city decay'.[140] As a report by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation concluded following consultation with tenants in 1994, 'Hulme in inner Manchester has…become a by-word for the failures of public housing policy. In particular, the Crescents…have epitomised the discredited, system-built estates of the 1960s and 1970s'.[141] In part, Hulme's layout lent itself

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[137] Ted Kitchen, *People, Politics, Policies and Plans: The city planning process in contemporary Britain* (London, 1997), pp. 153-154.
[138] *Ibid.,* p. 166.
[139] *Ibid.,* p. 155.
[140] Russell Jenkins, 'Horrors of the Concrete Jungle', *Manchester Evening News*, 22 February 1985.
[141] Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 'Lessons from Hulme', *Housing Summary 5, September 1994* (1994), https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/lessons-hulme [accessed 15 January 2020].

to this division of the Crescents in the academic literature. It was built in five distinct phases – of which the Crescents constituted the fifth – and tenants' perspectives as recorded through oral history and in tenant-produced documents, indicate that some saw each area as a separate estate. Manchester City Council's allocation policies also enhanced this sense of separateness, especially following debates concerning the suitability of families to high flats, as the first chapter discusses in more detail. However, the relative notoriety of the Crescents has eclipsed other parts of the estate and effectively extrapolated the blocks' reputation onto Hulme in its entirety. In creating the impression that Hulme did not exist beyond the Crescents, historical accounts have obscured the experience of the majority of the multi-storey development.

Chapter breakdown

The thesis comprises four chapters that can be viewed as two sections. The first analyses external representations of Park Hill and Hulme, concentrating on the estates' architectural, political, and cultural constructions. The second highlights tenants' accounts of their lived experience, exploring how far their narratives of multi-storey living intersect with the themes of the first two chapters. This separation is a somewhat artificial divide due to the focus of the thesis on the intersections between wider representations of multi-storey council housing and tenants' perspectives. There are parts of the first and second chapters that bridge this, discussing tenants' responses to social surveys, aspects of housing policy and press coverage to show the extent to which some tenants engaged directly with the external actors who shaped estate life, leaving behind archival traces. The inclusion of tenants' responses in these earlier chapters is mainly intended to show the extent of their participation in political interventions and cultural depictions of Park Hill and Hulme. It also presents tenants' perspectives as reactive to external actors, whereas the narratives considered in the final two chapters – collected through oral history interviews – offer a greater indication of how tenants structured their life stories by selectively reinforcing and reworking aspects of each estate's discursive construction. While there are connections between the first and second part of the thesis, the final two chapters reassert the role of tenants as agents of their own narratives.

The chapters are organised thematically. This is a deliberate attempt to reframe the chronology of some existing accounts, distancing the analysis of multi-storey council housing from evaluations of its success or failure as well as ideas of the inevitability of its decline. Nevertheless, a chronological focus is necessary in some parts to trace shifts in housing policy and cultural representations over time, with context a key indicator of the significance of these changes. The timeline for the thesis follows each estate's multi-storey lifespan, beginning in the mid-1950s and ending in the late 1990s. It charts plans for Park Hill's construction and later Grade II listing in

1998, encompassing Hulme's multi-storey redevelopment in the late 1960s, and its gradual demolition between 1992 and 1994. In following the case studies for most of the latter half of the twentieth century, the thesis takes a longer-term view of lived experience. In so doing, it avoids focusing on particular moments of accomplishment or 'crisis', that sit apart from the broader history of each estate.

Chapter One focuses on architectural design and housing policy. It analyses the interplay between the ideas of architects and local authorities about the social and housing needs of tenants, and the translation of these ideas into the design, construction, and management of the material environment of each estate. It focuses on the specific rationale behind deck-access housing, and the maintenance issues these developments posed, especially when constructed according to system-building techniques. It explores the extent to which notions of the suitability of this type of housing for certain tenant groups changed between the 1950s and the 1990s, while also shedding light on any continuities between the ways of living promoted through multi-storey design and those associated with the types of dwellings it replaced. While the chapter primarily draws on sources produced by local authorities, it uses these to assess how far tenants' opinions of multi-storey living permeated official evaluations or decision-making processes, either through consultation via social surveys or more direct participation in plans for redevelopment. Throughout, the chapter considers the degree to which the national policy framework shaped local approaches to housing in Sheffield and Manchester, highlighting how far interpretations of central government directives differed between cities depending upon their local context and respective histories of housing development. By situating the local context of the estates against a national backdrop of developments relating to both council housing provision and the 'inner city' more broadly, the chapter seeks to answer why the fates of Park Hill and Hulme – estates ostensibly alike in terms of architectural design – diverged so significantly in the 1990s. The comparison between the two from an architectural and policymaking perspective indicates the importance of a comparative, case study analysis to reasserting a more complex history of multi-storey council housing.

Chapter Two explores cultural discourses of multi-storey council housing through a focus on the local and national press. The chapter takes an initially chronological approach to the changing reception of Park Hill and Hulme, to highlight the differences between the Sheffield estate's initial celebration in the 1950s and early 1960s, and the reception largely afforded to Hulme from the 1970s. Like aspects of Chapter One, this chapter examines interconnections between the national and the local, to establish how depictions of multi-storey council housing across the country influenced representations of Park Hill and Hulme specifically in both local and national

newspapers. The chapter highlights the linguistic, thematic and visual continuities that underscored depictions of multi-storey council housing across the post-1945 period, demonstrating how the press revisited these frameworks of representation to package stories about Park Hill and Hulme in different ways according to political and cultural trends. It shows how the press used specific groups of residents to consolidate notions of the success and failure of high flats, with newspapers delineating tenants' experiences along lines of class, gender, and race. The chapter concentrates in part on how attitudes towards the use of different sources in the press engendered developments in its representation of multi-storey council housing, as the press became less deferential to institutions of government towards the end of the twentieth century. Using letters to the press and issues of a tenant magazine, the chapter also shows how far tenants sought to contribute to press coverage by alternately challenging and consolidating discourses of their homes. While there are inevitable gaps in the coverage of the estates based on the press's attention on 'news-worthy' events, such absences only reinforce the chapter's argument for the estates' selective cultural construction.

Chapter Three analyses tenants' spatial practices. Through tenants' personal testimonies, it assesses how far the architectural ideals for the use of the estates' material environments shaped the patterns of everyday life. It affirms the limits of deterministic design, demonstrating how residents reworked aspects of the spaces around them to suit their social and housing preferences. The chapter is primarily concerned with tenants' relationship to the built environment, but it highlights throughout the points at which tenants' accounts intersected with political and cultural representations through a socio-spatial lens. It explores tenants' interactions with the material spaces within each estate and their physical movement between an estate and the wider city, while emphasising the cultural attitudes that influenced these practices. Through the concept of boundary-making, it shows how residents attached ideas of 'roughness' and 'respectability' to certain spaces and their inhabitants, and examines how far these circumscribed their spatial mobility during their tenancies. The chapter also uses this focus on tenants' interactions with the material environment to highlight the complexities of personal narratives of moving to and from Park Hill and Hulme. It reasserts the role of tenant agency in moving to the estates, showing that although some moved involuntarily due to clearance programmes, many had made use of council waiting lists to request a tenancy, viewing the new, multi-storey flats as an aspirational place to live. Although some tenants framed their reasons for leaving the estates around notions of decline, for many this constituted part of a retrospective retelling, with their primary impetus for moving away having aligned instead with different points of the life cycle.

Chapter Four focuses on tenants' construction of identity and lived experience in narratives of Park Hill and Hulme. It concentrates in more depth on the ways in which participants told their life stories in relation to subject positioning and wider discourses. The chapter highlights the contradictions present in participants' life stories, arguing that these offer a valuable insight into the process through which former tenants reconciled their first-hand experiences with aspects of the political and cultural representation of multi-storey council housing. In acknowledgement of the marginalisation of the estates and council tenants more generally by the end of this period of study, many participants explicitly stated their aims to salvage the reputations of Park Hill and Hulme. However, the chapter shows how this intention led to ruptures in personal testimonies, with participants struggling to position themselves as individuals resistant to stereotypes of council tenants, while simultaneously communicating the representativeness of their experience by associating it with that of a wider collective of people. As the chapter demonstrates, this dual narrative framing attempted by many participants indicates the ways in which the infamy attached to Park Hill and Hulme has permeated even personal accounts of their histories. In addition to this focus on the effects of stigmatisation, the chapter also explores how tenants constructed their narratives in accordance with ideas of authenticity and belonging, to argue for who should speak for the history of these estates.

The findings of this thesis have implications for the study of post-war England more broadly. Recent research has attempted to complicate discourses of decline in relation to this period. This thesis builds on that work – not by disputing the process of 'decline' in some form – but by exploring its roots and development through the lens of housing in the late twentieth-century city. It focuses upon themes pertinent to understanding the social dimensions of urban environments, exploring the interconnections between representations and experiences of class and identity. By highlighting the ways in which political and cultural discourses intersect with life history narratives, the thesis offers a framework for a more relational approach to lived experience that combines the perspectives of the state, the media, and the individual. It recognises that 'experience' is not constructed in isolation, but constitutes the product of a much broader societal interplay that eschews a straightforward account of the 'reality' of everyday life. The thesis moves beyond the positioning of discourses imposed from the top-down against counter-narratives constructed from 'below', and argues that it is only by tracing the interactions between state-led and personal perspectives that working-class people emerge not as the curators of a separate, alternative account, but as active participants in the history of twentieth-century England.

Chapter One: Architectural Design and Housing Policy

In September 1987, Manchester City Council outlined proposals for the improvement of housing in Hulme. Describing the 2,864 deck-access dwellings built across the estate in the late 1960s as riddled with 'deficiencies' and representative of 'some of the least attractive housing stock in the City', the report signalled the start of a process of redevelopment that would encompass the following nine years.[1] As plans for Hulme's future developed, the demolition of its multi-storey flats and their replacement with low-rise housing became an increasingly integral aspect of the council's approach to countering the estate's social, economic and material problems. The local authority declared deck-access housing, particularly the blocks that formed Hulme's four Crescents, unsuitable for the families for whom it was built.[2] By 1992, a report for the Hulme City Challenge stated, 'If there was ever a time when the Crescents could have been "'saved"' it is now passed and their complete demolition…seems almost universally to be accepted as inevitable'.[3] This sense of inevitability pervaded accounts of Hulme's decline, as, in the twenty-five years since its construction, the high-density, deck-access scheme only seemed to pose greater problems for Manchester City Council.

More 'traditional' housing replaced Hulme's high flats in the 1990s, with over 1,000 new units constituting private dwellings in a bid to avoid the 'ghettoisation' of an estate comprising social housing alone.[4] The connections drawn between the architectural design of the post-war Hulme and social housing as an increasingly residual form of tenure demonstrate the extent to which housing policies had changed by the end of the twentieth century. The preface to Manchester City Council's 1987 *Position Statement* for Hulme showed how far understandings of failed architectural ambitions were perceived as central to this process. Quoting from a 1965 report authored by the chief architects of the Crescents, Hugh Wilson and John Lewis Womersley, the preface read, 'it is our endeavour to achieve, at Hulme, a solution to the problems of 20th century living which would be the equivalent in quality of that reached for the requirements of the 18th century in Bloomsbury and Bath'.[5] Followed immediately by an analysis of the estate's need in the late 1980s for housing improvement and the severe levels of social and economic deprivation

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[1] Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre (hereafter RRRC): GB3228.3/3/3, Manchester City Council, *Hulme: A Position Statement* (Manchester, 1987), p. 2.

[2] RRRC: GB3228.3/5/21, Manchester City Council, Director of Housing, *Hulme 5: Local Management Initiative Proposals* (Manchester, 1987), p. 2.

[3] MA: GB127.M857/1/16, Hunt Thompson Associates and Hulme Tenant Participation Project, *City Challenge: Creating the new Heart of Hulme. A report on the Community Planning Weekend Thursday 19 – Monday 23 November* (Manchester, 1992), p. 60.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 62.

[5] Manchester City Council, *Hulme: A Position Statement,* p. 1.

experienced by its residents, the use of the Wilson and Womersley quote highlighted the misplaced idealism so often attributed to post-war planners, positioning the council's report as the initial step towards rectifying past mistakes.

Park Hill, on the other hand, survived demolition in the 1990s, despite reports by Sheffield City Council that identified similar issues of 'multiple deprivation' as those attributed to Hulme, albeit on a relatively smaller scale.[6] Upon its Grade II listing in 1998, English Heritage described Park Hill as a "magnificent structure", expressing hope that the listing would offer residents a "real sense of pride in the place and their community".[7] The case of Hyde Park, built in the mid-1960s and largely demolished in the early 1990s, also raises questions when considered alongside Park Hill, as, aside from its greater height and density, it followed the same layout as its sister development. The comparative study of multi-storey council housing at Park Hill and Hulme therefore demonstrates the tensions inherent to attempts to categorise these estates in terms of their 'success' or 'failure'. Concentrating upon the architectural design and housing policies that shaped the construction and management of each estate, this chapter seeks to chart how discourses of success and failure became attached to Park Hill and Hulme, in attempt to complicate this dichotomy.

These labels were dependent to a large extent upon the differential timing of each estate's construction. That Park Hill is so often viewed through the lens of the idealistic ambitions of architects and planners is evidence of its contextual connection to the early post-war years. Park Hill attracted a level of optimism and enthusiasm closely linked to the new technologies and approaches to urban redevelopment apparent during this period. Moreover, in the mid- to late 1950s, when work at Park Hill began, paternalistic understandings of 'community' and the working class held sway. Publications like Michael Young and Peter Willmott's *Family and Kinship in East London* advocated for a place-based approach to 'working-class community', effectively mythologising a way of living perceived to be on the brink of transformation due to wholesale slum clearance programmes.[8] Park Hill encapsulated similarly classed perceptions of 'community' – a term undefined by its planners but prevalent in proposals for the estate – as well as the affluence and increasing consumerism and individualism often associated with the 1960s.[9] Like other multi-

[6] 'Multiple deprivation' refers to a category in social policy that sought to recognise the existence of additional forms of deprivation to the material. For more, see Aaron Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation, the Inner City, and the Fracturing of the Welfare State: Glasgow, c. 1968-78', *Twentieth Century British History*, 29/4 (2018), p. 606.

[7] 'High praise falls flat: uproar as tower block is declared part of our heritage', *Daily Express*, 23 December 1998.

[8] Michael Young and Peter Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (London, 1957).

[9] William Hampton, 'Optimism and Growth, 1951-1973', in Clyde Binfield, Richard Childs, Roger Harper, David Hey, David Martin and Geoffrey Tweedale (eds), *The History of the City of Sheffield, 1843-1993: Volume I: Politics* (Sheffield, 1993), p. 119.

storey developments built to replace areas of housing designated for clearance, Park Hill appeared to fulfil the tenets of an 'aspirational' place to live.[10]

By the time of Hulme's construction just a decade later, however, paternalistic overtures of community and its relationship to architectural design struggled to gain traction. With the 1970s typically characterised by urban 'crises' such as the 'rediscovery of poverty' and the identification of 'multiple deprivation' across England's 'inner cities', the language of community and its cultivation through architectural innovation applied to Park Hill was unavailable to Hulme.[11] Even Womersley's 1967 plans for the Crescents, which articulated a similar ambition for community and modernity as the architect had outlined in relation to Park Hill over ten years before, proved untenable in the context of the more pluralistic and less deferential society of the later decades of the twentieth century.[12] The withdrawal of central government funding for multi-storey redevelopment after the Ronan Point disaster of 1968 also made high flats an increasingly unpopular form of housing.[13] In comparing the two estates, these aspects of their respective historical contexts help to explain why ideas of initial success have endured in relation to Park Hill but not Hulme.

The chapter begins by exploring local authority and architectural approaches to the planning and design of both estates. It highlights how Sheffield and Manchester City Councils saw deck-access flats as a means of alleviating issues with isolation already apparent in high-rise tower blocks built in other parts of the country. The deck-access scheme seemed to promise a midpoint between 'traditional' ways of living for the local working classes, while offering improved living conditions in more modern housing. Through its focus on design, this first section interrogates how understandings of Park Hill as a 'social experiment' and Hulme as a quick-fix solution, became integral to their discursive political construction. It exposes the limitations of these representations, highlighting the longer-term roots of Manchester City Council's considerations of multi-storey housing, as well as the economic decisions that underpinned the design of the Sheffield estate.

In the second part of the chapter, we consider the management of multi-storey housing, examining local and central government policies and their relationship to changing architectural thought from the early 1970s. It charts the growing association of multi-storey, deck-access

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[10] Ade Kearns, Valerie Wright, Lynn Abrams and Barry Hazley, 'Slum clearance and relocation: a reassessment of social outcomes combining short-term and long-term perspectives', *Housing Studies*, 34/2 (2017), p. 220.

[11] Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation', p. 606.

[12] MA: q711.57Wi1/a, Hugh Wilson and Lewis Womersley, *Manchester Education Precinct: The Final Report of the Planning Consultants* (1967).

[13] Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius, *Tower Block: Modern Public Housing in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland* (London, 1994), p. 313.

housing with ideas of deterministic design capable of facilitating crime, insecurity and anti-social behaviour. In so doing, the chapter highlights how local authorities continued to ascribe these developments to the behaviour of certain tenants, despite an increasing recognition of the wider economic causes of deprivation. It uses a study of Manchester City Council's changing approach to housing families with young children in high flats from the mid-1970s to illustrate how far ideas as to the suitability of this form of housing for certain groups had altered in the decades between Hulme and Park Hill's respective construction. This section also considers how the local authorities' perspectives of each estate changed in the latter decades of the twentieth century in relation to understandings of the 'inner city'. It looks to the studies undertaken from the end of the 1970s to demonstrate the extent to which central and local governments sought to geographically map social and economic inequalities onto specific urban spaces. Through the lens of the 'crisis' of the inner city, policymakers rendered high-density, multi-storey council estates like those in Sheffield and Manchester synonymous with multiple deprivation.

Finally, the third section explores how far planning and policymaking incorporated tenants' perspectives of multi-storey living. It discusses the classed and place-based preconceptions that influenced these processes, drawing attention to the ways in which assumptions about council tenants restricted efforts for tenant consultation and participation. Using a 1960 sociological report and the 1962 *Park Hill Survey*, the section argues that Sheffield City Council's attempts to evaluate the success or failure of the estate adhered to a paternalistic view of its local population that did little to amplify residents' voices. Instead, social surveys like the one undertaken by residents sociologist Joan Demers enhanced discourses of Park Hill's early success, against which its later 'decline' seemed only too clear-cut. In Hulme, debates over the estate's future from the mid-1980s saw tenants involved in a more extensive process of consultation, ultimately leading to the formation of the Hulme Study, where tenants worked alongside the council and Department of the Environment to decide upon the estate's refurbishment or demolition. While long-standing tensions between tenants and the local authority weakened the effectiveness of their partnership, the Hulme tenants' action complicates depictions of the apathetic and victimised tenant prevalent among wider representations of the estate. Throughout, the chapter explores changing ideas of who mass multi-storey estates should house and how these questions as to the suitability of certain tenant groups were articulated along classed and spatial lines.

Architectural approaches to multi-storey housing

In 1955, Sheffield City Council's chief architect, John Lewis Womersley, outlined plans for the construction of a high-density, multi-storey estate 'comparable with houses on the ground'.[14] Supervising a team comprising Jack Lynn and Ivor Smith – architects keen to explore approaches to 'New Brutalism' and deck-access development – Womersley presented a vision of Park Hill that sought to balance historical elements of housing in Sheffield with more modern forms of architectural design.[15] Construction work began in April 1957. The first of the city's post-war redevelopment schemes, Park Hill's tall, concrete blocks of flats connected by wide, sheltered walkways above the ground echoed the style of Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation*. Elements of the Swiss-French architect's practice also formed the basis of the estate's early evaluation by the local authority, with its Housing Manager reporting in 1962 that, 'Park Hill is a satisfactory "machine for living in", to use Le Corbusier's phrase'.[16] Yet aspects of its design also harked back to the streets of Victorian, terraced housing it replaced, with the spaces of the new estate designed to foster the sociability deemed inherent to older residential areas. Despite the excitement surrounding the construction of Park Hill as 'the creation of an entirely different kind of place', for its architects, it remained important that the relative innovation and modernity of the multi-storey development did not erase more 'traditional' ways of living for members of the local working class.[17]

Similar considerations had underscored Manchester City Council's deliberations over areas like Hulme since the mid-1950s, as the local authority sought to make extensive changes to the built environment to resolve both land and housing shortages, while making some allowances for the established social networks of local people.[18] The council recognised that, despite Hulme's substandard housing conditions up to the 1960s, its residents often articulated a sense of belonging to the estate rooted in ties between neighbours and the wider community. Embarking upon a programme of post-war slum clearance and redevelopment, they were keen to ensure that aspects of the new Hulme's architectural design reproduced the socio-spatial practices seemingly intrinsic

[14] Sheffield Local Studies Library (hereafter SLSL): PAMP 1048 S, J. L. Womersley, 'Report of the City Architect', in Sheffield City Council, *Park Hill Redevelopment Proposals* (Sheffield, 1955), p. 5.

[15] For an account of 'New Brutalism' see Reyner Banham, *The New Brutalism: Ethic or Aesthetic?* (London, 1966).

[16] SLSL: 381.838, Sheffield City Council Housing Department, *Park Hill Survey* (Sheffield, 1962), p. 1.

[17] SLSL: MP 4335 M, Jack Lynn, 'The Development of the Design', *RIBA* (December, 1962), p. 449.

[18] Manchester Archives (hereafter MA): GB127/44, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, C. C. Lamb, Chairman of the Housing Committee, 'Draft Report of the Housing Committee to the City Council: Provision of Housing Accommodation for Aged Persons, 8 July 1957', *Minute Book 44: July 1957-April 1958* (Manchester, 1958), p. 67; MA: GB127/45: Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'Report of the visit to Berlin, Hamburg and Amsterdam, 14 July 1958', *Minute Book 45: June 1958 – February 1959* (Manchester, 1959), pp. 204-215.

to the older neighbourhood.[19] Yet planners also strove to avoid creating homogenous areas of housing, resisting the 'office block arrangements' of other multi-storey developments to cater to individuals within the wider community.[20] Situating Hulme in the context of redevelopments across the city in 1968, Manchester's City Planning Officer referred to this approach when he wrote that,

> We are concerned that the new areas of the City shall not only function efficiently and be pleasant places in which to live, but that each one shall exhibit the qualities of individuality and humanity that can best be summed up in the word 'character'.[21]

Architectural approaches to multi-storey living are indicative of the attitudes and perceptions that guided those who designed Park Hill and Hulme. Their efforts to reconcile changes to the built environment with the maintenance of longer-term social ties among residents speak to the endurance of traditional – and somewhat static – understandings of class and community during a period often defined by social and cultural change. Considering these themes, this section concentrates on the designs of Park Hill and Hulme to explore the extent to which the social underpinnings of each estate's physical spaces sought to shape new ways of living. In so doing, it demonstrates how accounts of Park Hill as a 'social experiment' have overstated the ambition of its architectural design, and in turn explores how far retrospective discourses of the inevitability of Hulme's demolition have largely obscured the longer history of Manchester City Council's cautious approach to multi-storey house-building. In illuminating the tensions and ambiguities inherent to their design and construction, the section argues for the recognition of competing visions of space, challenging ideas of the deterministic material environment of multi-storey housing discussed in more detail in the chapter's second section.

In 1955, Womersley wrote that Park Hill's design, with blocks built at different heights, set at different angles into the hillside, and connected by 'streets in the sky', would help residents to 'avoid the oppressive, overpowering feeling sometimes produced by large schemes of multi-storey flats'.[22] Relative to the tower blocks already constructed in other cities, Sheffield's City Architect considered deck-access housing schemes the key to high-density, multi-storey redevelopment capable of fostering residents' self-expression and feelings of ownership towards their

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[19] MA: Q711.4Ma4, Manchester City Council Planning Department, J. S. Millar, City Planning Officer, *A new community: the redevelopment of Hulme* (1968), p. 3.

[20] E. W. Cooney, 'High Flats in Local Authority Housing in England and Wales since 1945', in Anthony Sutcliffe (ed.), *Multi-Storey Living: The British Working-Class Experience* (London, 1974), p. 160.

[21] Manchester City Council, *A new community,* p. 2.

[22] Womersley, 'Report of the City Architect', pp. 4-5.

surroundings. Park Hill's deck-access design did indeed set it apart from other multi-storey redevelopments of the post-war years. Prior to the Sheffield estate's construction, local authorities had predominantly looked to tower blocks to facilitate multi-storey living.[23] The use of the deck-access scheme at Park Hill represented a concern prevalent among its architects for the survival of forms of community most often attributed to areas of nineteenth-century terraced housing demolished under slum clearance programmes.[24] With its connotations of 'English "'traditional' terraces"', the Sheffield estate reflected the hopes of Lynn, Smith and Womersley for the preservation of seemingly typical forms of local social interaction in housing that followed new approaches to post-war architectural design.[25]

According to plans by Sheffield City Council, the street decks of both Park Hill and its sister development, Hyde Park, were to be 'given distinctive names with local associations, [for example] the names of streets which previously existed in the area and have now been closed'.[26] Such measures indicate the council's attempts to create a sense of place for residents rooted in local history and identity, and go hand in hand with stories of its sensitive approach to the rehousing of slum clearance tenants. Writing about Park Hill in 1996, just two years before English Heritage guaranteed its preservation as a listed building, Dan Cruikshank praised Sheffield City Council for its efforts to safeguard existing 'communities' during the process of allocating the multi-storey flats to new residents.[27] Here, Cruikshank repeated a claim first made in a sociological report compiled by Park Hill's Housing Manager in 1960, which stated 'The pattern of the neighbourhood has been almost completely transferred here with the result that it is really near the truth to say 'everyone knows everyone else".[28] This, however, contradicted remarks made by Jack Lynn upon revisiting Park Hill in 1962. In the initial plans for the Park area's clearance and redevelopment, Park Hill and Hyde Park were to be built simultaneously to minimise the number of people rehoused from the local area. In practice, the council decided instead to complete each estate separately, one after the other. As Lynn acknowledged, 'There were some misgivings among us that the community structure would be irrevocably upset [by a wholesale approach to slum

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[23] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 135; Elain Harwood, *Space, Hope and Brutalism: English Architecture 1945-1975* (New Haven, 2015), p. 80; Alison Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture: The History of a Social Experiment* (London, 2001), p. 109.

[24] David Bryant and Dick Knowles, 'Social Contacts on the Hyde Park Estate, Sheffield', *The Town Planning Review,* 45/2 (April, 1974), p. 208.

[25] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 315.

[26] Sheffield Archives (hereafter SA): CA-MIN/100, Sheffield City Council Housing Development Committee, 'Meeting 22nd April 1963', *Minutes of Council and Committees: Minute Book, June 1962-May 1963* (Sheffield, 1963), p. 158.

[27] Dan Cruickshank, 'Park Hill: Its Future', in Andrew Saint (ed.), *Park Hill: What Next?* (London, 1996), p. 50.

[28] SA: CA-HMC/2/1, Sheffield City Council Housing Management Committee, 'Park Hill Part One: Sociological Report', *Minutes and Associated Papers: Draft Minutes and Papers, May 1959-November 1962* (Sheffield, 1960), p. 95.

clearance] as indeed it was', although he continued to assert that, 'the rapidity with which a new [community] was formed somewhat alleviated these fears'.[29]

The importance attached to the street decks as catalysts for community formation indicates the extent to which Park Hill's architects had sought to imbue certain spaces of older, working-class neighbourhoods with socio-cultural characteristics. As Joe Moran has argued, the persistence of the street in post-war redevelopment demonstrates its endurance as 'one of the symbolic terrains on which the struggle between social-democratic and market-oriented ideas of the public sphere is fought out'.[30] This is evident in descriptions of Park Hill's architectural design, which have viewed its street decks as characteristic of a 'hopeful, healing, romantic, backward-looking British vision of modernism'.[31] Their ties to ideas of 'working-class community', a cultural phenomenon seemingly at risk due to slum clearance, embodied a paradox referred to by Joanne Bourke as consisting at once of a 'backward-looking romanticism' and 'forward-looking socialism', which exaggerated the harmony of pre-existing relations between neighbours and saw community as the bedrock of class consciousness.[32] Similarly, Matthew Hollow has contended that, by reproducing 'elements of the slum' through its 'streets in the sky', Park Hill's architects sought in part to shape its tenants as 'social citizens'; members of a community that countered the seemingly increasing individualisation of British society.[33]

Manchester City Council's preference for mixed forms of development manifested in Hulme's post-war incarnation. The idea behind the estate's combination of deck-access flats, tower blocks and some low-rise housing stemmed from the council's ambition to provide suitable housing for tenants as their circumstances changed over the course of the life cycle, thereby reducing the need for out-migration from different parts of the city and ensuring the longevity of post-war estates like Hulme.[34] In practice, however, signs emerged as early as 1958 to suggest that multi-storey flats were a relatively unpopular form of housing for local people.[35] Despite its use of mass housing, the new Hulme encompassed a lower density than the old neighbourhood, meaning that even if the council had prioritised flat allocations to established members of the local

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[29] Lynn, 'The Development of the Design', p. 450.
[30] Joe Moran, 'Imagining the street in post-war Britain', *Urban History,* 39/1 (2012), p. 186.
[31] Andrew Saint, 'Introduction', in Andrew Saint (ed.), *Park Hill: What Next?* (London, 1996), p. 32.
[32] Joanna Bourke, *Working-Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: Ethnicity, Class and Gender* (London, 1994), p. 137.
[33] Matthew Hollow, 'Governmentality on the Park Hill Estate: the Rationality of Public Housing', *Urban History*, 37/1 (2010), pp. 126-127.
[34] MA: Q711.58MAN(843), Manchester City Council Planning Department, J. S. Millar, City Planning Officer, *Housing Densities* (Manchester, 1965), p. 8.
[35] MA: GB127/45, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, J. Austin Bent, Director of Housing, 'Slum Clearance, 4 December 1958', *Minute Book 45: June 1958-February 1959* (Manchester, 1959), p. 556.

population rather than housing need alone, 'less than half' of the area's former residents could remain after its clearance.[36] Once completed, issues relating to the suitability of Hulme's flats for families with young children also impeded the establishment of a long-term resident population in parts of the estate, as the following section of this chapter will discuss. It is tempting to view Manchester City Council's transition from traditional, low-rise buildings to multi-storey redevelopment as an inevitable product of necessity driven by rising housing demand in the post-war years. Yet this renders Hulme's redevelopment an almost apologetic shift in policy. Peter Shapely has argued that both low-rise, traditional development and multi-storey housing were consistent with the 'structures of feeling' in which Manchester City Council operated during this period. Through these, the multi-storey Hulme constituted a restructuring of the council's civic ambitions away from suburban overspill estates like Wythenshawe to inner-city high flats.[37] Like Park Hill in Sheffield, Hulme represented an opportunity for Manchester to assert its architectural prestige, an ambition most evident in the naming of the four blocks that made up the 'Crescents'. Dubbed Robert Adams, John Nash, William Kent and Charles Barry, each of the Crescents harked back to an architect responsible for some of England's most famous buildings, including the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace.

In 1968, the Chairman of the Manchester's Town Planning and Buildings Committee outlined a vision of Hulme that emphasised the centrality of its redevelopment to the social and spatial modernisation of a city 'on the cusp of rebirth'. As the Chairman wrote,

> The decision of the City Council to accelerate the clearance of obsolete slum dwellings over large densely populated areas of the City presents a unique opportunity to create entirely new communities on the most modern lines and to provide surroundings in step with the 20th Century, a new environment which will fulfil the conditions for fuller and happier lives for the people of Manchester.[38]

Even acknowledging the necessity of creating 'entirely new communities', Manchester's planners evidently still clung to the idea that residential proximity would foster social networks among Hulme's multi-storey tenants. Consideration of a community of some form thus remained an important element in approaches to the estate's layout. Manchester's City Planning Officer hoped

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[36] Sohair Hathout, 'Privacy in housing design: environmental study in urban housing, study of the Hulme area, Manchester', PhD thesis (University of Manchester, 1979), pp. 30-31; Manchester City Council, *A new community,* p. 2.

[37] Peter Shapely, Duncan Tanner, and Andrew Walling, 'Civic Culture and Housing Policy in Manchester, 1945-79', *Twentieth Century British History*, 15/4 (2004), p. 424.

[38] Manchester City Council, *A new community*, p. 1.

that, by situating housing of the highest density nearest to the estate's 'major pedestrian ways' and 'main community and transport facilities', they could ensure that these areas became the 'nerve centre' of Hulme's 'new community'.[39] Millar intended for these spaces, encompassing shops, pubs and the library, to provide ample opportunities for social contact between residents, counterbalancing to some degree the social effects of slum clearance. In attempting to plan Hulme's layout and mixed housing types in accordance with ideas of community and its longevity, its architects recognised the importance of mitigating the 'practical and social' shortcomings of 'having to leave familiar surroundings and start again in a new district altogether'.[40] It is somewhat ironic then that the design of the post-war estate itself, with its reduced provision for occupation, necessitated significant changes to the area's established population.

This focus on plans for Hulme shows that, far from simply fulfilling the mechanics of housing, the estate's redevelopment epitomised the council's determination to assert itself as a 'policy leader', rejecting 'unfashionable' tower blocks in favour of system-built techniques that ensured the swift construction of deck-access estates.[41] When compared with high-density, multi-storey developments in cities like London and Glasgow, Manchester City Council saw new estates like Hulme as sensitive to the 'social effects' of post-war housing reform.[42] Although often amalgamated into the record of high-rise housing in existing literature, it is important to recognise how distinct local authorities like Sheffield and Manchester considered deck-access housing from earlier multi-storey developments. Even if expectations did not ultimately align with reality, social considerations of the welfare of prospective tenants did form part of the planning process for estates like Hulme. With a focus upon minimising residential disruption after the multi-storey flats' construction, Hulme's planners sought to encourage ways of living that – similar to the aims of Park Hill's architects – mimicked older patterns of community in a more modern setting.

However, the creation of a sense of community was not the sole ambition driving Park Hill's design. While the desire to cater for the individual in mass multi-storey developments seems paradoxical to architectural ambitions for community spirit, the architects and policymakers associated with Park Hill negotiated a fine line between fostering collective and individual identities through the estate's design. Concern for the individual in the community was expressed in several ways, through the provision of the street decks as well as the aesthetic value of each block. To make blocks distinct from one another and thereby lend a sense of individuality to specific parts

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[39] *Ibid.,* p. 5.
[40] Manchester City Council, *Housing Densities,* p. 8.
[41] Shapely, Tanner and Walling, 'Civic Culture', p. 424.
[42] Manchester City Council, *Housing Densities,* p. 13.

of the development, Womersley proposed that decks, entrances and lift halls should receive 'special design treatment' alike to murals, that would embed decoration into the structure of the buildings. The architect did not shy from proclaiming the significance of this aspect of Park Hill's design, stating that it would 'undoubtedly have an important psychological effect on the inhabitants'.[43] The relationship between the community and the individual was also evident in the colour-coding of blocks, with every third floor marked in a different colour in an attempt to offer a sense of individuality to its dwellings.[44] The dual purpose of the street decks is indicative of how Park Hill's architects sought to connect outside spaces with the interiors of dwellings, thereby catering through design both to the resident as a lone entity and member of a wider group.

Womersley articulated this in a 1959 report, asserting, 'it is hoped that families may feel not that they have been issued with a certain floor area in a vast scheme, but that as an individual family they are an individual part of the community'.[45] In addition to this, Womersley saw residents' use of certain footpaths and play spaces as intrinsic to processes of collective and individual identity formation.[46] Observing everyday life at Park Hill five years after its construction began, Lynn found evidence of residents' use of space that seemed to confirm the success of attempts to cater to different levels of community development. Lynn wrote of the establishment of a tenants' association, the actions of which had moved beyond helping residents with the practicalities of moving to Park Hill to the organisation of activities such as fishing trips and dances.[47] However, aside from such group interactions, he also noted that residents had begun to make changes to the spaces immediately outside of their flats to establish a sense of individual ownership. Rather than whitewashing their front steps as Lynn expected of northern, working-class people, residents had begun to decorate this area with coloured linoleum, an occurrence that Lynn identified at once as evidence for a desire to conform and 'hesitant attempts at self-expression'.[48] The tension inherent in this duality shows how, in the early years at least, residents made use of the ambiguities of spaces designed for both the individual and the community, adapting their function to suit their needs.

However, the same competing architectural visions that underscored the ambiguous function of certain spaces did not always have the 'positive' effects identified by Lynn. In 1977, as part of a social research programme commissioned by the Department of the Environment, Jean

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[43] Womersley, 'Report of the City Architect', p. 8.
[44] SLSL: 728.314SQ, City of Sheffield Housing Committee, 'Report of the City Architect: Park Hill Redevelopment Part 1, Provision of amenities' (Sheffield, 1959), p. 3.
[45] *Ibid.*
[46] Womersley, 'Report of the City Architect', p. 8.
[47] Lynn, 'The Development of the Design', p. 457.
[48] *Ibid.*

Conway and Barbara Adams outlined their conclusions concerning what they saw as the inherent social problems of life off the ground. They found that design features intended to allow for privacy, as well as the fostering of a sense of self independent of the wider tenant population, had led in some instances to feelings of isolation and loneliness among residents. Their findings indicate tensions amidst the architectural visions for spaces, and their apparent use by tenants. According to Conway and Adams, mass multi-storey housing failed to provide 'neutral areas' – defined as 'semi-private spaces such as gardens and front steps' – for social interactions, meaning that residents had nowhere to talk casually without encroaching upon one another's privacy. Without such spaces, some residents reportedly spent little or no time on their estate outside their own dwelling.[49] Accounts of similar problems emerged from Hulme in the 1980s. In a report concerning the social and material need for another redevelopment programme, researchers highlighted the absence of distinctions between public, private, and semi-private spaces in Hulme as a cause for concern. Without sufficient physical markers separating one type of space from another, the team identified problems relating to security, privacy, and 'a general lack of identity with the outdoors [which] "belongs" to anyone and no one'.[50] The uniformity of access routes around Hulme, whether to individual blocks and homes or public spaces, meant that residents were liable to meet other tenants and strangers alike, thereby limiting their feelings of privacy and security as they moved around the estate.[51] Evidence of tenants' spatial practices suggests the difficulties of reconciling unclear, or even contradictory, architectural visions for Park Hill and Hulme.

In 1972, research conducted on housing estates across Sheffield also established a connection between isolation and multi-storey design, finding that residents of Park Hill's neighbouring estate, Hyde Park, rarely had any social contact with others living on the same street deck or even across the wider estate.[52] This pattern appeared in stark contrast to tenants of terraced housing in other areas of the city like Gleadless and Pitsmoor, where a significant amount of social interaction between neighbours occurred on the same street. Most damningly of Hyde Park, even residents of more typical high-rise blocks had established more social contact with one another by 1972 than those of the 'streets in the sky'.[53] Similar conclusions were reached in a social survey

[49] Jean Conway and Barbara Adams, 'The Social Effects of Living off the Ground', *Habitat International*, 2/5 (1977), p. 607.
[50] Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre (hereafter RRRC): GB3228.3/2/5, Capita, University of Glasgow, The Wilkinson Hindle Halsall Lloyd Partnership, Cobham Resource Consultants, *The Hulme Study: Volume 1* (Manchester, 1989).
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] Bryant and Knowles, 'Social Contacts on the Hyde Park Estate', p. 209.
[53] *Ibid.*

undertaken as part of Sheffield's Inner Area programme in the late 1970s. It found that neither Park Hill nor Hyde Park had escaped the problems commonly attributed to multi-storey living. Survey respondents cited continually high noise levels, a lack of privacy and the alienation felt by single occupants as everyday trials. For Sheffield City Council, these problems had led to higher rates of depression, drug abuse, and suicide in these areas.[54] By the 1970s then, it seemed that attempts by the architects of the 1950s and 1960s to ensure the equal provision of communal and private space had been unsuccessful.

The historical framing of prescriptive spaces – or rather, deterministic forms of design – implicit in discussions of the architecture of Park Hill and Hulme make it difficult to separate the estates from discourses of 'utopian' council housing. While these understandings may seem more applicable to the Sheffield estate, critics of Hulme also used the council's apparent 'social experiment' in deck-access housing to denounce its divergence from more traditional, low-rise buildings.[55] Spaces like the street decks became integral to ideas of Hulme's later 'failure', just as they shored up initial accounts of Park Hill's architectural 'success' – perceptions of which still endure in the relevant literature.[56] Yet a discussion of the architectural vision behind Park Hill should not mask the financial motivations behind its construction. Simon Ogden observed that, with all decks bar one providing some access to the ground, only the 'minimum number' of lifts were installed.[57] As Womersley himself concluded in 1955, 'This system of access is most economical in respect of the number of lifts required'.[58] Also in 1955, the City Treasurer confirmed in a report to the council that, 'the Park Hill flats are estimated to cost considerably less than is normal for multi-storey development due to the system of construction and layout employed'.[59] Further, that Sheffield City Council looked to multi-storey redevelopment in the post-war years at all is indicative of its struggle to resolve shortages of land within the city's boundaries, as well as its growing waiting list for council housing.[60]

This is not to detract entirely from the architectural influence of Park Hill, but an attempt to instead situate its design amidst economic as well as social considerations. By contextualising

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[54] SA: SYCC/ADMIN/10/11/19, Sheffield City Council, *Sheffield Inner Area Programme* (1978), p. 7.

[55] Examples of the estate's early criticism based on its design appeared in, Dennis Johnson, 'Hulme: The great expedient', *The Guardian*, 16 November 1970; Stephen Gardiner, 'Concave jungle', *The Observer*, 25 March 1973. The role of the press in contributing to wider discourses of the estate is discussed further in the second chapter.

[56] For an overview of 'utopianism' and multi-storey council housing with reference to Park Hill, see the final section of Chapter Seven, 'The Utopian Legacy' in Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture*, pp. 104-110.

[57] Simon Ogden, *Council House Building in Sheffield, 1919-1970* (Sheffield, 1976), p. 53.

[58] Womersley, 'Report of the City Architect', p. 5.

[59] SLSL: PAMP 1048 S, F. G. Jones, 'Report of the City Treasurer', in Sheffield City Council, *Park Hill Redevelopment Proposals* (Sheffield, 1955), p. 22.

[60] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 262; Harwood, *Brutalism,* p. 76.

the estate in this way, polarised depictions of Park Hill as an early architectural marvel turned housing failure lose some of their credibility. It was not the only estate, however, subjected to this rigid framework of interpretation. Even Hulme, an estate more typically associated with urban decline than architectural ambition, used what Miles Horsey referred to as 'utopian social-moral terms' to justify its approach to mixed forms of development.[61] In his study of housing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, John Burnett described architects and planners of the 1950s and 1960s as 'social engineers', 'caught up in the spirit of socialist euphoria', striving to create 'community and beauty' through changes to the built environment.[62] Its critics have gone some way to embedding ideas of 'utopian' post-war planning in discourses surrounding mass, multi-storey council housing, perhaps most evident in Alice Coleman's 1985 condemnation of its failures, *Utopia on Trial*.[63]

While still prevalent, research has attempted to nuance this view of post-war architecture and planning. John R. Gold has argued that city planning was far more 'fluid' and ideologically 'malleable' than studies of its sociological prescriptions under a Corbusian approach to modernism seem to suggest.[64] For Emily Cuming, cultural representations of these estates as products of architectural design rather than 'unregulated urbanisation and building speculation' have made the perceived failure of their 'utopian ideals' all the more noteworthy.[65] Moreover, as Richard Baxter and Loretta Lees's work has shown, the dual legacy of multi-storey living as characteristic of either 'utopian elitism' or 'social exclusion and anti-social behaviour' bears little resemblance to residents' perspectives of their homes.[66] That this view of the architectural underpinnings of estates like Park Hill and Hulme has remained so influential is in part also due to the ways in which it has framed accounts of the decline of mass, multi-storey council housing. Relative to the initial furore surrounding its construction, accounts of Park Hill's growing deprivation from the 1970s proved even more remarkable and its transfer to private developers for regeneration in the 2000s near inevitable.[67] Similarly, in the case of Hulme, its architects' apparently misguided attempts to provide

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[61] Miles Horsey, 'Multi-storey council housing in Britain: Introduction and spread', *Planning Perspectives*, 3/2 (1988), p. 168.

[62] John Burnett, *A Social History of Housing, 1815-1970* (Guildford, 1978), p. 279.

[63] Alice Coleman, *Utopia on Trial: Vision and Reality in Planned Housing* (London, 1985).

[64] John R. Gold, 'The Death of the Boulevard', in Nicholas R. Fyfe (ed.), *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity and Control in Public Space* (London, 1998), p. 56.

[65] Emily Cuming, *Housing, Class and Gender in Modern British Writing, 1880-2013* (Cambridge, 2016), p. 168.

[66] Richard Baxter and Loretta Lees, 'The rebirth of high-rise living in London: towards a sustainable, inclusive, and liveable urban form', in Rob Imrie, Loretta Lees, and Mike Raco (eds), *Regenerating London: Governance, sustainability and community in a global city* (Abingdon, 2009), p. 154.

[67] Christopher Bacon referred to the early excitement about Park Hill as having cultivated a 'myth of success' around the estate, which in turn exacerbated perceptions of its later failure. Christopher Bacon, 'Streets-in-the-sky: the rise and fall of modern architectural urban utopia', PhD thesis (University of Sheffield, 1982), p. 10.

multi-storey flats alongside other housing types to offset the social effects of living at height, as well as the council's reliance upon system-built techniques, prompted calls for the estate's demolition as reports of social problems linked to the built environment surfaced within just a few years of its construction.[68] Complicating the roots of these understandings in the architectural design and material spaces of Park Hill and Hulme is crucial to moving beyond rigid and polarising discourses of 'decline' that came to pervade accounts of multi-storey council housing and its connections to societal problems by the late twentieth century.

Managing Park Hill and Hulme

Towards the end of the 1970s and into the 1980s, attitudes towards deck-access design began to change in earnest. As a flurry of urban initiatives sought to assess the liveability of inner urban areas, especially after the creation of the Labour government's *Policy for the Inner Cities* in 1977, local authorities began to connect the layout of some multi-storey estates with rising levels of crime. By 1994, Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius remarked that, 'There has probably never been another feature in UK public housing which has been so widely criticised, and at the same time so widely used, as balcony access [deck access] to blocks of flats'.[69] From spaces apt for neighbourliness and play, the street decks of estates like Park Hill and Hulme became associated instead with hiding places and escape routes for criminals, most often characterised as 'muggers' following the so-called 'mugging panic' of the early to mid-1970s.[70] As Alison Ravetz noted of Park Hill, 'its architectural distinction did not exempt it from the familiar range of estate problems, or from being publicly stigmatised'.[71] In an overview of its post-war planning, Manchester City Council noted that 'within months' of opening Hulme had become a 'nightmare' for tenants living in housing unfit for purpose and beset by problems with leaks, poor insulation and ventilation, and huge fuel bills.[72] Sally Stone remarked that it had become 'a Modernist estate that was fit only for the lost, the broken, and the wasted'.[73]

Studies by each local authority seemed to support this idea of the growing material and social 'decline' of deck-access housing estates like Park Hill and Hulme. Following a series of social

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[68] MA: 711.4Ma(060), Manchester City Council, *Manchester, 50 Years of Change: Post-War Planning in Manchester* (London, 1995), p. 39.

[69] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 69.

[70] Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke and Brian Roberts, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (London, 1978), pp. 293-299.

[71] Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture,* p. 181.

[72] Manchester City Council, *Manchester, 50 Years of Change,* p. 39.

[73] Sally Stone, 'The Haçienda: The Manufactured Image of a Post-industrial City', *Interiors*, 5/1 (2014), p. 40.

surveys, in 1987 Manchester City Council classified crime as one of the most prevalent problems in each of Hulme's neighbourhood units, second only to the structural defects of the flats themselves, with issues emerging around this time over the widespread use of asbestos in the construction of most of the estate's deck-access blocks.[74] By 1993, violent crime against the person in Hulme was higher than anywhere else in the city, and of the 63 offences that were committed between April 1991 and March 1992, 47.6 per cent occurred specifically in the Crescents' beat.[75] Young people, of which there was a high proportion in Hulme, were perceived to be particularly susceptible to the adverse influence of multi-storey estates. In the late 1970s, Park Hill also had significant numbers of children under the age of eighteen resident on the estate, a fact often mentioned in connection to the emergence of its apparent social problems.[76] Responding to a survey in 1978, a police officer in Sheffield outlined his view of crime at Park Hill, blaming high-rise housing for causing 'a concentration of juvenile frustration' in Sheffield's inner-city areas.[77] By connecting young people's exasperation with the limits of the built environment to crime, the police officer's statement identified a causal link between multi-storey council housing and the actions of certain groups of tenants, suggesting the growing influence of theories of deterministic architectural design during the 1970s in approaches to managing and regulating these spaces.

The architect and city planner Oscar Newman outlined arguably the most famous of these theories in the early 1970s, when he coined the term 'defensible space'.[78] Researching levels of crime in relation to high-rise flats in New York, Newman found that the height of a building was the strongest determinant of instances of criminal activity and vandalism, with the size of blocks, provision of communal space, and number of potential escape routes also acting as contributing factors.[79] Newman argued that architects should concentrate on designs that enabled residents to take responsibility for the protection of the wider area in which they lived, finding that the uniformity and lack of private space in high-rise, high-density housing caused feelings of

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[74] MA: q711.58MAN(123), Manchester City Council, *Area Renewal in Hulme: A survey of the Tenants of the Hulme 3 Deck Access Estate* (Manchester, 1986), p. 4; MA: q711.58MAN(724), Manchester City Council, *Area Renewal in Hulme: A Social Survey of the Residents of Hulme 4 Deck Access Estate* (Manchester, 1987), p. 2; MA: q711.58HUL(883), Manchester City Council, *Area Renewal in Hulme: A Social Survey of the Residents of Hulme 2 Deck Access Estate* (Manchester, 1986), p. 3. The council did note, however, that despite problems with asbestos, Hulme Two had the lowest turnover of tenants relative to other parts.

[75] MA: GB3228.3/5/43, Manchester City Council Planning Department, *Hulme Baseline Study: A Portrait of Hulme Before Hulme City Challenge* (Manchester, 1993), p. 58 and p. 75.

[76] Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture*, p. 181.

[77] SA: CA-MIN/116, Sheffield City Council, 'Sheffield Grassroots Survey, 1978', *Sheffield Inner Area Programme* (Sheffield, 1979), p. 6.

[78] Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design* (New York, 1973).

[79] Ade Kearns, Elise Whitley, Phil Mason and Lyndal Bond, "Living the High Life?' Residential, Social and Psychosocial Outcomes for High-Rise Occupants in a Deprived Context', *Housing Studies*, 27/1 (2012), p. 100.

detachment and apathy among residents towards crimes committed beyond their front door. Newman's comparison between buildings of similar densities and residential groups reinforced the role of design as a determinant of anti-social behaviour, with his study concluding that 'poorly designed' buildings experienced significantly higher instances of crime than those planned more effectively.[80] By encouraging residents to take pride in shared spaces, Newman forecast that they could more effectively deter potential criminals.

Adapting the theory of defensible space, geographer Alice Coleman identified further problems relating to the social effects of multi-storey design in England in 1985. Coleman characterised multi-storey council estates as environments that caused 'stress, trauma…crime, fear, anxiety, marital breakdown and physical and mental disorders' among residents.[81] Key figures in the Conservative government, including Keith Joseph, Michael Heseltine and Margaret Thatcher herself, supported Coleman's conclusions as to a causal relationship between design and anti-social behaviour.[82] Following the publication of Coleman's *Utopia on Trial,* the government created and funded the Design Improvement Controlled Experiment (DICE) project, which, under Coleman's direction, used £50 million to 'improve' seven 'problem' estates. One of Coleman's main modes of intervention involved the compartmentalisation, if not removal, of street decks and sheltered walkways.[83] The geographer's work did not attract universal approval, with its critics predominantly focusing upon Coleman's failure to consider how the size of blocks, the dynamic between the type of building and the type of household it accommodated, and the effects of poverty could also engender social problems in these environments.[84] Despite this, Coleman's work helped to underline the Thatcher government's political view of housing. As such, her conclusions became essential to fuelling wider perceptions of the 'failure' of this type of housing by the 1980s, and the consequent grounds for a withdrawal of public provision.[85]

To some extent, Sheffield and Manchester City Councils replicated this understanding of the interrelationship of housing design and crime in their approaches to the management of mass, multi-storey estates like Park Hill and Hulme. In 1975, Manchester's Director of Housing submitted a report to the council that reviewed the management of deck-access schemes across

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[80] Rodney Harrison, 'Towards an Archaeology of the Welfare State in Britain, 1945-2009', *Archaeological Journal of the World Archaeological Congress*, 5/2 (2009), pp. 247-248.

[81] Coleman, *Utopia on Trial*, p. 3.

[82] Jane M. Jacobs and Loretta Lees, 'Defensible Space on the Move: Revisiting the Urban Geography of Alice Coleman', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 37/5 (2013), p. 1574.

[83] Graham Towers, *Shelter Is Not Enough: Transforming multi-storey housing* (Bristol, 2000), p. 115.

[84] Kearns, Whitley, Mason and Bond, "Living the High Life?", p. 101.

[85] Jacobs and Lees, 'Defensible Space on the Move', p. 1574 and p. 1560.

the city. It emphasised the security issues seemingly inherent to street decks, with the report recommending the installation of entry-phone systems to control access to particular blocks; the compartmentalisation of blocks through the use of physical barriers to limit the range of movement offered by walkways; and increased levels of care-taking through the employment of lift wardens or night patrols on higher decks.[86] The Director specifically sought to incorporate initiatives into the management of Hulme that encouraged residents to take greater responsibility for the upkeep of communal spaces. One such suggestion included the creation of 'deck gardens', through which residents would be offered 'planting boxes' to be placed either outside their front door on the street deck itself, or fixed over the balcony to a deck. The Director of Housing used the language of Newman's theory to support his recommendations, emphasising how their encouragement of 'community involvement' could help to make the space of the multi-storey estate 'defensible'.[87]

That Sheffield City Council also applied the principles of Newman's work to local multi-storey housing is evident in its managerial approach to levels of crime at Hyde Park. In the 1980s, the council found residents partly at fault for the high number of break-ins on the estate, citing their failure to create a neighbourly environment that would in turn encourage other residents to intervene if they heard a break-in taking place in a nearby flat.[88] Moreover, towards the end of the 1970s, an inner area study of Sheffield outlined several key issues for which it held the designs of both Park Hill and Hyde Park responsible. These included complaints about the spaces of the estates more generally – with noise, refuse disposal and a lack of children's facilities identified as areas of concern – but also encompassed high crime rates and social problems. Sheffield City Council attributed crime to the actions of residents, particularly vandalism, while some neighbourhood workers saw the estates' social problems – evident in rates of truancy, drug overdoses, attempted suicides, and reported feelings of loneliness – symptomatic of the poor environment in which residents lived.[89] More specifically, the neighbourhood workers described the built environment of Park Hill and Hyde Park combined as 'bleak, dreary, and hostile'.[90]

These changing understandings of the influence of the built environment emerged alongside new approaches to the management of cities towards the latter decades of the twentieth

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[86] MA: GB127/74, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, R. G. Goodhead, Director of Housing, 'Management Concept for Deck Access Scheme, 7 April 1975', *Minute Book 74: 14 April 1975-14 July 1975* (Manchester, 1975), p. 153.
[87] *Ibid.*
[88] SA: LD2481/15/1, A. McCreery, *Hyde Park Community Action, The Case for the Bulldozers* (January 1989).
[89] SLSL: 711.59 SQ, Sheffield City Council, Department of Planning and Design, *Sheffield Inner City Area: Areas of Worst Deprivation* (Sheffield, 1979).
[90] *Ibid.*

century, stemming chiefly from the White Paper *Policy for the Inner Cities* announced by the Labour government in 1977 and the 1978 Inner Areas Act. Under this new framework, both local and central governments worked with the private sector towards initiatives for urban renewal, seeking to follow a process of positive discrimination to target financial aid to those cities of greatest need.[91] The foundations of this approach lay in the so-called 'rediscovery of poverty' in the 1970s and a movement away from the identification of solely pathological sources of inequality.[92] Place-based understandings of poverty still held sway, as did a focus upon the behaviour of individuals, but the interventions of the late 1970s and 1980s attributed these issues to the economic performance of local areas.[93] As such, Labour's White Paper encouraged local authorities to geographically map the structural inequalities that would define the parameters of their inner cities on a primarily economic basis.[94] It led to the offer of state funding to districts and counties described by the Secretary of State for the Environment as having 'severe and large-scale inner urban problems', on the condition that they form public-private 'partnerships'.[95] Manchester secured additional financial help under the programme, joining with the neighbouring Salford to form the Manchester and Salford Inner City Partnership. Despite submitting an application that outlined similar issues, Sheffield's bid proved unsuccessful.[96]

Situated in urban areas newly defined as part of the 'inner city', multi-storey council estates like Hulme and Park Hill adopted a political and cultural meaning that bore consequences for their management. The respective local authorities classified each as areas of 'worst' deprivation, listing local characteristics exacerbated by 'high-rise developments' especially, such as high rates of unemployment, crime, a 'poor environment', and 'little community spirit'.[97] This allowed the councils to build a picture of each estate in comparison with the wider city, outlining proposals for their improvement in the process. A study into Park Hill as an 'inner city priority area' in 1980 highlighted the necessity of directing greater funds to the estate and making changes to the council's managerial approach. It recommended investment in more play space for children and social facilities for young adults, with the plans for Park Hill drawn up in the 1950s having failed

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[91] Peter Shapely, *Deprivation, State Interventions and Urban Communities in Britain, 1968-79* (London, 2017), p. 8.
[92] Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation', p. 608.
[93] Shapely, *Deprivation,* p. 3.
[94] Department of the Environment, *Policy for the Inner Cities* (London, 1977).
[95] 'Inner Cities House of Commons Debate, 6 April 1977', *House of Commons Hansard,* vol. 929, cc1226-46 (1977), https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1977/apr/06/inner-cities-government-proposals [accessed 22 March 2021].
[96] Roger Marsh, 'The relevance of programme status to the economic problems of the inner city with reference to the city of Sheffield', PhD thesis (Polytechnic of Central London, 1979), p. 92.
[97] Sheffield City Council, *Sheffield Inner Area Programme*, pp. 4-6; Christopher M. Law, 'Inner city policy on the ground: The Manchester experience', *Cities,* 6/4 (1989), p. 340.

to offer any social provision for the latter. Concerning the upkeep of the material environment, the report stated, 'The present policy of cutting back on repairs to homes and public buildings is not going to save money in the long term and in the short term is building up a high level of resentment and dissatisfaction amongst residents'.[98] This account of inadequate facilities, maintenance and funding presents a more complex explanation for the 'social problems' ascribed to Park Hill during this period, rather than the simplistic causal links drawn between the design of the housing itself and residents' behaviour apparent in earlier council papers.

The discursive roots of the 'inner city' reveal much of the areas deemed within its geographic scope. Before its application in British policymaking, the term often denoted inner areas of US cities home to predominantly black local populations. As Aaron Andrews has argued, 'inner city' therefore came to function as a 'euphemism for race' in its application in Britain, as well as a synonym for 'the urban poor'.[99] By 1978, 60 per cent of Manchester's West Indian population and 25 per cent of the city's Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi residents were council tenants and concentrated in just a few inner-city wards. For these tenants, overcrowding was a particular issue, with space standards in the home found to be lower than the city average.[100] Moreover, in 1988, social policy researchers identified Hulme as one of the poorest parts of central Manchester. Low quality housing, a transient population, and a high concentration of lone-parent families and low-income and Black and minority ethnic tenants contributed to this categorisation.[101] This demographic imbalance, combined with the type of housing most apparent in Hulme, shaped its classification as an inner-city estate, home to certain groups typically associated with socio-economic 'decline' in the post-war period.[102] The Manchester and Salford Inner City Partnership concluded in its preliminary report that significant investment in Manchester's inner area was necessary to resolve the problems prevalent in 'deck access properties designed in the late '60s and constructed according to industrial building techniques'.[103]

In the early 1980s, Sheffield City Council's Urban Strategy Panel commissioned a study of the city's most deprived areas. Using census information and the results of the city's 'Grassroots

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[98] SLSL: 711.59 SSTQ, Sheffield City Council Department of Planning and Design, *Inner City Priority Areas: Special Studies* (Sheffield, 1980), p. 4.
[99] Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation', p. 609.
[100] MA: q312.094273Ma7/c, Manchester City Council Planning Department, *Manchester's Population and Housing* (Manchester, 1981), p. 18.
[101] Peter Townsend and Ken Barnsley, *Inner City Deprivation and Premature Death in Greater Manchester* (Ashton-under-Lyne, 1988), p. 26.
[102] Shamit Saggar, 'Immigration and Economics: The Politics of Race in the Postwar Period', in Helen Fawcett and Rodney Lowe (eds), *Welfare Policy in Britain: The Road from 1945* (Basingstoke, 1999), p. 189.
[103] MA: 309.262Ma2, Manchester and Salford Inner City Partnership, *Inner City Manchester: Preliminary report on problems, priorities and key issues* (Manchester, 1978), pp. 7-9.

Survey' of 1977, the researchers ranked certain districts according to 18 indicators of poverty. These measured levels of employment, the size and composition of households, access to facilities such as an indoor bathroom, and tenure types. While the team found that 'pockets' of deprivation existed even in wealthy areas of the city such as Fulwood, it identified areas of 'acute poverty' disproportionately populated by low-income residents. Relative to the city average, these places possessed four times the proportion of lone-parent families, triple the proportion of unskilled workers, and more than double the unemployment rate for young people under the age of 25. The study showed a correlation between these indicators and the location of its post-war multi-storey council housing. Focusing upon Hyde Park, Broomhall flats and the Kelvin flats, estates characterised by their experience of 'a much more intense form of poverty than others', the study established that, 'Areas of Acute Poverty are predominantly high rise Council flats, located mostly in the older central core of the City'.[104] Although by no means exclusive to these locations, this mapping of the disproportionate distribution of poverty onto multi-storey estates in Sheffield's inner city, demonstrates the spatial politics attached to these estates by the mid-1980s.

Park Hill's absence from this list is notable, with the estate typically faring better than Hyde Park in studies of this kind. The summary of the findings of the Grassroots Survey noted that, 'Hyde Park received a greater number of mentions in the survey than Park Hill', with more respondents voicing problems with the larger estate.[105] It is likely the case that the higher density and number of residents at Hyde Park exacerbated issues also present at Park Hill. Indeed, an overview of the city's housing by the council in 1973 had noted the occurrence of similar problems at Park Hill to those experienced by residents of other multi-storey developments across Sheffield, mainly concerning vandalism and the misuse of lifts.[106] The Inner Area Programme report of 1978 found that both deck-access estates were receptive to problems of "'mass living'". It characterised these in terms of 'continual noise, lack of privacy, and isolation of people living on their own', which, the report stated, 'has led to a high incidence of depression, drug overdoses and attempted suicide' among residents. The study also cited 'high crime rates, both adult and juvenile'. Its summary of Park Hill remained pessimistic. 'The area is seen as having no motivation and it is difficult to move out. Problems are getting worse, and the outlook is bleak'.[107]

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[104] SA: LD2481/15/1, Sheffield City Council, 'Areas of Poverty in Sheffield: Reports to Urban Strategy Panel, 13th September, 1983' (1983), p. 4.
[105] Sheffield City Council, *Sheffield Inner Area Programme*, p. 1.
[106] SLSL: 352.5SQ, Sheffield City Council, *City of Sheffield Housing, 1972-73* (Sheffield, 1973), p. 29.
[107] Sheffield City Council, 'Sheffield Grassroots Survey', p. 4.

While these conclusions established causal links between the material environment of multi-storey housing and the actions of its tenants, the city's Urban Strategy Panel report also highlighted the role of Sheffield City Council's housing allocation policies in contributing to the high concentration of vulnerable tenants housed on certain inner-city estates. 'The policy of no discrimination and the reliance on a date order preference system has the unintentional effect of concentrating some of the poorest and most needy families with immediate housing needs into the more unpopular council estates'.[108] An analysis of local housing transfer lists in 1978 shows that, while 70 new residents had moved to the area encompassing Park Hill, Hyde Park, and the nearby Bard Street, their arrival did little to counterbalance the 530 requests to leave the estates.[109] As the residents who first moved to Park Hill in the late 1950s and 1960s began to leave, its population structure started to change, with the council's allocation policy engendering the rehousing of families in more precarious circumstances in the multi-storey flats. In 1982, a study into high-density housing presented to the council's Policy Committee observed that, while high levels of population turnover did not always cause 'social disorganisation', the reputation of certain estates in the city contributed to their deprivation by sparking a 'process of self-selection' among residents. 'The moment an estate acquires an unfavourable reputation', the study concluded, 'the more aspiring and house-proud tenants will try to leave for more respectable areas and only those indifferent to the reputation of the estate will be prepared to live there'.[110] By the late 1970s, the council had identified the number of single-parent families on the estate as a cause for concern, speaking to discourses of the 'problem family' prevalent throughout the twentieth century.[111] Until 1980 at least, its inner area studies had shown that Park Hill possessed a 'much more stable population' than Hyde Park, with its flats also proving 'more popular' than those of its larger, sister development. However, the study's authors warned that, should maintenance standards at Park Hill not improve, levels of transience would increase, contributing to understandings of its decline.[112]

Nevertheless, local documents betray an ongoing tension between behavioural and structural understandings of the causes of deprivation in certain areas of housing, even with studies undertaken by departments in the council attempting to acknowledge the latter. The

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[108] Sheffield City Council, 'Areas of Poverty in Sheffield', p. 4.

[109] Sheffield City Council, *Inner City Priority Areas*, p. 3.

[110] SLSL: 331.833 SQ, Sheffield City Council Policy Committee, 'Draft Report of Working Party on High-Density Developments' (Sheffield, 1982), p. 9.

[111] Sheffield City Council, *Areas of Worst Deprivation.* For an overview of discourses of 'problem families' in the twentieth century see John Macnicol, 'From 'Problem Family' to 'Underclass', 1945-1995', in Helen Fawcett and Rodney Lowe (eds), *Welfare Policy in Britain: The Road from 1945* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 69-93.

[112] Sheffield City Council, *Inner City Priority Areas*, pp. 5-9.

recommendations of South Yorkshire County Council concerning housing in the early 1970s demonstrate the extent to which mass, post-war estates were viewed as synonymous with individual social problems. To improve local living conditions, the County Council determined that 'high density housing must be avoided' and policies of 'discriminate rehousing' adopted to restore previously severed community ties.[113] Such suggestions indicate a significant shift in local government policy little more than a decade after the undertaking of widespread slum clearance programmes and the construction of new, mass housing estates. Yet these proposals continued to focus on individual behaviours, connecting 'family discord' to overcrowding, violence and crime, to argue that future housing must address the needs of larger families to encourage social cohesion. This preoccupation with the behaviour of certain resident groups also remained central to urban policy in Manchester. A 1978 report by the Manchester and Salford Inner City Partnership acknowledged how redevelopment had contributed to inner-city deprivation, with residents often contending with higher rent and utility bills in new properties relative to older terraced housing, but the association of individual behaviours with these issues also endured.[114] For example, the Partnership noted the contribution of 'considerable hostility to the design of the blocks' among residents of post-war multi-storey estates to tenants' 'motivation' to 'keep out of debt' to avoid eviction.[115] Moreover, the Partnership suggested that certain tenant groups were more susceptible to the apparent influences of inner-city living than others. It stated that young people – and more specifically, young 'immigrants' – experienced a 'disenchantment' with their environment and its facilities that 'lead youngsters into trouble'.[116] Despite some recognition of its structural causes, by continuing to rationalise deprivation as a behavioural issue in part, this approach to managing housing estates in the inner city co-existed with the idea that certain groups, delineated by age and ethnicity, were more likely to contribute to the deterioration of the built environment than others.

In Hulme, understandings of the suitability of certain tenants to multi-storey living coalesced around approaches to housing families with young children. An awareness of the influence of the built environment upon family welfare had begun to increase from the 1960s, emerging alongside reports published in the *British Medical Journal* of the emotional problems experienced by young mothers in high flats and building upon ideas of suburban neurosis prevalent

[113] SA: SYCC/ADMIN/10/11/20, South Yorkshire County Council, 'Paper for the Meeting with the Minister for Urban Affairs: Urban Problems of South Yorkshire, 29th September 1975' (Sheffield, 1975).
[114] Manchester and Salford Inner City Partnership, *Inner City Manchester*, p. 8.
[115] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[116] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

in the 1930s.[117] This sparked a conviction among some medical practitioners that multi-storey flats were both unsafe and unsuitable for children.[118] As early as the mid-1970s, a change in policy approach saw Manchester City Council attempt to rehouse families with young children from Hulme's deck-access flats. A focus upon its leadership helps to explain this apparent about-turn to some extent. Traditionally Labour-dominated, in 1967 the Conservatives took control of Manchester City Council.[119] Although Labour's local election victory in 1971 meant that their leadership was short-lived, in the intervening years the Conservatives set in motion the wholesale clearance and redevelopment of Hulme. As Peter Shapely has argued, the interplay between time-restricted political ambitions and the longer-term visions of social planners was often fraught with tension, and the multi-storey redevelopment of Hulme certainly reflected this imbalance.[120] Comprising 2,864 deck-access properties and 13 tower blocks across five neighbourhood units, the new estate marked a clear deviation from the traditional cottage-style housing hitherto championed by the local authority.[121] Even just before construction at Hulme began, Labour members of Manchester's Housing Committee had maintained their reluctance towards building high flats, especially tower blocks, and met proposals for the use of new construction technology and the hiring of private contractors with a similar degree of hesitance.[122]

Yet notwithstanding this change of leadership, the council's attitude towards multi-storey development had long represented a catalogue of contradictions founded in part upon questions over its suitability for families with young children. Hulme's construction did not begin until 1968, but the roots of its design can be traced in meetings held amongst members of Manchester City Council's Housing Committee ten years earlier. While land shortages in the city had sparked debates over multi-storey redevelopment before, after committee members visited high flats in Berlin, Hamburg and Amsterdam in May 1958, the possibility of recreating such buildings in Manchester began to edge closer to reality. During their visits, the committee members had noted how, on the European estates, high blocks of flats often sat alongside low- and medium-rise

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[117] D. A. G. Cook and H. Gethin Morgan, 'Families in high-rise flats', *British Medical Journal*, 284 (1982), p. 846; Lynn Abrams, Linda Fleming, Barry Hazley, Valerie Wright and Ade Kearns, 'Isolated and dependent: women and children in high-rise social housing in post-war Glasgow', *Women's History Review* 28/5 (2019), p. 804.

[118] A. R. Gillis, 'High-Rise Housing and Psychological Strain', *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*, 18 (1977), p. 427.

[119] Peter Shapely, 'Tenants arise! Consumerism, tenants and the challenge to council authority in Manchester, 1968-92', *Social History,* 31/1 (2006), p. 69.

[120] Shapely, *Deprivation*, p. 4.

[121] MA: Q71158MAN(981), Brian Parnell, City Planning Officer, *Planning Framework for Hulme* (September 1986).

[122] Shapely, Tanner and Walling, 'Civic Culture', p. 423.

housing amidst wide open spaces, diversifying what they might otherwise have considered a monotonous skyline.[123] This led members to conclude upon returning to Manchester, that,

> While we are still of the opinion that the 2-storey house with separate garden is the ideal for family life, we returned from our tour satisfied that...well-designed multi-storey flats with all modern labour-saving devices, washhouses, lifts, central heating etc., can provide a higher and more modern standard of comfort than that usually found in the normal two-storey house.[124]

Thus, in 1958, the council's Housing Committee determined that multi-storey flats could present a viable solution to the city's housing problems provided certain conditions were met. It identified the mixed use of high- and low-rise housing, sensitive allocation procedures, and the cooperation of satisfied tenants in the upkeep of the estate as essential components of a successful development.[125] However, the council struggled to reconcile its preference for families in low-rise housing with the shortage of available land in the city. In May 1958, it sought to resolve this by deciding that only families without young children or those apathetic towards housing with gardens should be allocated flats above the ground.[126] Yet later that same year, in December 1958, Manchester's Director of Housing reported that tenants' preference for some types of housing over others had considerably slowed the progress of slum clearance. The Director wrote, 'Attempts to clear areas by stages have been frustrated by a few tenants who will not accept anything but a particular type of house in a very restricted area'.[127] Advocating a more stringent approach to allocations for the remainder of the programme, the Director recommended the removal of tenants' ability to refuse an offer of rehousing on anything other than medical grounds, a change of direction founded upon the telling assertion that, '[tenants] should not be permitted to refuse flats simply because they are flats', suggesting that the typical low-rise house was widely preferred.[128] That this recommendation made no allowances for the special allocation of families in flats indicates that this social aim did not necessarily sit easily with the need for more comprehensive housing redevelopment.

In the first outline of plans for Hulme in 1968, the City Planning Officer proposed an average density of 90 habitable rooms per acre; a figure primarily influenced by the need to ensure

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[123] Manchester Housing Committee, 'Report of the visit to Berlin, Hamburg and Amsterdam, 14 July 1958', p. 205.
[124] *Ibid.,* p. 214.
[125] *Ibid.,* pp. 214-215.
[126] *Ibid.,* p. 214.
[127] Manchester City Council, 'Slum Clearance, 4 December 1958', p. 557.
[128] *Ibid.,* p. 557.

the allocation of families with young children to dwellings on the ground floor, preferably with direct access to green space.[129] That this proved no guarantee in practice is apparent in the events of July 1975, when a five-year-old boy fell from the fifth-floor balcony of his flat in Hulme's John Nash Crescent. The tragic nature of the child's death, which occurred during his birthday party, ignited local outrage regarding the safety of children in the Crescent flats.[130] The boy's death led several Crescent residents to form the Hulme Five Rehousing Campaign. Arguing for the rehousing of families with young children, these tenants focused specifically upon the dangers of the Crescent blocks, despite the use of deck-access housing across other areas of the estate. That the group chose the Crescents – or 'Hulme Five' to use the language of the estate's 'units'– as the basis for their campaign, reflects not only their residential ties to this part of Hulme, but the particular anxieties associated with the Crescents by the mid-1970s. Their distinctive curved blocks and greater density relative to other deck-access buildings saw observers position the Crescents as almost the sum of Hulme, obscuring accounts of the wider estate.[131] The campaigner's decision to concentrate their efforts on the safety of families in the Crescents' high flats alone, therefore suggests the influence of this area's growing reputation.

In August 1975, the Hulme Five Rehousing Campaign submitted a petition to the Housing Committee. Based on the results of a survey undertaken by the group of Crescent residents, the campaign established that 96.3 per cent of respondents wanted to be rehoused.[132] The Director of Housing criticised the campaigners for the 'bias' apparent in their questionnaire – the opening two questions of which asked 'do you want to leave Hulme?' and 'if so, where do you want to go?' – but conceded in an echo of the council's past concerns that, 'It is well known that the majority of families would prefer to live in houses with gardens rather than flats'.[133] The provision of this type of housing formed a core element of the Hulme Five petition, in addition to demands for greater transparency in waiting lists, the allocation of empty flats to single tenants, couples without children, or students, and the eligibility of all tenants for transfer regardless of rent arrears. Signed by 643 Crescent residents, the petition had asked, 'Why should we have to pay to live here in these dangerous prisons?'[134] Its findings mirrored those of a survey conducted by the Housing

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[129] Manchester City Council, *A new community,* pp. 5-6.

[130] Neil Wallis, 'Flat safety row after boy dies', *Manchester Evening News*, 23 July 1975; Gerald Brown, 'Get us out of flats: mothers', *Manchester Evening News*, 28 July 1975.

[131] For a more in-depth discussion of representations of the Crescents specifically, see Chapter Two, pp. 142-143.

[132] MA: GB127/75, Manchester City Council Policy Committee, 'Hulme V Rehousing Campaign, Report of the Director of Housing, 14 November 1975', Manchester City Council Housing Committee, *Minute Book 75*: *5 August 1975-10 November 1975* (Manchester, 1975), p. 135.

[133] *Ibid.*

[134] MA: GB127/75, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'Hulme 5 Development: Transfers', *Minute Book 75: 5 August 1975-10 November 1975* (Manchester, 1975), p. 15.

Committee into another inner-city multi-storey estate earlier that year – the nearby Moss Side District Centre – which concluded that living in a flat off the ground with young children was one of the main causes of tenant dissatisfaction.[135] Despite the palpable anger of the Crescent residents, Manchester City Council chose to make no immediate changes to deck-access allocation procedures pending more comprehensive alterations to its housing waiting list in general.[136] Instead, the council began to outline a new housing transfer scheme in January 1976.

The revised allocation policies under this new scheme demonstrated a far greater awareness of the social effects of slum clearance and mass redevelopment, with particularly high priority offered to objectives concerning families. Accompanying the new transfer plans, a report into changing housing needs in the city recommended the implementation of policies such as rehousing second-generation families closer to their parental homes to reunite families separated by clearance, and stated that children's residence in multi-storey flats – if unavoidable – should not be permanent. As the report stated, it was important that the children of families in 'deck access and walk-up flat schemes' did not spend their 'entire childhood' in these environments.[137] Reflecting the findings of social surveys of the late 1950s and early 1960s, Manchester's concerns over the dispersal of families were perhaps overdue.[138] However, the council's approach followed initiatives outlined under the Housing Act of 1974, which emphasised the importance of redeveloping and improving areas of housing need over demolition to avoid disruption to established local populations.[139] It seemed that the ways of living championed by Hulme's development were unravelling, increasingly regarded as cause for further local government interventions.

Changes to the council's allocation policy concerning families in flats were not applied uniformly to each area of Hulme, as the focus of the tenants' campaign suggested. Across the estate, the council attempted to limit the allocation of families with young children to flats above the ground. By the 1980s, however, it had restricted the allocation of these families to the Crescents

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[135] MA: GB127/74, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'Tenant Feedback – Moss Side District Centre (June 1975) – submitted to the Housing Committee for consideration on 14 July 1975', *Minute Book 74: 14 April 1975-14 July 1975* (Manchester, 1975), p. 690.

[136] MA: GB127/76, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'Hulme V Rehousing Campaign, December 1975', *Minute Book 76: December 1975-March 1976* (Manchester, 1976), p. 3.

[137] MA: GB127/76, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'A New Method of Administering, Determining and Meeting Housing Accommodation Needs', *Minute Book 76: December 1975-March 1976* (Manchester, 1976), p. 147.

[138] For example, Young and Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London*; Brian Jackson, *Working class community: some general notions raised by a series of studies in northern England* (London, 1968).

[139] SA: SYCC/ADMIN/10/11/20, South Yorkshire County Council, Urban Affairs Division, 'DoE Initiatives Relevant to Urban Deprivation, September 1974', *Inner Area Studies: Comprehensive Community Programme, July 1974-December 1976* (Sheffield, 1974).

completely, regardless of the height of available flats.[140] This differential implementation of housing policy despite the repetition of the deck-access design elsewhere, indicates the extent to which the Crescents' representation by tenants and the wider public informed policymakers' decisions. Inevitably though, there were limits to this approach to housing certain families in Hulme. By 1987, the proportion of children under five on the estate mirrored that of the city average, showing that although many had moved away from the area, new families had started in the places they left behind.[141] Moreover, those children rehoused from multi-storey flats such as those in the Crescents still maintained links with Hulme, often continuing to attend the local school.[142] Yet the social composition of the estate had undoubtedly changed. Growing numbers of students and young, single tenants saw the flats built for families allocated to more transient residents. In 1987, the council estimated that the rate of tenancy turnover in the Crescents was around 75 per cent per year, with flats on its upper floors more likely to constitute void properties than those at ground-floor level.[143] In addition, the built environment continued to act as a deterrent for some prospective tenants, with Manchester City Council noting in 1985 that 'it is difficult to let dwellings where the environment adjacent to the home is so unpleasant, and often intimidating, even in daytime'.[144]

All of this occurred against a national backdrop of the increasing residualisation of council housing more broadly. That multi-storey estates bore the brunt of this is evident from both its chronic underinvestment and its cultural stigmatisation, of which the second chapter will discuss in more detail. A national policy framework played a significant role in shaping ideas of the rise and fall of multi-storey council housing to which Park Hill and Hulme are often attached. First introduced in 1956, financial subsidies offered by central government encouraged the building of flats to higher levels and densities, sparking a rush to build high among local councils across the country.[145] The withdrawal of this support in 1967 inevitably led to a decreasing number of new multi-storey buildings thereafter, playing into the notion of the unpopularity or 'fall' of this type of housing.[146] Alongside this, local authority policies from the 1970s increasingly viewed prospective council tenants as 'deprived', despite the continuing prevalence of council housing,

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[140] MA: q352.75Ma, Manchester City Council, *Housing Defects in Manchester* (Manchester, 1985).
[141] RRRC: GB3228.3/4/1, Manchester City Council, Hulme Project, *Who Lives in Hulme? A report on Hulme's population based on census information* (Manchester, 1987), p. 2.
[142] *Ibid.*
[143] Manchester City Council, *Hulme 5: Local Management Initiative Proposals*, p. 2.
[144] Manchester City Council, *Housing Defects.*
[145] Harrison, 'Towards an Archaeology of the Welfare State in Britain', p. 245.
[146] Cooney, 'High Flats', p. 168.

with the 1977 Housing (Homelessness) Act only consolidating this approach.[147] The Act altered the eligibility criteria for council housing, restricting its allocation to those people of greater housing need. Consequently, council housing became a last resort option for prospective tenants.[148]

The introduction of the Right to Buy in 1980 is, however, most often cited in relation to the decline of council housing. Allowing tenants to buy their homes at a discounted rate, but failing to build more housing to counteract lost local authority stock, the Right to Buy saw public housing provision become an 'increasingly residual form of tenure'.[149] While Ben Jones has highlighted the longer-term roots of this process, there can be little doubt that the political landscape seemed set against council housing by the late twentieth century, with local attitudes towards the management of mass, multi-storey estates representing only part of a broader story played out across post-war England.[150] That certain places like Hulme and Park Hill featured largely in wider representations of this trajectory is perhaps indicative of what Joe Moran has described as the 'highly visible state intervention into people's everyday lives' exemplified by this type of housing.[151] By tracing the managerial approaches of Sheffield and Manchester City Councils, this section has highlighted key developments that led to the private redevelopment of Park Hill and demolition of Hulme, from changing understandings of deck-access housing and its effects upon tenant behaviour to its place in the 'inner city'.

Tenant participation in design and policy

Approaches to the design and management of Park Hill and Hulme adopted by their architects, planners and local authorities, evinced both classed and place-based preconceptions of council tenants. They followed well-established assumptions of 'traditional' ways of living, looking in part to recreate a vision of the past already somewhat distorted by mythologisation, especially in relation to ideas of community. While shaping the material environment of residents' everyday lives to some extent, these understandings also defined the parameters of tenant consultation and participation in the running of the estates. Persistent assumptions of tenants' preferences for

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[147] Keith Jacobs, Jim Kemeny and Tony Manzi, 'Privileged or exploited council tenants? The discursive change in Conservative housing policy from 1972 to 1980', *Policy & Politics*, 31/3 (2003), p. 313.
[148] *Ibid.*, p. 313.
[149] Aled Davies, "Right to Buy': The Development of a Conservative Housing Policy, 1945-1980', *Contemporary British History*, 27/4 (2013), p. 433.
[150] Ben Jones, 'Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualization: the Practices and Politics of Council Housing in Mid-twentieth-century England', *Twentieth Century British History*, 21/4 (2010), p. 515.
[151] Joe Moran, 'Housing, memory and everyday life in contemporary Britain', *Cultural Studies*, 18/4 (2004), p. 615.

housing and sociability circumscribed the effectiveness of the local authorities' efforts to incorporate their perspectives of Park Hill and Hulme into decision-making processes. Moreover, as the political and cultural meaning of council housing in all its forms began to shift towards the end of the 1970s, the emergence of tropes of the unsuitable, transient, or 'problem' tenant only further entrenched restricted preconceptions of multi-storey tenants. These attitudes all contributed to ideas of Park Hill and Hulme as unmanageable council estates emblematic of housing 'failure'.

From the start of the post-war period, Manchester's planners had used perceptions of prospective council tenants to voice concerns over the introduction of high-density, multi-storey developments to the city's future housing stock. As R. Nicholas wrote in the 1945 City Plan,

> It would be a profound sociological mistake to force upon the British public, in defiance of its own widely expressed preference for separate houses with gardens, a way of life that is fundamentally out of keeping with its traditions, instincts and opportunities.

Although written over two decades before Hulme's construction, the City Plan provided the influential antecedent to the city's 1951 Development Plan, eventually put into practice in 1961. Nicholas's recommendations were thus privileged long after the post-war plan's original publication.[152] The planners' attempts to speak for the preferences of the 'British public' invested an importance in more 'traditional' ways of living incorporated into Manchester City Council's approach to the mixed development of areas like Hulme. In addition, after its construction, similar invocations centring around local people underpinned criticism of the estate. Labour councillor John Smith asserted that, 'Manchester people are not "walk-up" flat orientated' in 1983, referring to street decks in particular as 'the type of feature which does not suit the ordinary Mancunian's temperament'.[153] Manchester City Council used invocations of the 'ordinary' Mancunian like this to reflect a specifically working-class, northern-English image of the city's identity, although the leadership of Councillor Graham Stringer saw a remodelling of this outlook throughout the 1980s.[154]

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[152] Ted Kitchen, 'The Future of Development Plans: Reflections on Manchester's Experiences 1945-1995', *Town Planning Review*, 67/3 (1996), p. 335.

[153] MA: Q942.733913HU169, *Octopus: The Hulme Magazine*, No. 2, April 1983, p. 3.

[154] Stephen Quilley, 'Entrepreneurial turns: municipal socialism and after', in Jamie Peck and Kevin Ward (eds), *City of Revolution: Restructuring Manchester* (Manchester, 2002), p. 91.

Urban studies research has shown that residents were often the only group to challenge negative depictions of council housing.[155] This was not an easy process, as mechanisms for residents' participation in the management of their estates were limited prior to the introduction of the 1969 Housing Act, which advocated for increased tenant consultation in the maintenance or redevelopment of council housing.[156] Even when this legislation passed, its focus centred on building consensus by educating local people, partly to ensure that their opinions were not 'forced' upon planners.[157] The assumption that tenants had little claim to expertise concerning their estates therefore remained prevalent among contemporary commentators and local authorities. Writing for *The Guardian* in 1970, Dennis Johnson embodied this scepticism of tenants' abilities to evaluate plans in relation to Hulme's multi-storey redevelopment. He stated,

> Families who have been living in insanitary, overcrowded conditions, with rats in the backyard, damp on the walls, and the ineradicable dirt of a century as a constant humiliation, are almost bound to find Parker Morris standards a great improvement.[158]

By depicting tenants as a monolithic group simply grateful for new housing, Johnson used Hulme tenants' experiences of housing designated for clearance to question their capacity to confer judgement upon the multi-storey estate.

In 1985, Coleman offered a similar view of tenants' opinions, especially concerning their use to determine managerial approaches to council estates. The geographer wrote that, 'while residents may have a very clear insight into what is wrong, they do not necessarily understand how to put it right'. Coleman cited as an example a request by residents of the Brandon estate in London who, in 1983, stated that the top priority for estate life was to spend more money on replacing glass broken by vandals, despite the £40,000 used to replace glass in the previous year having led only to its damage once more.[159] Irrespective of attempts during the post-war period to "democratise" community involvement in planning and management processes, the notion that professional planners and academics understood the needs of local populations better than

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[155] Annette Hastings, 'Stigma and social housing estates: Beyond pathological explanations', *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19/3 (2004), p. 251.

[156] Department of the Environment, *Report of the Committee on Public Participation in Planning*: *People and Planning* (London, 1969).

[157] Shapely, *Deprivation,* p. 92.

[158] 'Hulme: The great expedient', *The Guardian*, 16 November 1970. 'Parker Morris standards' refers to the space standards outlined in a 1961 Ministry of Housing publication, which stipulated that all dwellings required at least one flushing toilet and sought to address overcrowding by imposing limits on the number of inhabitants per square metre in newly-built housing. For more information, see Ministry of Housing and Local Government, *Homes for today & tomorrow* (London, 1961), p. 35.

[159] Coleman, *Utopia on Trial,* pp. 12-13.

themselves endured.[160] It was this perception that tenant initiatives often sought to combat directly, claiming a level of expertise rooted in lived experience unmatchable by an estate's external actors.[161]

This is not to say that councils did not attempt to gauge tenants' reactions to multi-storey estates, but rather to indicate how far expectations of tenants influenced their observations. From the very first days of their arrival at Park Hill in November 1959, members of Sheffield City Council's Housing Department charted residents' transition to high-density, multi-storey living. The resulting sociological report captured the mixed feelings of new tenants, several of whom had not seen the flats before moving day. It described the particular problems experienced by the elderly, for whom the movement away from houses they had lived in for decades proved a 'great strain', where 'Suddenly all surroundings are different, all personal possessions are no longer "'at hand"'.[162] In comparison, the Housing Department noted that young women found the transition to the flats relatively easy, an observation attributed to the flats' modern amenities. The report quoted these residents as having described their new kitchen as "a women's paradise", as well as having remarked that, "I can't believe you only have to turn the tap on to get hot water".[163] Its summary of Park Hill's earliest weeks and months evinced a more equivocal reaction to the flats than their cultural representation in the 1960s press would later suggest.

While some groups seemed more adaptable to the flats than others, the report predominantly painted a picture of an estate and its tenants in need of considerable guidance and monitoring. It detailed how residents 'arrive anxious and bewildered and seemingly slow to grasp essentials' on moving day, and commented that, despite 'instructions' given by maintenance staff, there remained 'ignorance amongst some residents on these points when visiting them in their own homes'.[164] Children and young adults proved the most difficult group to manage, with their engagement in 'anti-social' play, such as riding adult bikes along the walkways and throwing objects including milk bottles and penknives from the roof, leading Housing Managers to dub them 'a danger and a nuisance to themselves and everyone else'.[165] The report recommended police patrols to deter gatherings of young adults around the estate's coffee bar in the evenings until eleven o' clock to better prevent 'instances of violence among teenage groups', stating that a greater police

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[160] Camilla Schofield and Ben Jones, "Whatever Community Is, This Is Not It': Notting Hill and the Reconstruction of 'Race' in Britain after 1958', *Journal of British Studies*, 58/1 (2019), p. 149.
[161] Quentin Bradley, 'Proud to be a Tenant: The Construction of Common Cause Among Residents in Social Housing', *Housing Studies*, 27/8 (2012), p. 1127.
[162] SA: CA-MIN/116, Sheffield City Council Housing Management Committee, 'Park Hill Part One: Sociological Report', *Minutes: 20th May 1959 to 8th November 1962* (Sheffield, 1962), p. 95.
[163] *Ibid.*
[164] *Ibid.*, p. 94.
[165] *Ibid.*, pp. 96-98.

presence on one occasion had shown signs of effectiveness.[166] Some patrols – undertaken by employees of the council – were already in place prior to this, with two 'patrolmen' walking about the estate during the late afternoons and evenings to address any issues relating to anti-social behaviour.[167] For council representatives, the severity of the situation could not be overstated, as they concluded that its resolution 'may prove to be a vital factor in the success or failure in building up an effective community'.[168] Evidently, the ambiguous prescriptions of the built environment outlined by its architects and planners had left the function of certain spaces open to tenants' interpretation.

Two years after the council's sociological report, the sociologist Joan Demers completed the *Park Hill Survey*. The 1960s saw the emergence of social sciences in academic institutions, within which sociology became a significant discipline in its own right. This moment of change to institutional infrastructure sparked an interest in everyday life as a category 'ripe for social scientific analysis', and Demers's *Park Hill Survey* of 1962 certainly contained references to the material and social aspects of multi-storey living.[169] The Assistant Estate Manager and a welfare worker, Demers moved to Park Hill in October 1959. Significantly, Sheffield City Council recorded that Demers was the estate's first resident, reinforcing depictions of Park Hill as a 'social experiment' enacted through housing.[170] From August 1961 to March 1962, Demers interacted with residents of 197 flats through the format of a questionnaire and interviews with structured, closed questions. The resulting report demonstrates an attempt to gauge tenant satisfaction through a primarily spatial analysis of their responses to the design, facilities, and density of the flats. It celebrated Park Hill's achievements from the outset, referencing details ranging from noise, heating and storage to residents' use of wider estate facilities as evidence for a flourishing, well-designed community. The overwhelmingly positive report that Demers presented, however, engendered the dismissal of some residents' views to the contrary. When 21 per cent of the families with children who participated in the survey expressed some level of dissatisfaction with life in the flats, Demers attributed this to residents missing old friends who used to live nearby, rather than any shortcomings of the estate's multi-storey layout. She also questioned the reliability of residents' responses, noting that 'when expressing feelings residents too often would show approval or

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[166] *Ibid.,* p. 98.
[167] *Ibid.,* p. 97.
[168] *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[169] Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 133-134.
[170] Harwood, *Space, Hope and Brutalism,* p. 80; SA: CA-MIN/116, Sheffield City Council Housing Management Committee, 'Annual report of the Housing Department, 13 September 1962', *Minutes: 20th May 1959 to 8th November 1962* (Sheffield, 1962), p. 384.

disapproval and at a later stage under cross-questioning would give a number of qualifications which made the original answer appear under a very different light'.[171] Connecting her findings to social theory, the social aims of Park Hill's architects, and even evidence from psychiatrists, Demers occasionally used her expertise to override the tenant voice.

This is particularly evident in her description of children's play. Despite stressing that mothers overall felt that the safety of children at play had improved since moving to Park Hill, Demers expressed some concerns as to their supervision, noting that the 'substantial proportion' of women who allowed children between the ages of eight and fifteen to roam freely around the estate without supervision was 'sufficiently high [as] to be disturbing'.[172] Demers attributed this to women's behaviour, rather than the difficulties of supervising children caused by multi-storey housing. Her observations spoke to anxieties over the role of the mother at a time of women's increasing participation in the workforce, as well as psychological studies into the dangers of maternal deprivation and discourses of the 'incompetent mother' associated with ideas of 'problem families'.[173] This issue of parental supervision persisted into the following decade, with a 1975 report by South Yorkshire County Council attributing the anti-social behaviour of young people in Sheffield to 'a decline of parental control and, in many cases, parental absence at work, which should be considered in the context of city's apparently increasing problem of the 'broken' and one-parent families'.[174] Unsurprisingly, however, resident mothers at Park Hill did not share Demers's perspective, with a survey undertaken by the Department of the Environment in 1972 finding that most 'housewives' saw the estate's multi-storey layout as the primary cause of problems with children's play.[175] Nevertheless, the Department's conclusions framed residents' viewpoints in a similar way to Demers's ten years before, noting that women's concerns were ultimately 'emotional in nature' and failed to indicate a correlation between issues of children's play and the height or density of the material environment in which they lived.[176]

Despite their efforts at consultation then, social surveys often limited the communication of residents' voices. While the council's 1960 sociological report quoted residents in part, its format

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[171] SLSL: 331.833 SSTQ, Sheffield City Council Housing Department, *Park Hill Survey* (Sheffield, 1962), p. 1.
[172] *Ibid.,* p. 8.
[173] Matthew Thomson, *Lost Freedom: The Landscape of the Child and the British Post-War Settlement* (Oxford, 2014), pp. 79-99; Dolly Smith Wilson, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker: The Good Working Mother in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History*, 17/2 (2006), p. 214; Macnicol, 'From 'Problem Family' to 'Underclass'', p. 79.
[174] SA: SYCC/ADMIN/10/11/20, South Yorkshire County Council, 'City of Sheffield: The Problems of Urban Living Which Face the Local Authority, 30 September 1975', *Inner Area Studies: Comprehensive Community Programme, July 1974-December 1976* (Sheffield, 1976), p. 2.
[175] Department of the Environment, *The Estate Outside the Dwelling: Reactions of Residents to Aspects of Housing Layout* (London, 1972), p. 3.
[176] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

highlighted the opinions of the Housing Department workers themselves, not Park Hill tenants. Similarly, when summarising the findings of the 1962 survey, Demers recorded residents' responses as percentages relating to their levels of satisfaction with different aspects of life at Park Hill, occasionally paraphrasing any of their broader comments about the estate. These approaches embodied a tendency to speak for council tenants rather than through them during this period. As Hollow's work has shown, if Park Hill residents failed to qualify their experiences in the language expected of them – that of the architects and planners around whose ideas their everyday lives were framed – their testimonies were ignored.[177] Yet Demers's intentions seemed to stretch beyond a purely detached, quantitative analysis. In addition to the questionnaire and interviews, she conducted a longer-term ethnographic study, getting to know fellow residents and playing an instrumental role in setting up the estate's tenants' association.[178] While Hollow has interpreted the sociologist's residency and involvement in tenant affairs through a Foucauldian lens as an attempt to 'incorporate and indoctrinate [tenants] into the planning process from the start', the *Park Hill Survey's* report shows that Demers also considered her close work with tenants as key to understanding and communicating their feelings about the estate. As the survey's summary stated, 'This report seems to be clear proof [of Park Hill's success], but the real proof can be even more clearly felt in the hearts and minds of the people who live here'.[179] Moreover, in her concluding remarks, Demers also expressed her enthusiasm at having worked on a housing development that evinced such a 'thoroughly thought out approach to human needs, integrating both high quality housing and social amenities, as well as the possibility of developing human relationships'.[180] Although in practice her communication of an unmediated tenant voice proved difficult to reconcile with the survey's methodology and approach to communicating its findings, it is worth noting the ways in which Demers's work also constituted a collaboration with tenants, especially regarding activities relating to the tenants' association, rather than a process of imposition or even 'indoctrination' as Hollow's work suggested.[181]

However, attempts to access tenant voices through social surveys in the early 1960s also encountered resistance from the council's Housing Management Committee. While other parties

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[177] Hollow, 'Governmentality', p. 131.

[178] SLSL: 331.833 SQ, Stephen Garnsey, *The Community in the Sky: Life on the Park Hill Flats* (Sheffield, 1980), p. 6.

[179] Sheffield City Council, *Park Hill Survey,* p. 10.

[180] *Ibid.,* p. 9.

[181] While operating on a much smaller scale, the tensions between Demers's approach and the ultimate communication of her findings shares some similarities with those identified in relation to Pearl Jephcott's attempts to locate the 'authentic' tenant voice in her study of multi-storey housing in Glasgow, *Homes in High Flats.* For more information, see Barry Hazley, Valerie Wright, Lynn Abrams and Ade Kearns, 'People and their homes rather than housing in the usual sense'? Locating the tenant's voice in *Homes in High Flats*', *Women's History Review*, 28/5 (2019), pp. 728-745.

expressed an interest in surveying Park Hill residents, the Committee sought to manage discourses of estate life. In June 1963, it rejected an external request to undertake a sociological survey of tenants at Sheffield's Park Hill and Woodside estates, revealing the extent to which Sheffield City Council attempted to regulate the scrutiny of Park Hill.[182] When it became apparent later that same year that the refused survey had taken place regardless of their permission, the Committee decided that 'investigations involving personal interviews with the tenants at Park Hill should now be restricted so far as possible'.[183] Although Demers's survey may have convinced Sheffield City Council that Park Hill was a 'success', the determination of the local authority to regulate tenants' voices suggests that it was wary of outsiders' interpretations of residents' experiences. This highlights an important tension in the local authority's consultation of Park Hill residents. While Sheffield City Council sought the opinions of its tenants, the selective documentation of their voices and continual framing of their everyday lives through the lens of the social and material aspects of the areas in which they had lived previously, demonstrates the extent to which the council's view of the local working classes remained static. This put the management of the estate in contention with its architectural design. Despite the attempts of Smith and Lynn to reconcile the needs of the individual and the 'community', marrying the 'traditional' with the 'modern' through Park Hill's layout and the provision of certain spaces, the council's early evaluations indicate an expectation that multi-storey living would ultimately echo, rather than transform, residents' lived experiences of the areas they had left behind.

In Hulme, tenants' campaigns for participation show the extent to which residents sought to engage in plans for housing improvement, complicating notions of the role played by the estate's social problems in exacerbating its unmanageability and eventual demolition. In 1985, tenant representatives and council workers organised the 'Hulme Conference' to discuss changes to the management of deck-access housing. The conference attracted tenants' association members who lived on similar estates built by thirty-five councils across Britain, representing a national effort to revise approaches to this type of housing and fund its redevelopment, coordinated by tenants and local authorities.[184] Throughout the latter part of the 1980s, however, studies and surveys by Manchester City Council casted doubt upon the estate's longevity, particularly following the discovery of asbestos in a significant proportion of deck-access flats, but the council had yet to

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[182] SA: CA-HMC/2/2, Sheffield City Council Housing Management Committee, 'Meeting 13 June 1963', *Minutes and Associated Papers: 13 December 1962 to 25 July 1966* (Sheffield, 1966), p. 66.
[183] SA: CA-HMC/2/2, Sheffield Housing Management Committee, 'Meeting 12 September 1963', *Minutes and Associated Papers*: *13 December 1962 to 25 July 1966* (Sheffield, 1966), p. 93.
[184] MA: q352.75Ma(874), Manchester City Council, *Deck Access Disaster: Report of the Hulme Conference held at Birley High School, Manchester on 22nd February, 1985* (Manchester, 1985), p. 1.

reach a decision on whether to refurbish or demolish Hulme's multi-storey housing. In 1986, it sought residents' opinions on which approach to take, conducting door-to-door surveys in conjunction with the tenants' associations attached to each of the estate's five parts. While the use of asbestos in the flats' construction had prompted the council's enquiry, the surveys' results revealed the diversity of residents' attitudes towards deck-access living, the location of the estate more broadly and the extent to which either informed their decision as to Hulme's refurbishment or demolition. In Hulme Three, for example, Manchester's Director of Environmental Health identified the deck-access flats as the 'worst affected' across the entire estate. While the construction of all Hulme's multi-storey housing involved the use of industrial building systems, the council had found that the use of asbestos was more extensive and 'random' in Hulme Three, making it a priority area for action.[185]

Over half of the residents surveyed had seen asbestos in their homes, with 58 per cent calling for Hulme Three's demolition. A quarter of the respondents had registered for rehousing already, but only two per cent of this latter group cited asbestos as the reason for their decision to leave.[186] Instead, problems associated with the area of the estate proved more influential, with most households describing it as "rough", "dangerous" or referring to crime.[187] The survey found that residents seemed to prioritise these issues over those relating to the upkeep of the deck-access flats themselves, but when asked what type of housing they would wish to return to if rehoused in Hulme following its demolition, 62 per cent advocated for a greater provision of low-rise housing.[188] The findings show that, while the living conditions of residents' homes undoubtedly influenced their experience of Hulme, they did not constitute the sole factor in determining levels of satisfaction with life on the estate. However, this differed across the estate. Most residents of Hulme Four reported satisfaction with their homes, although they expressed concerns over the maintenance and security of the blocks.[189] However, in Hulme Two, an area that also comprised deck-access housing interspersed with low-rise dwellings, the housing type was the chief determinant of residents' decisions to move elsewhere.[190] The survey noted that, although residents struggled to counter high rates of unemployment at twice the city's average and four times the national average, the stability of its population made it 'atypical' of the rest of Hulme and therefore

[185] Manchester City Council, *Area Renewal in Hulme: Hulme 3,* p. 3.
[186] *Ibid.,* p. 38 and pp. 27-28.
[187] *Ibid.,* p. 36.
[188] *Ibid.,* p. 45.
[189] Manchester City Council, *Area Renewal in Hulme: Hulme 4*, p. 3.
[190] Manchester City Council, *Area Renewal in Hulme: Hulme 2,* p. 47.

'the most "acceptable" deck access estate in the area'.[191] The demographic structures of each part of Hulme evidently also shaped residents' attitudes towards demolition or refurbishment.

The council saw consultation exercises like these as the foundation for a longer-term process of tenant participation in discussions of Hulme's future, evident in its creation of a dedicated team of workers and researchers based on the estate's Otterburn Close called the Hulme Project.[192] Yet the reports that presented their results indicate the restricted reach of residents' voices amidst the confines of the questionnaire approach. Like the *Park Hill Survey*, residents' responses featured as percentages in relation to key issues outlined by the council, which included the condition of housing, the wider area, crime and insecurity, and access to amenities. While this encompassed many of the features of residents' everyday lives, it left little room for deviation from the overarching structure of the consultation. Moreover, residents' opinions of Hulme did not feature in the reports directly, with council workers instead mediating their responses to form a more concise summary. The precise nature of residents' engagement with the question of Hulme's refurbishment or demolition therefore remains somewhat limited, with the surviving documentation presenting a detached account of the wider context of the estate's lived experience. Practical issues also hindered the collection of residents' responses. In a survey of the estate's tower block tenants, the council workers noted that 'fear of crime is making tenants reluctant to open their doors and answer questions', while, at the Medlock Court tower block, the 'risk to staff' meant that survey questions were posted to residents rather than asked in person, an approach that generated only 21 responses of a possible 91.[193]

In comparison to these earlier efforts, the creation of the Hulme Study seemed to pave the way for higher levels of tenant involvement in key decision-making processes concerning Hulme's redevelopment. A tripartite partnership between tenants, the council and the Department of the Environment, the Study took place between 1987 and 1990, and sought to address issues with Hulme's housing and amenities, as well as improvements to the social and economic circumstances of tenants. Publicity for the Study distributed among residents by Hulme Project staff described it as a 'genuine partnership' between groups to formulate an 'action plan' to 'tackle all of the area's disparate problems together'.[194] Outlining the Study's feasibility and rationale in 1988, Manchester City Council wrote that,

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[191] *Ibid.,* p. 3.
[192] Manchester City Council, *Area Renewal in Hulme: Hulme 3,* p. 5.
[193] MA: q363.580942Hu(421), Manchester City Council, *Multi Storey Blocks in Hulme: A Survey of Tenants in Thirteen Blocks in 1986* (Manchester, 1986), p. 30.
[194] RRRC: GB3228.3/3/19, Manchester City Council, Hulme Project, *The Hulme Study* (Manchester, 1990).

> Hulme is Manchester's "sink estate". It is a refuge of last resort for those with no other option. The purpose of this study is not to redevelop the site, making one of Manchester's other estates the sink estate, but to solve the problems of Hulme in Hulme for the people of Hulme.[195]

The council report later added, 'the study is to be carried out in a spirit of partnership with the local community. The purpose of the study is not to do things TO local people, nor FOR them, but WITH them'.[196]

Its output, however, struggled to match these declarations, with the project producing only one report before the council's securement of funding under the central government-led City Challenge initiative rendered the partnership redundant in 1991. Ravetz described the tenants' confidence in the Study as 'almost touching', especially considering the context of the history of disputes between tenant activists and the council over the management of Hulme, one of which culminated in tenants' occupation of the Hulme Project office for seven weeks during the 1980s.[197] Viewed as 'part of the Town Hall' until they proved themselves otherwise by showing that they could 'get things done', the Project had struggled to win tenants' trust since its creation.[198] However, even during the Hulme Study tensions persisted between tenants and the council over consultation. The tenants' associations of each part of the estate had joined together in 1987 to create the Hulme Tenants' Alliance, and their view of the council's earlier consultation efforts articulated in 1988 showed the extent of their ongoing frustration. 'The City Council appears to be concerned with producing a strategy for Hulme, but they have got it wrong', members of the Tenants' Alliance wrote. 'We need the Council to understand <u>our</u> strategy, and to start believing in our views'.[199] The Study had already experienced early setbacks. Within just a few months of its inception, the Department of the Environment announced the withdrawal of its participation alongside a more stringent cap on funds for the redevelopment of certain pockets of the estate, rather than Hulme in its entirety.[200] The announcement precipitated tenants' gradual exclusion from the council's plans.

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[195] RRRC: GB3228.3/6/18, Manchester City Council, *An approach to policy and management for Hulme* (Manchester, 1988).
[196] *Ibid.*
[197] Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture,* p. 230.
[198] MA: q711.58HUL(040), Manchester City Council, Hulme Project, *Hulme Workshops: Proceedings* (Manchester, 1987), p. 3.
[199] RRRC: GB3228.3/1/15, Hulme Tenants' Alliance, *Report for Strategy Sub-Committee: Tuesday 8 November 1988* (Manchester, 1988). Underlining is the tenants' emphasis.
[200] RRRC: GB3228.3/1/32, Hulme Tenant Representatives, *What the hell is going on…and where does that leave the residents of Hulme?* (Manchester, 1991).

Tenants' associations and tenant representatives of the Hulme Study continued to push for greater participation, even organising a minibus to provide transport for tenants to travel to London to gain entry to a meeting between the council and Department of the Environment about which they had heard through 'rumours' and 'leaks'.[201] A subset of these tenants founded the group 'Hulme Community Homes', which campaigned for assurances of 'decent affordable accommodation' in areas of tenants' choosing during the redevelopment process.[202] The council repeatedly undermined tenants' efforts, however, by insisting that those who participated in campaign groups represented only a minority view, with most residents keen to leave Hulme altogether.[203] This version of events fit neatly with wider discourses of the estate, with local newspapers like the *Manchester Evening News* having long drawn upon tenants' accounts of life in Hulme to justify calls for its demolition, as well as ideas of council tenants more broadly as a 'downtrodden' group denied the 'liberation' of home ownership.[204] The council's claims also echoed more general concerns over the representativeness of tenant and residents' associations that developed throughout the 1990s, particularly under New Labour, with Paul Watt arguing that the government's urban policies only enhanced the discursive construction of council tenants as a 'socially excluded, economically inactive and politically apathetic 'underclass".[205]

Concerns over the representativeness of tenants involved directly with the Study had informed part of the council's methods for consultation from the outset. Alongside regular meetings with the tenants' representatives who formed part of the Hulme Study's 'Supervisory Group', the council appointed a Tenant Resources and Development Worker to Hulme from June 1989, responsible for the coordination of tenant participation in the Study through working groups. The Resources and Development Worker also acted as a 'communication channel' between tenants, consultants involved in the Study, the council and the Department of the Environment, a responsibility deemed necessary by the council to ensure 'wider community involvement' in the Study.[206] The council therefore recognised that consultation with local people more active in formal tenants' groups did not necessarily fulfil the need for tenant participation.

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[201] *Ibid.*

[202] *Ibid.*

[203] *Ibid.*

[204] For a closer analysis of examples from the local press, see Chapter Two. On discourses of the 'oppressed council tenant' see Jacobs, Kemeny and Manzi, 'Privileged or exploited council tenants?', p. 314.

[205] Liz Millward, 'Just because we are amateurs doesn't mean we aren't professional: The importance of expert activists in tenant participation', *Public Administration*, 83/3 (2005), p. 737; Paul Watt, "Underclass' and 'ordinary people' discourses: Representing/re-presenting council tenants in a housing campaign', *Critical Discourse Studies*, 5/4 (2008), p. 347.

[206] RRRC: GB3228.3/5/34, Manchester City Council Policy and Resources Committee, *Report for Resolution: The Hulme Study* (Manchester, 1990), p. 5.

The differentiation between 'tenants' and 'tenants' representatives' in the Study's 'Housing Action Plan' of 1991, suggested a similar acknowledgement.[207] While this distinction saw the council seek greater involvement during the Study's consultation stage, it became less central to plans for the estate's redevelopment under the City Challenge initiative, through which communication between tenants and the council over Hulme's future represented a more hierarchical approach to disseminating information by the local authority.

The limitations of consultation and participation outlined in this chapter in relation to Park Hill and Hulme demonstrate the extent of tenants' exclusion from decision-making processes. Without formal policy mechanisms in place, and even then, without the willingness of the local authorities, there remained barriers to the incorporation of tenants' perspectives into the management of multi-storey council housing. This does not, however, legitimise representations of indifferent and oppressed tenants. As the examples from Hulme show, tenants' attempts to secure greater levels of consultation were ongoing throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, with their campaigning of the council evident from the families in high flats dispute of the mid-1970s. While their achievements were limited and groups were often susceptible to division, Hulme tenants' grassroots organisation saw people across the estate launch a sustained attack upon the council for housing improvements.[208] This focus is not to erase the social and economic hardship – no doubt exacerbated by the poor maintenance of their homes – experienced by residents, many of whom did not become involved with participation efforts. The records left by more active tenants and their documented interactions with the council create a persuasive story of activism in which most tenants did not formally partake. Nevertheless, evidence from tenants' associations and representatives of the Hulme Study offer an important counterpoint to one-dimensional depictions of the victimised multi-storey council tenant.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined how architectural design and housing policies have helped to cultivate discourses of the rise and fall of multi-storey council housing. The first high-density, deck-access estate of its kind, Park Hill's association with utopian forms of housing in the early post-war years has fostered similarly exaggerated portrayals of its later decline. Shrouded in the proclamations of its architects and City Council planners that it could preserve traditional ways of living in a modern

[207] RRRC: GB3228.3/5/38, Manchester City Council, Director of Housing, *Hulme Initial Action Plan – Housing Section* (Manchester, 1991), p. 12.
[208] Shapely, 'Tenants Arise!', p. 63.

setting, the reputation of the Sheffield estate as an ambitious, architectural experiment remains central to histories of Park Hill. That it encountered problems shared by other council estates across the country from the 1970s, such as poor maintenance and underinvestment, and ultimately faced clearance and redevelopment at the start of the twenty-first century, has only added weight to depictions of its failure. For Hulme in Manchester, built according to a similar scheme but with industrial techniques becoming increasingly commonplace over a decade after Park Hill's construction, accounts of the estate's demolition are often framed by references to inevitability. Discourses of Hulme have emphasised the rapid deterioration of the built environment, the lack of consultation among residents prior to the estate's multi-storey redevelopment, and the multiple deprivation experienced by tenants throughout the 1980s and 1990s to explain its alignment with the fall of this type of housing. The product of the council's search for a rapid, low-cost solution to the housing needs of the local population, Hulme's architectural and policymaking legacy is one seemingly emblematic of failure from the start.

Without dismissing the very real problems experienced by the residents of these places – who felt changing approaches to the funding and maintenance of Park Hill and Hulme most keenly – this chapter has offered a more complex account of these estates. While highlighting the dual intentions apparent in Park Hill's design, which sought to preserve a sense of 'working-class community' in conjunction with measures for privacy as a concession to individuals, it has shown that economic considerations also informed the approaches of its architects. Moreover, as indicated briefly here but discussed in more detail in the third chapter, residents' spatial practices did not necessarily conform to the social prescriptions imagined by Park Hill's architects and planners, particularly after the first wave of tenants moved elsewhere. In recognising the limitations of plans for Park Hill that were influenced by economic factors from the outset, it is possible to question the foundations of its discursive construction as an example of misplaced idealism prevalent in the post-war years. Considering Hulme, the chapter has shown that its multi-storey redevelopment constituted the culmination of longer-term debates as to the viability of this form of housing undertaken by Manchester City Council since the late 1950s. Although the green light for Hulme's construction came after the Conservative local election victory in 1967, thereby accounting to some extent for the local authority's shift on the subject of high-density, deck-access flats in Hulme, plans for the estate were in progress from the mid-1960s.

A focus upon local housing policy has demonstrated how ideas as to the suitability of certain tenants for multi-storey living changed over the course of the post-war period. Across the country, scholarly thought helped to transform spaces such as the 'streets in the sky' from points of contact between neighbours to deterministic forms of design capable of facilitating criminal

activity. These ideas helped to shift the responsibility for the estates' maintenance onto residents themselves, with the local authorities identifying some tenants as incompatible with multi-storey living, particularly young adults. In Hulme, concerns for the safety of families with young children raised by tenant campaigning saw a gradual policy shift from the mid-1970s, leading to the cessation of new allocations to these groups of tenants to flats above the ground in most blocks. This opened the door for more transient tenants; people who not only moved to the estate for a short-term housing solution, but who were previously established as single tenants in Hulme but later moved elsewhere in search of family living. Allocation policies also represented a point of concern for Sheffield City Council, with the Housing Department conceding that its approach to housing tenants of greatest need in unpopular estates had contributed to perceptions of an area's stigmatisation. These understandings of suitability, employed differently by the respective councils, reflected in addition ideas of the 'inner city' by the late 1970s, to which mass, multi-storey estates like Park Hill and Hulme became attached as archetypal spaces of multiple deprivation.

Preconceptions of their inhabitants sparked tensions between architectural and managerial approaches to these estates. Despite the introduction of political mechanisms for tenant participation in planning and housing policy towards the end of the 1960s, it still faced limitations throughout the latter decades of the twentieth century. The communication of tenants' perspectives through social surveys and council reports at Park Hill was limited, and irrespective of more formal and integrative processes for participation in Hulme – as intended in the creation of the Hulme Study – residents struggled to make their voices heard. Nevertheless, the study of Hulme tenants' involvement in consultation exercises by the council allows for the complication of discourses of the apathetic or victimised tenant often ascribed to these estates, even if their efforts often proved unsuccessful. Hulme's demolition in the late 1990s and Park Hill's clearance and ongoing redevelopment from the mid-2000s, may initially seem confirmation of discourses of the inevitable decline of council housing built according to a high-density, deck-access design. However, by addressing the architectural ideas, policy approaches, and tenant involvement in the management of each estate, a more intricate picture of Park Hill and Hulme emerges. This is vital to transcending the narrow discursive confines within which the legacy of these places remains bound.

There are key differences between the estates that must be considered in a study of their design and management. Chronology forms part of this, with Park Hill built at a time when it could be called the first of its kind, while Hulme appeared later, following controversies over the safety of high flats and their suitability for family living, debates fuelled by the Ronan Point

disaster.[209] Hulme's mode of construction, with flats built through new industrial techniques, also set it apart from the Sheffield estate, helping to explain in part the relative and ongoing structural viability of the latter. The reality behind notions of 'success' ascribed to Park Hill is that Sheffield City Council did construct an estate that has remained structurally sound, albeit while necessitating considerable levels of maintenance increasingly unsustainable to the local authority. Moreover, in the same decade as demolition work began in Hulme, Park Hill's listing ensured its survival. Ultimately, however, the approaches to management undertaken by the respective local authorities, as well as changing central government policies and cultural attitudes towards council housing more broadly, had significant consequences for each estate. A greater focus upon these factors, rather than the seemingly inherent disadvantages of high-density, multi-storey housing or the actions of certain resident groups, helps to explain the opposing circumstances of Park Hill and Hulme by the end of the twentieth century.

[209] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 313.

Chapter Two: The Press and Multi-Storey Council Housing

In November 1993, the *Manchester Evening News* offered readers a glimpse of Hulme's future housing stock. With two of the estate's four Crescents already reduced to rubble and demolition work ongoing, the newspaper looked ahead to the construction of their replacement in the spring. The article's images showed architectural plans, set to comprise 600 private homes, 'varying from flats to four-bedroom houses…[built] in traditional street patterns'.[1] Quoting Manchester City Councillors and the Deputy Chairman of the private development company tasked with rebuilding the estate, the *Evening News* article framed the changes to Hulme as a necessary step to bringing 'life back into the rundown area'.[2] Yet this focus upon Hulme's future also contained traces of its past. In characterising the Crescents' demolition, the article stated, 'misery flats make way for city homes designed in the old-fashioned way' and emphasised the ways in which the development followed the 'traditional style' of house-building. Its reference to the Crescents as 'the former slum' echoed the language of coverage of areas designated for clearance in the 1950s and 1960s, while Councillor David Lunts's description of the new houses as "'stylish and continental'" evoked the European influences of the earlier post-war years over Hulme's deck-access design.[3] Even the return of images of architectural plans and councillors mirrored the ways in which the press had once depicted multi-storey redevelopment projects like Sheffield's Park Hill. The *Evening News* hinted at the historical similarities of its representation in a caption that noted, 'Crescent goes full circle'.

The article indicates the endurance of thematic, linguistic, and visual continuities in press coverage of multi-storey council housing over the post-war years. Newspapers still used ideas of community, class and gender to underscore representations of high flats and discursively produce the identities of tenants, but the extent to which the press viewed the policy of multi-storey development favourably had changed significantly by the time of Hulme's demolition. In evidencing aspects of the continuities and changes of press coverage, this chapter ultimately illuminates how newspapers reworked established cultural discourses to create alternate frames of multi-storey council housing in the late twentieth century. While newspapers constructed representations according to an overarching framework of success and failure, the ways in which these discourses played out in relation to sub-themes of community, class and gender differed over time. By understanding press coverage in relation to 'frames' of representation, this chapter

[1] Janine Watson, 'Right up your street', *Manchester Evening News,* 24 November 1993.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*

demonstrates how newspapers used similar themes, language, and images to develop contrasting depictions of Park Hill and Hulme between the 1950s and the 1990s.

Towering above their conventional low-rise counterparts, multi-storey flats across the country provided a stark attestation to the changing urban landscape of post-war England. Captured in documentaries, television series, and newspapers, the stories and images of estates became entrenched in popular culture throughout this period. In 1962, Sheffield City Council commissioned the production of the *Park Hill Housing Project*. Spanning 33 minutes, the documentary showed Park Hill's early years, exploring the flats' interiors, as well as the café, bakers, and shops of the 'Pavement', to build a detailed picture of the estate.[4] *Park Hill Housing Project* showcased the possibilities of multi-storey living, echoing the interwar documentaries that had promoted new forms of modernist housing.[5] Nevertheless, in depicting groups of neighbours talking, children playing together, and milk floats traversing the street decks, the documentary also highlighted the endurance of traditional symbols of working-class culture despite the novelty of the estate's design. Early representations of Hulme were not so favourable. In 1978, the estate featured in the investigative documentary series *World in Action* on ITV. The episode illustrated the extent of poverty in Hulme, largely attributing its deprivation to the flats' deck-access design and already raising the question of their demolition just a decade after their construction.[6]

Park Hill did not escape these later changes to the reception of multi-storey council housing. In films and television series, the post-war deck-access flats have served as the backdrop for areas of crime, violence, and economic hardship, denoting the ongoing association of this form of housing with decline, irrespective of the individual circumstances of estates.[7] More broadly, novels like J. G. Ballard's *High Rise,* published in 1975, entrenched understandings of high flats as synonymous with social and material decline. Parts of the post-war press viewed the novel and its depiction of residents' deprivation, immorality and chaos spurred by the tower block in which they lived, as a cautionary tale for housing redevelopment. For the *Daily Express, High Rise* offered an 'eerie glimpse into the future' and confirmed 'long held' understandings of high flats as places

[4] Yorkshire Film Archive (YFA): YFA3315, *Park Hill Housing Project* [film] (Sheffield City Council, 1962).

[5] Emily Cuming, *Housing, Class and Gender in Modern British Writing, 1880-2013* (Cambridge, 2016), p. 168.

[6] Owen Hatherley, *A Guide to the New Ruins of Great Britain* (London, 2010), p. 125.

[7] For example, in the television mini-series *This is England '86* [television], directed by Tom Harper and Shane Meadows (Warp Films, 2010) and *This is England '90* [television], directed by Shane Meadows (Warp Films, 2015). Park Hill is also used as a stand-in for Belfast's Divis Flats in *'71*, a film set during the Troubles, see *'71* [film], directed by Yann Demange (Crab Apple Films, Warp Films, Film4, BFI Film Fund, Screen Yorkshire, Creative Scotland, 2014).

'notorious for producing delinquency and broken homes'.[8] The book's publishers certainly wanted to highlight the intersections between fiction and social commentary, with the blurb of the 1975 edition characterising *High Rise* as a "warning of what the future will bring".[9] Offering little indication of a sense of place, representations like these have effectively homogenised the appearance of multi-storey council housing across time and space, embedding cultural assumptions of its deprivation so firmly as to render the contextualisation of specific estates unnecessary. As Joe Moran has argued, the height, appearance of concrete, and apparent pervasiveness of multi-storey blocks has enhanced their 'embarrassing visibility' and subsequently widespread association with housing failure.[10]

This chapter explores the development of these cultural representations of multi-storey council estates, from their discursive construction as modern, ambitious housing projects, to their seeming embodiment of material and social deprivation towards the latter part of the twentieth century. It maintains a focus on the Park Hill flats in Sheffield and Manchester's Hulme, but widens its geographical scope to situate popular perceptions of both in a national context. While novels, films and documentaries help to demonstrate the changing role of multi-storey council housing in the public imagination, and serve as an important reminder of the cultural saturation of these places across a relatively short period of time, their ability to communicate details specific to Park Hill and Hulme is limited. To explore cultural attitudes towards these estates, this chapter concentrates instead on their representation in the press. The press constituted a key site for the construction and contestation of attitudes towards this type of housing. While this is not to suggest that newspapers packaged reports accepted by readers without challenge, the chapter argues that the framing of coverage of multi-storey council housing shaped its cultural reception.

For James Curran and Colin Sparks, although readers did not accept messages produced by the media without question, the context in which the press reported upon certain news items limited their meaning to such an extent that they offered a 'preferred reading'.[11] Curran and Sparks's work drew clear distinctions between 'understanding' and 'interpretation', recognising that audiences may share a common understanding of a report even if their responses to it differed, to conclude that 'structured systems of belief and thought' rooted in the press restricted the range of

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[8] Peter Grosvenor, 'Clear thinking, by a man who saw through the fog', *Daily Express,* 14 November 1975. *The Guardian* also recognised the novel's function as a warning for future multi-storey redevelopment in C. J. Driver, 'Myths and history', *The Guardian,* 13 November 1975.

[9] Lorna Sage, 'Nabokov in transition: Fiction', *The Observer*, 23 November 1975.

[10] Joe Moran, *Reading the everyday* (London, 2005), p. 141.

[11] James Curran and Colin Sparks, 'Press and popular culture', *Media, Culture & Society,* 13/2 (1991), pp. 224-226.

its interpretation.[12] This too limited the representativeness of reports, with Martin Conboy arguing that newspapers produced a series of discourses that sought to 'define and set limitations on the concept and the content of a culture claiming to represent the people'.[13] In their research into representations of the welfare state, Peter Golding and Sue Middleton stated that media coverage 'provides a vocabulary and a set of explanations that can focus inexact personal observations into cogent social theory', suggesting a causal link between the press and cultural attitudes, as well as newspapers' limited framing of social inequalities.[14]

The years between the late 1950s and the late 1990s represented a period of considerable media change, in which new technologies jostled for dominance. The national press became increasingly partisan, with only *The Guardian* and *Daily Mirror* opposing the Conservative editorial line of most national newspapers by the mid-1980s.[15] In the meantime, the ownership of existing publications became similarly concentrated, meaning that by 1981, three large, multi-national media groups controlled the daily circulation of national newspapers.[16] The sensationalist rhetoric and images used to characterise multi-storey council housing from the 1970s owed much to the dominance of tabloid newspapers, and their influence over the journalistic model adopted by more 'traditional' newspapers, during the latter part of the twentieth century.[17] Yet even as this engendered a growing scepticism of 'authority figures' and the introduction of new voices in the press, readers' access to divergent viewpoints of multi-storey flats remained limited, with newspapers largely echoing political condemnations of council housing.[18] Recent sociological research has highlighted the extent to which such 'external' understandings of certain neighbourhoods can influence the 'internal' attitudes of their residents, identifying the role of negative press coverage in exaggerating and sensationalising underlying issues.[19] Whether newspapers accurately represented multi-storey life or not, they had the power to shape residents'

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[12] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

[13] Martin Conboy, *The Press and Popular Culture* (London, 2002), p. 8.

[14] Peter Golding and Sue Middleton, *Images of Welfare: Press and Public Attitudes to Poverty* (Oxford, 1982), p. 173.

[15] Nancy Murray, 'Anti-racists and other demons: the press and ideology in Thatcher's Britain', *Race and Class,* 27 (1986), p. 3.

[16] Golding and Middleton, *Images of Welfare*, p. 173.

[17] Adrian Bingham and Martin Conboy, *Tabloid Century: The Popular Press in Britain, 1896 to the present* (Oxford, 2015), p. 2.

[18] Henrik Örnebring and Anna Maria Jönsson, 'Tabloid journalism and the public sphere: a historical perspective on tabloid journalism', *Journalism Studies,* 5/3 (2004), p. 293; Keith Jacobs, Jim Kemeny and Tony Manzi, 'Privileged or exploited council tenants? The discursive change in Conservative housing policy from 1972 to 1980', *Policy & Politics,* 31/3 (2003), p. 314.

[19] Frank Wassenberg, 'Large Social Housing Estates: From Stigma to Demolition?', *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment,* 19/3 (2004), p. 277.

attitudes towards their homes, making their consideration vital to understanding Park Hill and Hulme's lived experience.

In focusing on press representations of the built environment and its tenants, the chapter highlights themes of class, gender and race. It draws examples from the national press but maintains a focus primarily on local newspapers. While national newspapers responded to issues relating to multi-storey council housing more broadly, the local press focused on specific estates in more depth, thus lending a greater sense of immediacy and severity to problems ultimately associated with multi-storey living. As research has established, the local press especially played an instrumental part in constructing the reputation of a particular area.[20] The first section analyses the content of newspaper coverage of Park Hill and Hulme, tracing shifts in the estates' discursive production from the 1950s to the 1990s. It demonstrates how far the selective framing of tenants, policymakers and planners, and architectural design, saw the press dichotomously represent multi-storey council housing as either a success or failure. The second section explores how far changing coverage of these estates reflected newspapers' approaches to the use of sources over this period. It highlights the primacy of 'official' voices in the press, used in turn to reinforce reports that celebrated and condemned multi-storey council housing. While the authority ascribed to the architects and planners who championed multi-storey living in the early post-war years had waned by the 1970s, some 'expert' voices remained integral to reports, with newspapers calling upon figures like Oscar Newman to substantiate increasingly negative coverage. The inclusion of tenants' perspectives did little to correct this imbalance, with tenant interviews and letters to newspapers largely subscribing to the chronology of multi-storey 'rise and fall' that framed press representations. The final section focuses on the visual construction of Park Hill and Hulme. It charts how the presentation of the material environment of each estate, and the visibility of certain groups of tenants in different contexts, influenced the image of multi-storey housing over this period.

The chapter draws upon articles accessed through digital and local archival collections. While the digitisation of several national newspapers has helped to facilitate their use, most local newspapers have yet to receive similar treatment. Existing collections of press cuttings proved instrumental in finding relevant sources. These include those gathered by staff at the Sheffield Local Studies Library from *The Star* and the *Sheffield Telegraph* from 1956 to 1981, and the Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre's Hulme Study collection in Manchester, from 1988

[20] Ade Kearns, Oliver Kearns and Louise Lawson, 'Notorious Places: Image, Reputation, Stigma. The Role of Newspapers in Area Reputations for Social Housing Estates', *Housing Studies,* 28/4 (2013), p. 592.

to 1992. Otherwise, searches by keyword and date helped to locate articles, with dates aligning with important developments on the estates such as their construction, opening, citation in national press coverage, and respective listing and demolition. This chapter does not, therefore, claim to offer an entirely comprehensive account of all press coverage relating to these estates. Nevertheless, through this collection of articles, it is possible to map the development of cultural discourses of multi-storey council housing.

Constructing multi-storey 'success' and 'failure'

This section explores changing cultural discourses of multi-storey council housing from the 1950s to the 1990s. Beginning with press coverage of plans for Park Hill's redevelopment and its early cultural reception, it highlights how far both local and national newspapers discursively produced multi-storey council housing as emblematic of modernity and post-war reconstruction. The section demonstrates the centrality of certain tenant groups, such as women and children, to this representational approach, with the press using understandings of community, class and gender to frame multi-storey estates like Park Hill as a 'success' in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The focus of the section then shifts to explore the ways in which newspapers utilised these themes from the 1970s. Although still relevant to press coverage, in the context of the changing cultural, political and economic landscape of the late twentieth century, newspapers drew upon ideas of community, class and gender to highlight the interrelationship between social problems and multi-storey council housing. Discourses of modernity and post-war reconstruction remained at the heart of these representations, but the press articulated them differently by the 1970s, portraying Park Hill and Hulme instead as evidence for the failures of urban planning. National developments like the partial collapse of Ronan Point helped to legitimise this focus. Finally, the section considers how newspapers used language to alter the cultural meaning of these estates over time. Ultimately, the section argues that the extent to which ideas of the 'success' or 'failure' of Park Hill and Hulme gained traction in late twentieth-century society, depended largely upon the selective discursive framing of these estates and their tenants in the post-war press.

Amidst accelerating slum clearance programmes alongside the use of overspill estates, local authorities across Britain turned to multi-storey housing in the 1950s to reassert the 'optimistic futures' of their cities.[21] High flats constituted a visible sign of progress and growth, epitomising the possibilities of urban planning during a period of full employment and economic prosperity. While largely rhetorical, the optimism of post-war city plans had become embedded in political

[21] Lynn Abrams, Ade Kearns, Barry Hazley and Valerie Wright, *Glasgow: High-Rise Homes, Estates and Communities in the Post-War Period* (Abingdon, 2020), p. 11.

and cultural discourses by the time of Park Hill's redevelopment.[22] In this context, the press represented the Sheffield estate's construction as a success. In 1956, Sheffield newspaper *The Star* characterised Park Hill's construction as 'the most ambitious [project] ever undertaken' by the City Council, favourably comparing the flats not only to the housing they replaced, but also to other multi-storey developments of post-war England.[23] For *The Times* in 1962, Park Hill's deck-access design represented an 'imaginative' and 'impressive' example of post-war housing innovation, stating that the estate constituted the 'one exception' to the otherwise total concentration of new, inventive housing schemes in London.[24] In 1962, *The Guardian* praised Park Hill as a 'heroic' example of architectural design, highlighting its pedestrianisation and the provision of communal spaces.[25]

Newspapers used this architectural focus to frame Park Hill as a global success. *The Times* described Sheffield's reputation for council housing as 'international', citing Park Hill and Hyde Park as the city's 'best known' developments.[26] In several articles in the early 1970s, the newspaper characterised the multi-storey estate as 'the largest single development of its kind in Western Europe', an accolade also highlighted in the *Sheffield Telegraph.*[27] In June 1975, *The Guardian* stated that 'Park Hill, all of 18 years old, is wearing better than most of the developments around the world which it inspired', speculating that this was due to 'a very careful initial lettings programme combined with good management'.[28] Newspapers also offered comparisons closer to home. In 1962, *The Guardian* featured a report outlining the ways in which Wigan Council had attempted to follow Park Hill's approach to amenities when embarking on new multi-storey housing schemes.[29] Similarly, a 1966 report in *The Times* commented that other cities had much to learn from Sheffield City Council's approach to multi-storey redevelopment at Park Hill.[30] 'Compared with the bleak

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[22] James Greenhalgh, *Reconstructing Modernity: Space, Power and Governance in Mid-Twentieth Century British Cities* (Manchester, 2017), p. 66.

[23] '£2,300,000 for Sheffield Flats', *The Star*, 18 June 1956.

[24] 'Impressive planning for rehousing in Sheffield', *The Times,* 15 September 1961.

[25] Diana Rowntree, 'Hidden masterpiece: a study of Sheffield architecture', *The Guardian,* 17 April 1962.

[26] Paul Kimball, 'Massive facelift marks new prosperity', *The Times,* 10 November 1969.

[27] Ronald Kershaw, 'Planning series of communities with own corporate spirit', *The Times,* 30 June 1972; Ronald Faux, 'Plant with hardy roots flowers afresh', *The Times,* 30 June 1972; John Young, 'Now for something completely different – Indian and American vistas in Yorkshire', *The Times,* 14 October 1974; 'The Children's Paradise: A Triumph of Design and Planning that Challenges all Europe', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 16 June 1961.

[28] Robert Waterhouse, 'Sheffield: A divided city perhaps, but one that has managed to diversify its industries as well as its amenities', *The Guardian,* 5 June 1975.

[29] 'Public houses in flats: Plan for a council estate', *The Guardian,* 9 August 1962.

[30] 'Building the quick way', *The Times,* 22 June 1966.

towers of Glasgow or Manchester', the newspaper reported in 1974, '[Park Hill] represents style, imagination and sympathy'.[31]

Yet this framing of multi-storey council housing did not rely solely upon ideals of urban planning. Newspapers also tied Park Hill to notions of class and community. In 1962, the *Sheffield Telegraph* used a quote by Housing Manager H. J. Aldhous to emphasise the importance of a classed sense of respectability among residents to ensure Park Hill's 'success'. In bold lettering beneath the headline, the quote read, "'So long as your neighbour is clean and tidy, makes no undue noise at night, and only uses his electric drill before television starts, you can live next door for years without friction'".[32] Here, the newspaper presented the estate's 'success' primarily in relation to the behavioural standards of its working-class tenants, reinforcing the cultural paradigm of 'roughness' and 'respectability' consistently used to represent working-class housing since the interwar period.[33] The local newspaper evidently presented 'community' as an integral component to life on the estate, an approach also apparent in its characterisation of Park Hill as 'a rich and telling example of progressive building for the community - with the community itself as one of the materials'.[34] This representational interconnection endured throughout the 1960s, with *The Times* using ideas of community to argue for Park Hill's continuing 'success'. In a 1969 article, the newspaper stated, 'eight years after the flats were opened, it is obvious that the idea [behind Park Hill] has worked', crediting its proximity to the city centre and provision of amenities as having created a 'community' tied to both the estate and the wider city.[35]

Certain tenant groups such as women, the elderly and children constituted a core element of these depictions of class and community in the press. Focusing on aspects of everyday life in the flats, newspapers used these tenants to reflect the social values championed by the estate's architectural design and evaluate its success. In June 1959, the *Sheffield Telegraph* reported that prospective tenants identified as 'housewives', 'pensioners' and 'children' had declared the multi-storey flats "'wonderful'", while in August 1961, *The Star* reported that Hyde Park's highest flats had offered elderly women a 'new lease of life'.[36] Women recounted how they barely noticed the height – only when 'cleaning windows' – and did not fear for their children's safety playing on the

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[31] 'Now for something completely different', *The Times,* 14 October 1974.

[32] Geoffrey Nash, 'Park Hill – it's a success, say the tenants', *The Star,* 30 May 1962.

[33] Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor, *Moving Histories of Class and Community: Identity, Place and Belonging in Contemporary England* (Basingstoke, 2011), p. 18.

[34] Peter Sizer, 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

[35] Gordon Aspland, 'Achievements in bulk housing', *The Times,* 10 November 1969.

[36] 'The Verdict: Wonderful. Multi-floor flats project on show to the public', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 6 June 1959; 'City's Top Flat Means New Lease on Life for Tenant', *The Star,* 12 August 1961.

street decks.[37] The *Sheffield Telegraph* dubbed the flats a 'children's paradise'.[38] Advertisements for domestic goods also attempted to appeal to Park Hill's women residents, imploring 'housewives' to 'take a lead from these cost and performance-conscious local authorities' and buy new appliances.[39] While the post-war period saw working women attempt to reframe gendered constructions of domesticity, these articles and advertisements illustrate how far understandings of women's connection to the home endured in the 1950s and 1960s.[40]

From the 1970s, however, the press largely altered its approach to representing multi-storey council housing. The optimistic association of high flats with modernity and post-war reconstruction in the context of economic growth in the 1950s and 1960s, failed to resonate with the rising levels of unemployment and inflation apparent in the early 1970s.[41] With the rhetoric of ambition and progress no longer sustainable, the press instead portrayed multi-storey council estates as symptomatic of decline. This framing also saw the reworking of other discourses previously connected to high flats, with newspapers using references to community, class and gender to highlight the social problems seemingly inherent to this form of housing. Articles became more attuned to clashes between local councils and planners on the one hand, and tenants on the other, often stylising their interactions as conflicts between 'mothers' and 'officials'. This also suggests how newspapers used tenants to reinforce the material and social deprivation of high flats, disparately labelling certain groups the victims or orchestrators of their poor environment. The underlying discursive and thematic continuities between representations of the 1950s and 1960s, and those from the 1970s until the turn of the century, demonstrate the power of the post-war press to create and disseminate alternative frames of multi-storey council housing.

Events at Ronan Point in May 1968 helped to facilitate this shift in newspapers' representational approach. The partial collapse of the East London tower block occurred following a gas explosion and killed four residents. It sparked a slew of national coverage concerning the safety of high flats, as well as more sensationalised depictions of multi-storey living. While some reports used Ronan Point to raise questions as to the reliability of the use of gas in high flats, and amplified the worries of residents in multi-storey blocks elsewhere in the country, others offered

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[37] 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

[38] 'The Children's Paradise', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 16 June 1961.

[39] Advertisement, *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

[40] Dolly Smith Wilson, 'A New Look at the Affluent Worker: The Good Working Mother in Post-War Britain', *Twentieth Century British History,* 17/2 (2006), p. 207.

[41] Jacobs, Kemeny and Manzi, 'Privileged or exploited council tenants?', p. 309.

a more editorialised account of the aftermath of the explosion.[42] For example, in a double-page article printed the day after Ronan Point's collapse, the *Daily Mirror* described how 'mothers grabbed babies and ran', providing a floor-by-floor account of the damage done to individual flats.[43] For the *Daily Express,* the explosion signified a growing rift between post-war planners and tenants. The newspaper used Ronan Point to contrast the fears of 'thousands of people who live in tower blocks of council flats', with the reassurances of the borough architect for Newham – where Ronan Point was situated – who asserted that the flats remained 'perfectly safe' despite the explosion.[44] This tension became a recurring frame of press coverage thereafter. From the 1970s, local newspapers followed this approach to portray Park Hill and Hulme as evidence for the transition from the 'dreams' of former years to the later 'nightmares' of everyday life.[45]

As the *Daily Mirror* report of Ronan Point's collapse suggests, certain tenant groups such as women and children were crucial to later representations of multi-storey failure. In Sheffield, newspapers drew upon women's perspectives to highlight tenant dissatisfaction with the rising cost of living in multi-storey blocks across the city, complaints about insect infestations and noise from nearby steelworks, and concerns over children's isolation and safety.[46] In May 1976, *The Star* described how 'worried city mums', fearful for their children following news of a series of sexual assaults on young people locally, had drawn up a rota to supervise play at Park Hill.[47] In making the location of previous attacks the focus of the article, *The Star* framed their occurrence as an issue specifically related to the material environment of 'blocks of flats'.[48] Using the testimonies of women residents to further this approach, the article outlined how mothers at Park Hill struggled to monitor their children's whereabouts due to the estate's layout, quoting resident Catherine Duncan, who explained, "'if my children go out to play at the playgrounds it is impossible for me to keep an eye on them from my kitchen window"'.[49] In framing coverage of the attacks around women and children, *The Star* not only added to debates over the suitability of families in high

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[42] For examples of the safety debates covered by the press, see Bertram Jones and James Davies, 'No-gas flats row flares', *Daily Express,* 16 August 1968; Frank Roberts, 'National gas warning on high flats', *The Times,* 16 August 1968; Sidney Williams, 'Greenwood: Cut off sky flats gas at once', *Daily Mirror,* 14 November 1968; Ronald Ricketts, 'Council to evacuate 1,000 in sky flats', *Daily Mirror,* 15 November 1968; Sidney Williams, 'Sky flats rebellion ends at midnight', *Daily Mirror,* 16 November 1968.

[43] 'Hell tumbles down at Ronan Point', *Daily Mirror,* 17 May 1968.

[44] 'Flats are safe, says architect', *Daily Express,* 17 May 1968.

[45] Bernard Spilsbury, 'Hulme and Beswick - what went wrong?' *Manchester Evening News,* 23 June 1973; 'The Park Hill 'Nightmare"', *The Star,* 19 May 1980; Gerald Brown, 'Never Again', *Manchester Evening News*, 9 April 1981.

[46] 'Life at the top lonely for flats children', *The Star,* 18 August 1964; 'Flats Plagued by Invading Earwigs', *The Star,* 10 July 1971; 'Tenants face steep rise in heating costs', *The Star,* 2 October 1971; 'Park Hill flat noise problem unsolved', *The Star,* 2 October 1973.

[47] 'Worried city mums in playground vigil', *The Star*, 10 May 1976.

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Ibid.*

flats, but also reinforced the salience of ideas of women's respectability to the discursive construction of victimhood in crime reporting.[50]

The national press also intensified debates over children's place in multi-storey housing. In September 1970, *The Times* printed an article with the headline 'Multi-storey flats: a generation in danger'. Citing a report by the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) throughout, the article amplified the organisation's link between poor child development, feelings of isolation among mothers, and the poor amenities found in multi-storey estates.[51] In October 1970, the *Daily Express* used the same NSPCC report to underscore news that Whickham Council in County Durham had followed in the footsteps of Liverpool and the Greater London Council in attempting to limit the number of children housed in flats off the ground. Concerned over reports of children becoming 'shy, withdrawn and backward at school', without gardens or places to play with other children at home, and due to the isolation again attributed to multi-storey living, the council declared that high flats posed "'too many risks and dangers for young children'".[52] Although these articles offer some examples of straight news reporting, the press also used stories about children to underscore not only ideas of housing failure, but the ways in which their homes exemplified cultural shifts of the late twentieth century. For example, in September 1970, the *Daily Mirror* reported on a new housing allocation system in Liverpool under which three hundred families with children under the age of nine would be rehoused from multi-storey flats to ground-floor accommodation. While the newspaper noted practical shortcomings of the flats' spaciousness for families with young children, especially those who could not play safely in the roads that surrounded many estates, it also portrayed the flats as having 'interfered with family life', depicting multi-storey living at odds with ideas of the traditional family home.[53] The *Mirror* report indicates how far high flats had come to symbolise the decline of traditional forms of working-class culture by 1970, despite children having moved gradually away from aspects of this such as street play since the early 1950s, partly due to the rising 'material comfort' of homes and popularity of televisions.[54]

In the latter decades of the twentieth century, the press also used multi-storey council housing to frame societal anxieties over crime. In 1980, Sheffield newspaper *The Star* relied on

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[50] On the gendered construction of 'victim credibility' see, Louise Wattis, 'Exploring gender and fear retrospectively: stories of women's fear during the 'Yorkshire Ripper' murders', *Gender, Place & Culture,* 24/8 (2017), p. 1073.

[51] Pat Healey, 'Multi-storey flats: a generation in danger', *The Times,* 11 September 1970. The report discussed in the article is W. F. R. Stewart, *Children in Flats: A Family Study, NSPCC* (London, 1970).

[52] Adella Lithman, 'Children banned from sky flats', *Daily Express,* 15 October 1970.

[53] Frank Corless, 'Sky flat families get new homes', *Daily Mirror,* 28 September 1970.

[54] Matthew Thomson, *Lost Freedom: The Landscape of the Child and the British Post-War Settlement* (Oxford, 2014), p. 144.

familiar representational tropes of the architects' 'dream' of reconstruction and modernity, to exaggerate the scale of the 'people's nightmare' experienced by Park Hill residents facing rising levels of crime in the area.[55] Newspapers in Manchester followed a similar line, primarily framing reports around anti-social behaviour, drug abuse and gun crime in the 1980s and early 1990s.[56] However, from the early 1970s, the press often associated the crime of mugging with these estates. The historical context to such reports is key, with Stuart Hall describing 1972 as 'the moment of the mugger' following widespread media attention on violent events like Bloody Sunday and concerns over the reach of law and order surrounding the miners' strike, regardless of any actual increase in instances of muggings in particular.[57] Steve Chibnall has argued that the power of stories focusing on muggings derived from 'the apparently random way in which victims and venues for the crime were selected', with this rendering the crime symbolic of 'non-specific feelings of tension and unease in society'.[58] Without disputing the latter, press coverage of Hulme demonstrates the ways in which newspapers also framed causal connections between muggings and high flats. In 1993, the *Manchester Evening News* described the multi-storey estate as a 'mecca for muggers', with *The Observer* noting that, 'only two years after the crescents had been completed, there was the fear of vandalism and mugging'.[59] The *Telegraph Magazine* remarked that mugging had become 'commonplace' prior to Hulme's redevelopment, while *The Observer* drew a correlation between the level of muggings on the estate in 1986 and the design of the Crescents, buildings that the newspaper presented as inherently 'aggressive'.[60]

In October 1988, Manchester City Council acknowledged the prevalence of muggings in Hulme, and a study into health on the estate undertaken in 1992 highlighted how the fear of muggers led some residents to remain indoors during dark, winter evenings.[61] Sheffield tenants

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[55] 'The Park Hill 'Nightmare'', *The Star,* 19 May 1980. National newspapers also covered instances of criminal activity at Park Hill, see 'Quizzed man: I'm not a killer', *Daily Express,* 31 December 1986; ''Child workers' try to kidnap sisters', *Daily Express,* 8 February 1990.

[56] Russell Jenkins, 'Horrors of the Concrete Jungle', *Manchester Evening News*, 22 February 1985; Gerald Brown, 'Gloom crescents facing hammer', *Manchester Evening News*, 4 July 1990; Stephen Kelly, 'The Moss Side Mob', *The Guardian*, 15 December 1990; Sarah Champion, 'Hulme Requiem', *Weekend Guardian*, 23 May 1992; Gordon Burn, 'A Moss Side Story', *Observer Magazine*, 21 February 1993; Dan Ehrlich, 'Moss Side Story', *Daily Mail,* 9 January 1993.

[57] Stuart Hall, Chas Critcher, Tony Jefferson, John Clarke and Brian Roberts, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (London, 1978), pp. 17; 287-288.

[58] Steve Chibnall, *Law-and-order news: an analysis of crime reporting in the British press* (Abingdon, 1977), p. 126.

[59] 'Right up your street', *Manchester Evening News,* 24 November 1993; Stephen Gardiner, 'Good riddance to the Hulme horror', *The Observer,* 10 January 1993.

[60] Michael Watts, 'Voices from Hulme', *Telegraph Magazine,* 20 March 1993; Stephen Gardiner, 'Knock down this disgraceful estate', *The Observer*, 5 January 1986. Other examples of press coverage relating to muggings in Hulme: Michael Morris, 'Tenants demand 'people first' policy', *The Guardian*, 22 June 1987; Erlend Clouston, ''Peculiar' community's £50m ticket for the space-age tram', *The Guardian*, 1 August 1991.

[61] Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre (hereafter RRRC): GB3228.3/6/18, Manchester City Council, *An approach to policy and management for Hulme* (Manchester 1988); Manchester Archives (hereafter MA):

expressed similar concerns in a meeting in August 1984, held between Sheffield City Council representatives, Park Hill and Hyde Park tenants, and the police. There, the elderly residents in attendance also voiced their concerns about leaving their flats after dark, despite assurances from the police as to the rarity of muggings on the estates.[62] While this may indicate a discrepancy between the occurrence of criminal activity and its reporting to the police, it also suggests the presence of a climate of fear amidst multi-storey tenants that coalesced around the crime of mugging in particular. The influence of connections between mugging and multi-storey council housing had evidently endured past the early 1970s, with the prevalence of such reports in the press likely fuelling residents' concerns. While newspapers did not focus on Park Hill to the same extent as Hulme, in failing to convey the irregularity of criminal activity or offer a more nuanced critique of the relationship between crime and the built environment, representations of muggings in newspapers further homogenised cultural discourses associated with this form of housing.

Coverage of Park Hill's listing in *The Times* indicates the extent to which newspapers had reworked ideas of post-war reconstruction and modernity prevalent in earlier coverage of the estate by the late 1990s. In 1996, a letter to the newspaper stated that Park Hill's multi-storey flats 'epitomise the arrogance of post-war mass housing schemes', but conceded that demolishing the estate would only constitute a return to a '1960s mentality' of urban redevelopment.[63] Despite ultimately calling for Park Hill's preservation and thereby supporting its listing, by printing the letter under the headline 'Keep our monstrous carbuncles', *The Times* presented this reader's opinion as contrary to the seemingly accepted fact of the Sheffield estate's failings. Moreover, the newspaper framed its coverage of the listing to amplify tensions between architectural perspectives of the estate and those of its residents or local people more broadly. One article contrasted the praise Harold Macmillan had once offered to Park Hill, describing it as capable of "'draw[ing] the admiration of the world'", with the words of tenant Reg Balderson, who stated, "'the place is an eyesore. And I should know. I've lived here since 1960'".[64] A later reader's letter printed in December 1998, just after the flats' listing, warned against 'the dangers of adopting what I can only call an art historian's approach to architectural conservation', rather than concentrating on the creation of 'living structures designed by and for the use of people'.[65]

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q362.1042HUL(033), Central Manchester Health Authority, Department of Public Health, *Health and Hulme 1992: Report of Hulme Rapid Appraisal Project* (Manchester, 1993), p. 19.

[62] Sheffield Archives (hereafter SA): LD 2491/1, Sheffield City Council Recreation Department, 'Hyde Park Recreation Strategy: Notes on Meeting Held at 10.00 am on 29 August 1984' (Sheffield, 1984), p. 2.

[63] Giles Worsley, 'Keep our monstrous carbuncles', *The Times,* 3 September 1996.

[64] 'Mod con', *The Times,* 31 August 1996.

[65] 'Conservation of a Sheffield 'eyesore'', *The Times,* 30 December 1998.

In August 1999, the newspaper drew upon interviews held with Park Hill tenants and a Professor of Architecture respectively to shed further light on this conflict. Describing the academic as a fan of 'eccentric living' who had 'three homes, none of which is particularly normal', the article repeatedly called into question his positive view of the flats' architectural significance. It used residents' testimonies to support this framing, quoting a tenant called Michael who stated,

> The professor is an architect so he's seeing it as a building, seeing it as a piece of nostalgia, really. Has he had a rubbish bag set on fire outside his front door? We can see what we want to see, can't we?[66]

While the newspaper's framing of Park Hill's ties to post-war reconstruction and modernity had changed, the 1999 article demonstrates how far the classed elements of its representation had endured. The article evoked the nostalgia mentioned by Michael in its depiction of another tenant, Lena, described as an elderly resident who had lived at Park Hill since 1961. According to *The Times,* 'On Sundays [Lena] sits on her balcony and listens to the hallelujahs waft up from the church. Every morning she takes Dettol and Fairy Liquid and washes her front step and the walkway in front of it'.[67] This characterisation evoked a sense of working-class respectability apparent in earlier representations of Park Hill in the 1960s; an approach reinforced by the newspaper's descriptions of other, younger, tenants as 'unemployed', 'missing several teeth' and 'tattooed'.[68]

The way newspapers linguistically framed high flats also showed the endurance of continuities in representations of Park Hill over time. The language used in some reports erased distinctions between estates and their inhabitants to produce standardised representations of multi-storey council housing. This is particularly evident in relation to the changing use of words like 'skyscraper'. In June 1961, the *Sheffield Telegraph* juxtaposed the 'old Park district slum houses' with Park Hill's new 'skyscraper blocks' in an article that explored 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky'. In a report that praised the estate's 'safety', 'community', and overall 'success', the term 'skyscraper' denoted the relative modernity and architectural ambition of Park Hill, somewhat overstating the visual dominance of an estate that, at some points, reached only four storeys high.[69] The use of 'skyscraper' alongside 'homes in the sky' also highlighted the novelty of multi-storey flats in their seeming embodiment of new ways of living, with the *Sheffield Telegraph* article following the representational approach adopted by the local press since the first announcement of Park

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[66] 'Park Hill Sheffield: ugly council estate or design icon?', *The Times,* 11 August 1999.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

Hill's development in the mid-1950s. These early reports featured detailed information as to the estate's budget, architectural plans, and everyday functionality.[70] *The Star* used 'skyscraper' to a similar effect in July 1961, in a report that stressed the longevity of 'skyscraper blocks of flats' built according to newer 'forms of construction' than interwar developments already marked for demolition in other cities.[71]

However, newspapers' changing use of language constituted another key element of the representational transition from the 'success' to 'failure' of multi-storey council housing. Martin Conboy has argued that, although responsive to changing socio-political contexts to an extent, language in newspapers operated 'within a set of dominant perspectives and within historically specific social formations'.[72] Thus, in the context of the 1970s, the term 'skyscraper' had come to represent the failings of high flats. In 1972, *The Times* ran an article with the headline 'Skyscraper blocks more vulnerable to crime'. Despite referencing Oscar Newman's findings in relation to high flats in New York – specifically the '"high-rise, double-loaded corridor apartment tower"' – the earlier application of 'skyscraper' to deck-access flats amalgamated estates like Park Hill into this frame of representation.[73]

A similar pattern was evident in newspapers' application of the term 'tower block' to both the Sheffield estate and Manchester's Hulme. In December 1998, a *Daily Express* headline stated, 'uproar as tower block is declared part of our heritage'. Although the article referenced the Grade II listing of Trellick Tower in London, built in the tower block style, its text focused overwhelmingly on Park Hill, the history of its development, and interviews with its tenants.[74] Unlike Park Hill, Hulme did consist of some tower blocks, but most of its housing was constructed in the deck-access style. Nevertheless, in reports that specifically related to the deck-access Hulme, *The Times* categorised the estate's high flats as 'tower blocks'. In an article stemming from the Hulme People's Rights Centre's study *Inner City Crisis: Manchester's Hulme,* the newspaper's sub-heading stated 'social workers link suicide with tower blocks'.[75] Although *The Times* briefly acknowledged the architectural difference between Hulme's towers and deck-access flats in the

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[70] For examples see, 'Layout plan for £5 million flats is approved', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 22 February 1958, this figure includes Hyde Park's redevelopment alongside Park Hill; 'City flats have permanent 'life'', *The Star,* 19 July 1961; 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961; 'The Children's Paradise, *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

[71] 'City flats have permanent 'life'', *The Star,* 19 July 1961.

[72] Martin Conboy, *The Language of Newspapers: Socio-Historical Perspectives* (London, 2010), p. 7.

[73] 'Skyscraper blocks more vulnerable to crime', *The Times,* 26 October 1972.

[74] 'High praise falls flat: uproar as tower block is declared part of our heritage', *Daily Express,* 23 December 1998.

[75] The Hulme People's Rights Centre was a voluntary organisation that offered advice to tenants on a range of issues from housing to education. For details of its preliminary report, see MA/q362.104209HU1, Hulme People's Rights Centre, *Inner City Crisis: Manchester's Hulme* (Manchester, 1977).

main body of the text, its analysis repeatedly conflated one with the other in calling for the demolition of 'tall blocks of flats'.[76] The newspaper repeated its approach in a September 1996 report on the estate's redevelopment, characterising Hulme's post-war housing as having consisted of 'crescent-style tower blocks'.[77]

The indiscriminate use of terms like 'skyscraper' and 'tower block' indicates the extent to which newspapers attached certain labels to Park Hill and Hulme to suggest a common experience of multi-storey living across post-war estates, regardless of the architectural differences between each form of housing. This contrasted with the approach of local newspapers in the earlier post-war years, which had attempted to highlight how far the design of Park Hill differed from past multi-storey developments in its promotion of social cohesion, following claims made by the estate's architects themselves.[78] From the 1970s, both estates served as a warning to be heeded in cities home to multi-storey housing across the country. *The Times* described Hulme as 'synonymous with all that is bad in Britain's inner cities', while the *Daily Express* used the Crescents in particular to exemplify its presentation of 'post-war housing' as 'the great British disaster story'.[79] In a 1972 article outlining the need for a greater police presence at Park Hill to counter the 'rampant vandalism', 'terror' and sense of 'danger' felt by some residents, the *Daily Express* described Sheffield as 'a typical British city', to highlight the potential ubiquity of these problems in multi-storey housing elsewhere. Quoting Sheffield City Council's leader, the article stressed, '"what we are faced with – and this is on a national scale, not just in Sheffield – is a breakdown in law and order. A loss of respect for your neighbour and his property"'.[80] Here, the newspaper presented multi-storey housing as symptomatic of ways of living at odds with the moralistic values and social cohesion of an imagined past. Conboy has shown how the selective evocation of history, combined with 'powerful, rhetorical strategies of popular imagination', saw the tabloid press in particular cultivate in part a 'collective memory' of certain events. While Conboy focused on the discursive construction of national memories of the Second World War, his approach suggests the influential capabilities of popular newspapers' reinterpretation of the past.[81]

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[76] 'Demolition of flats sought after nervous complaints and crime', *The Times,* 28 October 1977.

[77] Amanda Loose, 'Houses designed by the community', *The Times,* 18 September 1996.

[78] 'City flats have permanent 'life'', *The Star,* 19 July 1961; 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961; 'The Children's Paradise', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

[79] 'Houses designed by the community', *The Times,* 18 September 1996; 'Housing: The crisis that won't go away', *Daily Express*, 24 July 1978.

[80] Alain Cass, 'The Protectors…How one city plans to help its police', *Daily Express,* 22 November 1972.

[81] Martin Conboy, 'A Tale of Two Battles: History in the popular press', *Media History,* 13/2-3 (2007), p. 265.

The intersection of wider cultural and political discourses of post-war England in newspapers is especially evident in the application of the term 'inner city' to Park Hill and Hulme. Aaron Andrews's work has illustrated the links between the term 'inner city' and primarily black areas of US cities, particularly following riots like the 1965 Watts riots in Los Angeles.[82] The racialised construction of the term largely eclipsed its spatial parameters, but this did not prevent its association with multi-storey council estates. In marking estates as part of the 'inner city', the press followed policymakers' discursive approach to delineating areas of deprivation, albeit infusing the term with more sensationalist rhetoric. Appearing alongside words like 'decay' and 'crisis', the context of the application of 'inner city' to multi-storey estates entrenched ideas of this form of housing as synonymous with decline.[83] As Michael Romyn argued, 'mass media treatments of the inner city ignored the social, economic and historical geographies of place, and ensured that certain districts were stamped ever deeper into the trammels of false assumption'.[84]

Linguistic tropes relating to the inner city emphasised the 'Americanisation' of urban Britain. This is apparent in coverage of the death of Benji Stanley in Moss Side in January 1993. Shot by members of a local gang at just fourteen years old, Benji's death made national newspaper headlines. The racialised nature of coverage cannot be ignored, with the press characterising the shooting of Benji, a young black boy, as symptomatic of the inner-city crisis infiltrating British cities from across the Atlantic. Seven days after the shooting, the *Daily Mail* sent the London correspondent for the *New York Daily News,* Dan Ehrlich, to Moss Side. Ehrlich's 'brief' was to 'examine whether Moss Side was becoming Britain's first Americanised inner-city area, complete with gang warfare and rule by gun'.[85] Ehrlich's conclusion was unequivocal. Connecting the events in Moss Side to the 'race riots' he had witnessed in US cities like Los Angeles, the journalist wrote,

> Moss Side is a generic name for all that is rundown and bad in Manchester. It takes in about a single square mile and is divided into two parts: Hulme and Moss Side proper. It is Hulme, an area of slum devastation, that has given rise to the 'Bronx of Britain' tag.[86]

This is an especially loaded framing of the shooting and its use of language is key. Describing Moss Side as 'a generic name for all that is rundown and bad' in the city, shows how far the press used

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[82] Aaron Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation, the Inner City, and the Fracturing of the Welfare State: Glasgow, c. 1968-78', *Twentieth Century British History*, 29/4 (2018), p. 608.

[83] For examples, see 'Horrors of the Concrete Jungle', *Manchester Evening News,* 22 February 1985; 'Demolition of flats sought after nervous complaints and crime', *The Times,* 28 October 1977; Alan Dunn, 'Tear down our flats – say residents', *The Guardian,* 28 October 1977; 'High-rise estate 'in crisis'', *The Guardian,* 21 September 1977.

[84] Michael Romyn, 'London Badlands': The Inner City Represented, Regenerated', *London Journal*, 44/2 (2019), p. 134.

[85] 'Moss Side Story', *Daily Mail,* 9 January 1993.

[86] *Ibid.*

certain areas to emblematise much broader societal issues. The shooting did not take place in Hulme, yet Ehrlich cited Hulme as central to Manchester's developing reputation for crime and deprivation. Similarly, the journalist's reference to Hulme as the 'Bronx of Britain' reinforced connections between Manchester's urban core and the US 'experience'. This transatlantic framing of the inner city and its connection to racialised depictions of violence continued with Ehrlich's posing of the question, 'Is the death of Benji Stanley a sign that Britain is set on a course of ghetto violence to match the worst excesses of America?'[87]

Other newspapers mirrored this representational approach, with the *Daily Express, Manchester Evening News* and *The Guardian* characterising Hulme and Moss Side in the early 1990s as 'Britain's Bronx', the 'Bronx of Britain', and home to the 'Bronx's killer streets'.[88] With no contextualisation of regional or national disparities, nor distinctions between estates, the press used stories like the shooting of Benji Stanley to discursively construct a homogenous 'inner city' easily extrapolated onto different urban areas. While this shows that the spatial boundaries of the shooting mattered little to its representation, Ehrlich still used the physical landscape of Hulme to support his depiction of urban crisis, referencing its 'rotting concrete towers' and 'dark, litter-strewn stairwells'.[89] This attests to the duality of representations of multi-storey council housing, with deterministic links between Hulme's design and levels of crime persisting, even while press coverage framed the estate as emblematic of cultural discourses that transcended its material environment.

The *Daily Mail* article used the term 'slum', with its connotations of material deprivation alongside a sense of immorality, to represent a causal factor in the decline of Moss Side and Hulme. Across the post-war British press, the term was associated with multi-storey council housing, with newspapers like the *Daily Express* describing high flats in 1978 as 'inner city skyscraper slums'.[90] The latter, 'slum', was perhaps a term most often used to exemplify Park Hill and Hulme's decline. In evoking the earlier forms of housing supposedly eradicated by the construction of each estate, newspapers' application of the term 'slum' indicated that the newer, multi-storey flats had failed to resolve a more pervasive problem.[91] This suggested that the housing was not the main issue, but

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[87] *Ibid.* On links between racialised depictions of violence in American and British cities see Andrews, 'Multiple Deprivation', p. 608; Romyn, "London Badlands", p. 137; Rob Waters, 'Black Power on the Telly: America, Television, and Race in 1960s and 1970s Britain', *Journal of British Studies,* 54/4 (2015), pp. 967-70.

[88] 'Gloom crescents facing hammer', *Manchester Evening News*, 4 July 1990; 'Hulme Requiem', *Weekend Guardian*, 23 May 1992; 'Britain's Bronx', *Daily Express,* 4 January 1993; 'Bronx's killer streets', *Daily Express,* 1 July 1993.

[89] 'Moss Side Story', *Daily Mail,* 9 January 1993.

[90] 'Housing: The crisis that won't go away', *Daily Express*, 24 July 1978.

[91] For examples of the use of the term 'slum' to characterise Park Hill and Hulme see, Martin Wainwright, "Slum' fear for housing associations', *The Guardian*, 7 January 1994; Janine Watson, 'A golden date for the slums', *Manchester*

rather its tenants. Ben Jones argued that, following slum clearance programmes in Brighton during the post-war years, those residents rehoused from the city to its suburbs found themselves followed by the stigmatisation of the 'slum', unable to dispel the social and cultural connotations of the places where they had once lived.[92] The 1978 *Express* article embodied this approach, reporting that Manchester City Council's Director of Housing expected the rehousing of families from Hulme's high flats and their replacement with young professionals and students to "'raise the social climate of the area'", thereby 'turning the slums into a des. res.'.[93]

In November 1970, two years before work on the estate was fully complete, *The Guardian* referred to the Crescents as 'formidable, even forbidding', and declared that, 'in Hulme, Manchester has created a ghetto of the future', reinforcing the 'otherness' of the estate's housing and acting as a precursor to its later association with the 'inner city'.[94] Although *The Guardian* concluded that the estate was the best Manchester could have hoped for at a time of such limited funding for council house-building from central government, this did little to negate the impression the paper created of the estate through words like 'slum'.[95] In 1978, *The Times* used the term to issue a warning in relation to multi-storey blocks more broadly,

> housing schemes only 20 years old or less are in danger of becoming slums. The housing forms do not always match the behaviour of the tenants…Life for [some] tenants can be quite appalling if this community is destroyed or spoilt by a small number of disruptive families or even disruptive elements from the surrounding area.[96]

Reinforcing the historic moralistic overtones of terms like 'slum', the language of *The Times* article minimised tenants' agency, presenting them as either the passive victims of, or unwitting collaborators in, the increasing residualisation of multi-storey council estates. While tenants' voices did underscore coverage of Park Hill and Hulme towards the end of the twentieth century, as the following section argues, the dichotomy of the victimised or lawless tenant remained central to newspapers' representational approaches to multi-storey council housing.

Evening News, 26 July 1991; Janine Watson, 'Hulme is burying its slum image', *Manchester Evening News*, 11 June 1994; 'A cry of despair from a Prisoner of Park Hill', *The Star,* 6 August 1979; Martin Wainwright, 'Council blocks get concrete sign of cultural approval', *The Guardian,* 2 September 1996.

[92] Ben Jones, 'Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualization: the Practices and Politics of Council Housing in Mid-twentieth-century England', *Twentieth Century British History*, 21/4 (2010), p. 536.

[93] 'Housing: The crisis that won't go away', *Daily Express*, 24 July 1978.

[94] Dennis Johnson, 'Hulme: The great expedient', *The Guardian,* 16 November 1970.

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Charles McKean, 'Council housing: a post-war tragedy', *The Times,* 29 August 1978.

Locating tenant voices in the press

Newspapers' changing use of sources also demonstrate how the press framed representations of Park Hill and Hulme over time. In the 1950s and 1960s especially, newspapers drew upon 'official' sources to lend institutional backing to coverage of multi-storey estates, imposing in turn limitations upon the inclusion of residents' perspectives. Press coverage of Park Hill amplified institutional voices during the estate's early years, with City Architect J. L. Womersley and representatives of Sheffield City Council often featuring in local newspapers *The Star* and the *Sheffield Telegraph*. The newspapers' reliance upon these sources shaped the largely positive nature of representations of Park Hill's construction and initial occupation. In June 1956, they showed their support for the Park area's public redevelopment in reports that highlighted the scale of funding – over £2 million – awarded to the council by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. For the *Sheffield Telegraph,* this denoted the commitment of central and local government to slum clearance and residential redevelopment.[97] For *The Star*, it proved that Park Hill represented a new, dramatic response to large-scale housing reform by the local authority.[98]

Even before the first Park Hill residents had moved in, plans for further multi-storey development on the hillside above the flats represented another cause for celebration. Known initially as 'Park Hill Part II' but later renamed 'Hyde Park', the buzz surrounding its construction demonstrated the cultural receptiveness for mass, multi-storey council housing projects in late 1950s Sheffield. In February 1958, the *Sheffield Telegraph* referred to Hyde Park as 'an essential complement of Part I in the architectural sense', and added that, 'it will be, by virtue of its site, by far the more dramatic of the two portions'.[99] Quoting Womersley extensively throughout, the article provided specific details of Hyde Park's footpaths, play spaces, and street decks, replicating the paternalistic perspective of residents' spatial practices adopted by the estate's architects.[100] Yet the newspapers framed this focus upon the design and layout of flats as in the interests of prospective tenants. In 1959, the *Sheffield Telegraph* reported that 'hundreds of flat-hungry Sheffielders' had crowded into show flats at Park Hill and the nearby Netherthorpe development to see estates of 'eye-catching construction', suitable for 'every sort of family taste and requirement'.[101]

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[97] George Tomblin, 'Consent to £2 and a half million loan granted', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 19 January 1957.
[98] '£2,300,000 for Sheffield Flats', *The Star,* 18 June 1956.
[99] 'Layout plan for £5 million flats is approved', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 22 February 1958.
[100] *Ibid.*
[101] 'The Verdict: Wonderful', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 6 June 1959.

The arrival of Park Hill's first tenants only amplified reports of its cultural acclaim. The *Sheffield Telegraph* devoted a three-page supplement to Park Hill in 1961, using it to provide a detailed outline of the functionality of life in multi-storey flats, from cookers and boilers to the Garchey waste disposal system.[102] Even without quoting Womersley directly, the articles mimicked the City Architect's reports, evident in descriptions of Park Hill's design as able to accommodate both private and communal living, and its street decks as 'ideal places for daily social contact'.[103] The supplement also offered an in-depth report of the flats' brief history, from the council's initial plans for mass, multi-storey housing to their completion, with profiles highlighting the roles of key individuals in the Public Works and City Architect's departments.[104] This, again, demonstrates the centrality of institutional actors to depictions of Park Hill's initial 'success'. When doubts arose concerning the reliability of multi-storey developments in July 1961, following reports of plans to demolish the Quarry Hill Flats in Leeds just thirty years after their construction, the press sought Womersley's reassurance first. Speaking to *The Star*, the City Architect commended the strength of Park Hill's structure in comparison, and remarked, "'I would deplore that anyone should decry the Leeds scheme…for it was a great pioneering experiment, in which the late Mr. R. A. H. Livett, the Leeds City Housing Architect, explored completely new fields'".[105] Despite the demolition of the Leeds flats, *The Star* agreed with Womersley's evaluation, also characterising Quarry Hill as a "great experiment".

In the 1970s, articles included official voices to justify reports of multi-storey decline. In May 1973, *The Guardian's* planning correspondent Judy Hillman used Manchester to explore the effects of slum clearance programmes ten years after their initiation. Drawing upon the testimony of the President of the Royal Town Planning Institute to support her conclusions, Hillman quoted the planner's assertion that, "The less sophisticated people are, the less suitable they are for living in high density conditions, with certain pleasant exceptions. Social problems and vandalism become more acute than at more modest densities."[106] In two articles in *The Guardian* published in November 1973 and featuring the respective headlines "Jungle Estate' Report' and 'The youth club that turned into a fort', the newspaper quoted from a report by Manchester Corporation's Director of Works which stated that the estate had fostered "jungle-like conditions" due to failures

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[102] 'How the Park Hill Flats Function', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961. The Garchey system allowed residents to dispose of small items of household waste via a chute connected to the plug of the kitchen sink.

[103] *Ibid.* The language used in the article is especially similar to that used in this report: SLSL: 728.314SQ, City of Sheffield Housing Committee, 'Report of the City Architect: Park Hill Redevelopment Part 1, Provision of amenities' (Sheffield, 1959).

[104] 'The Children's Paradise', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 16 June 1961.

[105] 'City flats have permanent 'life'", *The Star,* 19 July 1961.

[106] Judy Hillman, 'The Struggle for our Cities: 1', *The Guardian*, 8 May 1973.

of its design.[107] The second article presented the estate's failure in even stronger terms, quoting a section of the Director of Works' report that stated, "There is no doubt that the monolithic mass of unrelieved concrete was just right for producing the kind of social disease that plagued the estate".[108]

One of the most prominent examples of the use of official voices in national press coverage of multi-storey council housing in the 1970s was its application of Newman's theory of 'defensible space'. In 1973, architectural correspondent for *The Guardian* Stephen Gardiner incorporated Newman's ideas into a report on Hulme, referring to the architect's conclusions as having articulated the 'inevitable social consequences of appalling planning of this kind'.[109] The article connected rising anti-social behaviour apparent in Hulme as early as 1973 to the estate's design, arguing that it was only natural for tenants to smash windows and litter in the face of the poor conditions of the built environment. According to Gardiner, the Crescents especially constituted 'aggressive acts which are being repaid with aggression'.[110] This presentation of Newman's findings demonstrates how far some newspapers editorialised coverage of multi-storey council housing, eschewing straight news reporting in favour of a more sensationalised depiction of the significance of 'defensible space'. In a later article for *The Observer,* Gardiner reiterated his support for Newman's approach to design, calling for the demolition of the 'dreadful' Hulme by arguing that the anonymity of the flats encouraged 'muggings and violence'.[111] The multi-storey estate's demolition in 1993 only seemed to justify the journalist's long-held position, as Gardiner again asserted that, '[the Crescents] had to be seen to be believed for their sheer inhumanity. Of course, such places breed gangs and drugs and violence, and I said so'.[112] Other newspapers applied 'defensible space' to multi-storey council housing in much broader terms. *The Times* reported Newman's research findings relating to high flats in New York upon publication of his book in 1972, but it was not until 1974 that the newspaper began to see the effects in Britain.[113] Describing the 'built-in crime wave of tower blocks', *The Times* wrote: 'Britain has repeated some of the architectural errors that make buildings stimulate crime, according to Professor Oscar Newman, the architect whose research in America has provoked rethinking about design'.[114]

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[107] "Jungle Estate' Report', *The Guardian*, 8 November 1973; Gita Conn, 'The youth club that turned into a fort', *The Guardian*, 14 November 1973.
[108] 'The youth club', *The Guardian,* 14 November 1973.
[109] Stephen Gardiner, 'Concave Jungle', *The Guardian,* 25 March 1973.
[110] *Ibid.*
[111] 'Knock down this disgraceful estate', *The Observer*, 5 January 1986.
[112] 'Good riddance to the Hulme horror', *The Observer*, 10 January 1993.
[113] 'Skyscraper blocks', *The Times,* 26 October 1972.
[114] Peter Evans, 'The built-in crime wave of tower blocks', *The Times,* 11 February 1974.

For Miles Glendinning and Stefan Muthesius, this media backlash against multi-storey council housing represented in part the development of 'a new breed of journalist-critic who professed to be on the side of the user'.[115] The use of different sources, and thereby the incorporation of different voices, marked a representational shift in newspaper reports of estates like Park Hill and Hulme. Julia Lefkowitz has offered a linguistic analysis of 'quoted speech' in tabloids and broadsheet newspapers to trace the partial intersection of journalistic values commonly attributed to either the 'quality' or 'popular' press over the course of the twentieth century, questioning the extent of 'tabloidization' to propose instead a process of 'dual-convergence'.[116] Lefkowitz found that this process appeared most prominently in comparisons between *The Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror,* with each newspaper using direct quotes from similar, but broader, demographic groups to diversify their readership and survive in an increasingly competitive market.[117] Henrik Örnebring and Anna Maria Jönsson regarded the developing practice and use of interviews in Britain's tabloid newspapers as integral to cultivating 'an alternative arena for public discourse', through which news became more accessible to different audiences and less deferential of 'traditional authority'.[118] Similar conclusions saw John Thompson coin the term 'mediated visibility' to suggest that the representation of certain groups in the press facilitated their empowerment.[119]

However, when multi-storey council tenants featured in coverage, the context in which newspapers presented their reports often limited the range of voices heard. For example, in articles printed in Park Hill's early years, local newspapers ensured that residents' opinions of life at the estate did not overshadow those of representatives from Sheffield City Council. In May 1962 *The Star* ran an article with the headline, 'Park Hill - it's a success, say the tenants', yet lent equal weight to the views of the estate's Housing Manager throughout, justifying its predominantly institutional framing of reports about the estate.[120] Even when teething problems began to emerge at Park Hill, the press showed a reluctance to question aspects of its construction. One such incident in 1961 involved a faulty boiler that hindered access to central heating and hot water for 15 hours, but the *Sheffield Telegraph* reported that residents were without complaint. Instead, most used the

[115] Glendinning and Muthesius, *Tower Block,* p. 106.
[116] Julia Lefkowitz, '"Tabloidization" or Dual-Convergence: Quoted speech in tabloid and "quality" British newspapers 1970-2010', *Journalism Studies,* 19/3 (2018), p. 355.
[117] *Ibid.,* pp. 369-370.
[118] Örnebring and Jönsson, 'Tabloid journalism', p. 293.
[119] Lefkowitz, '"Tabloidization"', p. 370.
[120] 'Park Hill – it's a success', *The Star,* 30 May 1962.

opportunity to publicly praise Park Hill's efficiency, with residents like Mary Hill of Norwich Row stating, "'we hardly noticed that the heating had packed up'".[121]

The selective incorporation of residents' perspectives remained a feature of local press coverage of Park Hill, with their voices occasionally drawn upon to support more negative depictions of the estate from 1970. In 1962, the estate's Housing Manager had commented to *The Star* that, although the design of the flats and the use of balconies in particular had the potential for "'problems of noise'" and a "'lack of privacy'", such "'serious disadvantages are avoided at Park Hill'".[122] Although the residents consulted by the newspaper concurred with the Manager's view at the time, others had told a different story in the early 1960s, a perspective eventually represented by *The Star* in 1973. By this point, not only had the flats' deck-access layout – which meant that some bedrooms were situated directly beneath the street decks – led to complaints, but the estate's proximity to steelworks also constituted a source of noise disturbance.[123] Residents' concerns over crime also featured prominently in reports during the late 1970s, with *The Star* interviewing mothers concerned for their children's safety and, in October 1979, reporting the fearful reactions of residents following news of a man 'savagely beaten' while walking back to his flat after visiting a neighbour.[124] "'It was like all hell breaking loose'", said one neighbour who heard the attack taking place. "'It's terrible to think this sort of thing can happen around here'".[125] Emphasising the role of the estate's layout in facilitating the violence, the article noted that the victim 'had just reached a dark stairway when he was attacked'.[126]

Letters to the press also represented an opportunity for the communication of residents' voices, albeit with some constraints. Printed without images alongside several other letters delineated only by short headlines, local perspectives constituted only a fraction of newspapers' overall coverage. While issues concerning their layout in print might suggest the letters' limited readership, Karin Wahl-Jorgensen has argued that letters pages remained one of the most popular sections of local and regional newspapers across Britain – excepting only the front page – even towards the end of the twentieth century.[127] Although not necessarily representative, in providing

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[121] 'Heating cut 15 hours – no complaints. Park Hill is so efficient', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 18 November 1961.

[122] 'Park Hill – it's a success, say the tenants', *The Star,* 30 May 1962.

[123] SA: CA-HMC/2/1, Sheffield City Council Housing Management Committee, 'Park Hill Part One: Sociological Report', *Minutes and Associated Papers: Draft Minutes and Papers, May 1959-November 1962* (Sheffield, 1960), p. 95; 'Park Hill flat noise problem unsolved', *The Star,* 2 October 1973.

[124] 'Worried city mums', *The Star,* 10 May 1976; '44-year-old Sheffield print worker savagely beaten-up on the doorstep of his home in Park Hill Flats', *The Star,* 10 October 1979.

[125] 'Sheffield print worker savagely beaten-up', *The Star,* 10 October 1979.

[126] *Ibid.*

[127] Karin Wahl-Jorgensen, 'Letters to the editor in local and regional newspapers: Giving voice to the readers', in Bob Franklin (ed.), *Local Journalism and Local Media: Making the local news* (London, 1998), p. 221.

a forum for debate, these pages often illuminated the most contentious issues for local people. Considering that it was common practice to print residents' letters alongside one another in the opening pages of newspapers, it is telling that *The Star* diverged from this format in August 1979 to highlight a letter from an unnamed Park Hill tenant, reproduced in the style and format of an article. While conceding the atypicality of their decision to include an anonymous letter, as the editor's note stated, 'we felt this [letter] was important enough to respect the writer's fears of what could happen if the name was given'.[128] Titled, 'A cry of despair from a Prisoner of Park Hill', the letter occupied a full page, almost half of which showed a photograph of the flats' façade accompanied by the caption, 'the whole area exudes an atmosphere of utter hopelessness. Children have inadequate and unsuitable play areas'.[129]

The letter's content, and its accentuation in the newspaper, demonstrated how far attitudes towards the architectural approaches of the early post-war years had changed by the late 1970s in Sheffield. It read,

> I have suffered a life sentence of 20 years, without remission, in Sheffield's Park Hill flats. In that time I have grown cynical, suspicious and even more convinced than I was 10 years ago that the designers, architects and builders of these high density monstrosities called flats (together with the city council officials who sanctioned them) should be made to suffer the same daily tortures and torments, and all the inadequacies, frustrations and conditions of the tenants who have to live in them.[130]

The tenant's language echoed that of press coverage of multi-storey council housing not only in Sheffield, but across the country, in which newspapers labelled multi-storey developments 'monstrosities' and 'prisons'.[131] Further, in emphasising the failures of Sheffield City Council and Park Hill's planners and architects, the letter marked a significant shift in tone from *The Star's* representation of the flats in the 1950s and 1960s as an architectural triumph; reports that relied predominantly upon the opinions of the institutional actors this tenant's letter disparaged.

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[128] 'Prisoner of Park Hill', *The Star,* 6 August 1979.

[129] *Ibid.*

[130] *Ibid.*

[131] For other examples relating to Sheffield see, Simon Ogden, *Council House Building in Sheffield, 1919-1970* (Sheffield, 1976), p. 57. For examples relating to national coverage of multi-storey council housing see, '64 Flats Ready in 18 Weeks', *The Times,* 11 May 1965; 'Mother saw her tower block flat as a prison', *The Times,* 9 September 1977; 'Hope for high rise children', *The Guardian,* 11 September 1977; Alfred Gibbon, 'Close-Up: The Concrete Jungle', *Daily Mirror*, 28 October 1977; 'High-rise ban for families', *The Guardian,* 22 November 1977; 'Good riddance to the Hulme horror', *The Observer*, 10 January 1993.

The letter provoked several written responses from other tenants over subsequent weeks. Refuting the claims of Park Hill's 'prisoner', they questioned *The Star's* decision to publish the letter at all. Anne Mawson, a resident of Norwich Row, wrote, 'In response to your article in *The Star* about Park Hill flats, as a resident for 14 years I must refute almost everything that was written. We know there are faults but if I had to refute every point in detail it would take a letter twice as long as your article'.[132] A letter submitted the following week by D. Reed, condemned the 'disgraceful exaggerations and plain lies' of the 'prisoner' of Park Hill, and criticised *The Star* for including a letter that focused entirely upon the behaviour of apparent '"problem" families and individuals' rather than holding the local authority to account for the poor standard of maintenance of both flats and the street decks.[133] However, *The Star* granted little space to these defences of Park Hill relative to the subject of their complaint. Although a similarly critical response written by Christopher Bacon – a PhD student living at and studying Park Hill – received more space in the newspaper than some past letters, this only reinforced the notion that newspapers like *The Star* privileged the contributions of those with a more recognisable sense of 'expertise' in the estate, over that of tenants without institutional backing.[134] Minimising the lasting effects of this debate further, in the year following the 'Prisoner of Park Hill' contribution, *The Star* once again printed a resident's letter in the style of an article. This letter focused on the unsuitability of children to the high flats, arguing that the only things children could do on the estate were 'watch grown-ups jumping off the top of the building', or 'pass the time reading the filth written on the walls'.[135]

While the press had traditionally considered local authorities a primary source of information, the relationship between the council and newspapers changed during the post-war period. In a study of the press and system-built housing in Manchester, Peter Shapely argued that by the 1980s, local newspapers were not prepared to accept council press releases unchallenged. Instead, publications such as the *Manchester Evening News* in particular, sought to highlight tenants' experiences of system-built housing. Focusing on estates like Hulme, the *Evening News* questioned the efficacy of the council's role as a housing provider and the architectural ambition associated with mass, multi-storey developments across the country.[136] Coverage elsewhere had already adopted a similar approach by 1970. An article printed in *The Guardian* in November 1970 described the styling of the Crescent blocks after the Georgian crescents of Bath, as well as their

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[132] Anne Mawson, 'Park Hill view', *The Star,* 11 August 1979.

[133] D. Reed, 'Happy Captives', *The Star,* 21 August 1979.

[134] Christopher Bacon, 'The real problems of Park Hill', *The Star,* 21 August 1979.

[135] 'Why Spoil a Child's Fun?', *The Star,* 10 January 1980.

[136] Peter Shapely, 'The Press and the System-Built Developments of Inner-City Manchester, 1960s-1980s', *Manchester Region History Review*, 16 (2002-2003), pp. 36-37.

naming after famous architects such as John Nash, 'a piece of riotous presumption'.[137] The report indicated the extent to which the housing 'experiments' of the 1950s and 1960s had since fallen out of favour.

However, the increasing tendency to critique institutional sources did not automatically lead to the incorporation of a wider range of perspectives. Matthew Schoene has used the concept of 'media standing' to explain why some grassroots groups received press coverage over others. The researcher argued that 'media standing' was inextricably linked with 'institutional standing', with newspapers more likely to consider non-institutional neighbourhood groups unsuitable participants in public debate.[138] Journalistic practices like this engendered the privileging of institutional voices, with expectations of objectivity and looming deadlines leading writers to rely upon 'bureaucratic sources' over those of the grassroots.[139] Schoene's work also established that, even if grassroots groups did obtain media standing and thereby participated in public debates through the local press, this did not guarantee their representativeness as spokespeople for a wider campaign.[140] This presents an important parallel with local press coverage of Hulme in the years leading to the estate's eventual demolition. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, newspapers such as the *Manchester Evening News* often quoted representatives of Hulme tenant organisations to highlight the ongoing debate between tenants and the local authority over the estate's future. In a double-page article describing Hulme's decline in relation to the 'horrors' of everyday life, the newspaper quoted the tenant, council warden, and Hulme Repairs Committee chairman Maureen Moonsamy extensively. The article used Moonsamy's testimony to support the conclusions of journalist Russell Jenkins, who stated that Hulme had come to represent a 'bloody battleground for Labour's left-wing conscience' by the mid-1980s. Moonsamy's testimony echoed this conflict, stating that, "'At the end of the day, politicians are out for themselves. There is no way I am going to allow any politician to come along and patronise me'".[141]

The *Manchester Metro News* presented a similarly antagonistic portrayal of tenant interactions with the council in the early 1990s. Interviewing the tenant representative Charlie Baker, who would later found the Hulme housing co-operative 'Homes for Change', the *Metro News* reported Baker's accusations of the council's "'half-hearted'" approach to tenant consultation, as well as his declaration that tenants would seek legal action against the local authority if the process did not

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[137] 'Hulme: The great expedient', *The Guardian,* 16 November 1970.

[138] Matthew Schoene, 'Friend or Foe? The Media Coverage of Chicago's Public Housing Transformation', *Sociological Focus*, 48/4 (2015), p. 323.

[139] *Ibid.,* p. 313.

[140] *Ibid.*, p. 323.

[141] 'Horrors of the Concrete Jungle', *Manchester Evening News*, 22 February 1985.

improve.[142] The newspaper's framing of tenant representatives in direct conflict with Manchester City Council served to level the playing field of their respective expertise, with the tenant representatives afforded considerable knowledge and agency over their housing. Yet with the same voices appearing in different newspaper reports over time, the scope of tenant involvement in the public debate was limited as negotiations with the council progressed.[143] In the context of Hulme's redevelopment in the early 1990s, the focus of local newspapers on tenant pressure for increasing levels of consultation obscured the experiences of the majority of tenants who were not members of the residents' associations.

While Schoene observed that privileging of voices with institutional links over the 'rank-and-file' members of tenants' movements in the press could compromise the authenticity of their message, local newspapers' over-reliance on tenant representatives of residents' associations raises similar questions as to their ability to speak for all. Most of these tenants were educated white men and women, with none speaking from the perspective of the estate's ethnic minority or unemployed populations. The voices of these residents remained largely absent from articles in the press, despite the diversity of estates associated with the 'inner city' like Hulme attracting the focus of some coverage. Instead, these examples of Hulme tenant representatives suggest the increasing 'professionalisation' of tenants due to developments in tenant participation policy implemented by Housing Associations and Corporations from the early 1990s.[144] As Liz Millward demonstrated in her study of the changing role of 'expert activists' under New Labour, policymakers' aims to consult 'ordinary' tenants rather than the 'same old faces' sat uneasily alongside the cultivation of long-term relationships with a small sample of tenants committed to participation.[145]

While Shapely argued that Manchester's press showed greater sympathy for tenants' housing problems in the 1980s than in previous decades, the limited inclusion of residents' voices in newspaper articles persisted. With articles often distinguishing between residents according to their gender and familial status, some tenants were more likely to speak in reports than others. Press coverage of both Park Hill and Hulme included quotations from mothers more often than

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[142] Deborah McCaughley, 'Tenants fight for Crescents', *Manchester Metro News,* 8 February 1991.

[143] Tenant representative Charlie Baker is quoted in several articles throughout the early 1990s, such as: 'People first plan by tenants', *Area News,* 13 June 1991; Deborah McCaughley, 'Heseltine: End Hulme quarrels', *Manchester Metro News,* 21 June 1991; Janine Watson, 'Save our homes', *Manchester Evening News,* 6 June 1991; 'Voices from Hulme', *Telegraph Magazine,* 20 March 1993; 'New life with touch of the old in £2.7m facelift', *Manchester Evening News,* 9 June 1993.

[144] Liz Millward, 'Just because we are amateurs doesn't mean we aren't professional: The importance of expert activists in tenant participation', *Public Administration*, 83/3 (2005), p. 747.

[145] *Ibid.,* p. 748.

any other tenant 'group' in the estates' earlier years. In Manchester, the press used mothers to foster a sense of injustice at the conditions in which tenants lived, with tenants presented as the victims of a hostile housing environment. In July 1975, the *Manchester Evening News* ran an article under the headline, 'Get us out of flats: mothers'. The report formed part of a wave of press attention on Hulme, following the death of the five-year-old Basharat Tyson after falling from the fifth-floor balcony of his home in the Crescents. Reporter Gerald Brown described how a protest march that featured almost 200 women and children descended upon Manchester's city centre to demand the rehousing of families away from multi-storey flats.[146] The article introduced residents first through their status as mothers, negating the organisational role played by many of these women in the march itself. The newspaper took a similar approach to coverage of another protest in August 1975, in which 'a chanting army of children' helped their parents to protest the high cost of electricity in the flats.[147] In this article, the *Evening News* again quoted women characterised primarily in relation to their familial status, such as, 'mother of seven, Maureen Ramsay' and '44-year-old mother of nine'.[148]

As Roger Fowler has argued, the use of social 'groups' like this to categorise people in the press provides an insight into 'the structure of the ideological world represented by a newspaper', demonstrating how different publications communicated a version of reality to their readers.[149] Such representations relied upon and consequently reinforced stereotypical understandings of particular groups of people. This is evident in an article for the *Manchester Evening News* in 1985, in which a journalist described an encounter with a young person in Hulme. The journalist's initial depiction mirrored typical reports of young people, crime and inner-city estates, referring to the teenager as a 'mean looking kid'; an impression apparently justified by his 'Mohiccan (*sic*) brush of jet-black hair…black combat fatigues and exaggerated lace-up Doc Martens', which the journalist feared could be hiding a weapon.[150] However, such thoughts abated once the teen's 'whispered "excuse me" in well modulated, middle-class tones gave him away as one of the students who have taken over the crescents and turned them into their own personal playground'.[151] The twin portrayals of the resident played into stereotypical representations of Hulme tenants, implying that the estate's young, working-class population represented a potentially violent threat, while the menace seemingly embodied by the clothing of Hulme's middle-class students was dismissed as

[146] 'Get us out of flats: mothers', *Manchester Evening News*, 28 July 1975.
[147] Neil Wallis, 'Children join high bills protest', *Manchester Evening News*, 1 August 1975.
[148] *Ibid.*
[149] Roger Fowler, *Language in the News: Discourse and Ideology in the Press* (Abingdon, 1991), p. 42.
[150] 'Horrors of the Concrete Jungle', *Manchester Evening News*, 22 February 1985.
[151] *Ibid.*

performative rather than genuine, a depiction reinforced by the journalist's reference to the Crescents as a student 'playground'.

In 1985, the *Manchester Evening News* featured two in-depth profiles to exemplify the 'terrible tragedies of lives without hope' among Hulme tenants. The first detailed the experience of a woman named Megan, who had feigned a dispute with her husband to ensure the rehousing of herself and her three children outside of Hulme, which she described as "'a world of tranquilisers, chronic ill-health, racial tension, casual crime, glue sniffing among the kids and dope pushers living upstairs'". The second profile, of a man called Tony, revealed how his marriage 'fell apart in a haze of alcohol and drugs – living in a deck access flat on social security with eight children to support didn't help'.[152] The *Daily Mirror* had taken a similar approach in a 1977 report on life in Hulme, focusing upon Irene, a '24-year-old unmarried mother', who had taken to drinking alcohol to 'keep herself calm' and physically harmed her four-year-old son.[153] Both newspapers presented a more personalised depiction of multi-storey council housing by concentrating upon human interest stories, but this also saw them individualise more structural problems. Such reports called into question the behaviour of certain tenants and failed to offer other, alternative perspectives, of everyday life in places like Hulme.

That each report connected the housing itself to social deprivation placed the material environment at the heart of Hulme's problems, with tenants unable to adjust to multi-storey living. As the *Daily Express* wrote of the Crescents in 1978,

> Built only eight years ago, the Crescents…were greeted as the perfect answer to a desperate housing shortage. Within months of being occupied everyone knew that open access was an invitation to vandals, and that for the kids long, narrow "streets" five storeys high were no substitute for gardens. Or that for parents the almost total lack of privacy could prove a round-the-clock nightmare.[154]

In highlighting the deviant behaviour of certain tenants, coverage individualised and sensationalised aspects of their lived experience rather than offering an assessment of the wider factors that shaped tenants' circumstances. Consequently, newspapers did little to illuminate the persistent material, social and economic inequalities of these estates and their interrelationship with twentieth-century society more broadly.

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[152] *Ibid.*

[153] 'Close-Up: The Concrete Jungle', *Daily Mirror*, 28 October 1977.

[154] 'Housing: The crisis that won't go away', *Daily Express*, 24 July 1978.

Instead, both local and national newspapers attempted to portray themselves as generally supportive of, or at least more in step with, residents' attitudes relative to institutional actors towards the end of the twentieth century. This relied upon their framing as the voice of British people, despite their limited representativeness in practice.[155] This approach was particularly evident in coverage relating to Park Hill's listing in 1998. For example, describing the 'uproar' provoked by English Heritage's decision, the *Daily Express* asked how far the flats' preservation represented 'our heritage' to frame its coverage as reflective of public attitudes.[156] This selective use of pronouns constituted part of a longer-term approach of the popular press throughout the twentieth century, in which tabloid newspapers used 'a dichotomous vision of 'us' and 'them'', in this instance to reproduce stereotypes of the idealistic post-war planner and the victimised tenant.[157] This representation, however, failed to recognise differences of opinion among tenants, depicting them instead as a homogeneous group either for or against multi-storey living dependent upon the context of coverage.

In the early 1990s, newspapers in Manchester began to amplify the voices of those residents who opposed demolition, despite the press having called for the destruction of Hulme's multi-storey flats since the mid-1970s. Research has shown that this approach is typical of media coverage of multi-storey demolition, with those residents against demolition – whether due to their preference for multi-storey living or resistance to the displacement of the local population – featured most prominently in reports.[158] Articles in the *Manchester Evening News* and *Manchester Metro News* in 1991 highlighted the perspectives of those who wanted to stay in Hulme, quoting tenants like Charlie Baker, who was prepared to "'take Manchester City Council to court'" to save the Crescents, and Maureen Mahon, whose 'fighting talk' sought assurances for those residents who were "'happy to stay in Hulme'".[159] Although offering a perspective of the estate rarely included in coverage that instead largely focused on the breakdown of community and its relationship to the flats' architectural design, these articles still presented only one aspect of residents' opinions on what was a divisive and complex topic.[160]

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[155] Bingham and Conboy, *Tabloid Century*, p. 201.

[156] 'High praise falls flat', *Daily Express,* 23 December 1998.

[157] Fowler, *Language in the News*, p. 16.

[158] Ade Kearns, Elise Whitley, Phil Mason and Lyndal Bond, "Living the High Life?' Residential, Social and Psychosocial Outcomes for High-Rise Occupants in a Deprived Context', *Housing Studies*, 27/1 (2012), p. 99.

[159] 'Tenants fight for Crescents', *Manchester Metro News,* 8 February 1991; Carl Palmer, 'Fighting Maureen speaks for families', *Manchester Evening News,* 15 June 1991. Related coverage includes, 'Save our homes', *Manchester Evening News,* 6 June 1991; 'Heseltine 'hijack' bid by shuttle pair', *Manchester Evening News,* 18 June 1991; 'Heseltine: End Hulme quarrels', *Manchester Metro News,* 21 June 1991.

[160] Evidence of the range of opinions among Hulme tenants is apparent in the testimonies recorded as part of the Hulme Views Project, formed to facilitate tenant consultation in plans for redevelopment. The Project featured

That the relative absence of some residents' voices in the press did not equate to their disengagement with issues relating to the estate is evident from their contributions to the Hulme tenant magazine the *Octopus*. Between March 1983 and August 1987, Hulme tenants wrote and published 27 issues of the *Octopus,* a magazine largely reliant upon donations from readers to stay in print.[161] Containing articles relating to living conditions, tenant action for housing improvement, and more general aspects of day-to-day life in Hulme, the magazine showed how some tenants interacted with the estate's representation in the press. While the tenants who contributed to the magazine recognised the necessity of considerable maintenance in Hulme, they rejected the ways in which the press framed the estate's deprivation. This is evident in letters to the tenant magazine that related to coverage of Hulme in the *Manchester Evening News*, which argued that the newspaper reinforced negative stereotypes of council tenants. That the *Evening News* connected the estate's multi-storey design to tenants' social problems, rather than highlighting factors more influential to their exacerbation such as the area's chronic unemployment and underinvestment, proved a source of some tension.

This was apparent in a letter written by tenant Brigitte Soltau in March 1985. Soltau's letter contested specific accusations made by journalists for the *Manchester Evening News,* who had described tenants as "'lazy'" and implied that they were unclean. Soltau asserted that washing machines left on street decks above the ground were abandoned because lifts rarely worked, not because – as the newspaper had suggested – the people of Hulme were "'war-mongering tenants hoarding military hardware'".[162] For Soltau and the tenants who made similar points in other letters, representations of Hulme like those in the *Manchester Evening News* only encouraged perceptions of the inevitability of the estate's decline, which in turn could be used to legitimise its neglect by the City Council. The nature of this coverage led to increasing distrust among some tenants as to the reliability of the local press. In a letter printed in the *Octopus* in March 1986, an anonymous tenant railed against newspapers' tendency to present only one side of life in Hulme. Focusing in particular on articles by the journalist Gerald Brown for the *Evening News,* the tenant wrote,

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residents' perspectives of life in Hulme in two collections published in the early 1990s. MA: GB127.M781, Hulme Views Project, *Hulme Views, Self Portraits: Writing and Photographs by Hulme People* (Manchester, 1990); MA: GB127.M857/1/15, Hulme Views Project, *Views from the Crescents: writing photographs and illustrations by people from the Crescents area of Hulme* (Manchester, 1991).

[161] MA: Q942.733913HU169, 'Editorial', *Octopus: The Hulme Magazine,* No. 13, April 1985, p. 2.

[162] MA: Q942.733913HU169, Brigitte Soltau, 'Whose Friend?' *Octopus*: *The Hulme Magazine,* No. 12, March 1985, p. 3.

> [Brown] takes statements from people and twists them around, quotes them out of context and distorts facts…Against a background of low (and decreasing) governmental support for the inner cities, we face enough trouble trying to do anything about it. I do not seek to praise unreservedly the council and their actions, but friend Brown, the kind of crap you write does'nt (*sic*) help things one bit.[163]

Tenants' letters to the *Octopus* like this show the extent to which some sought to adapt representations of Hulme's deprivation, the blame for which the press ascribed indiscriminately to both the built environment and Hulme's tenants. These letters acknowledged the estate's problems, but highlighted their roots in housing conditions and wider socioeconomic issues like unemployment. The content and tone of these letters, as well as the magazine's production throughout the mid-1980s, help to challenge images of the hopeless or hostile tenant prevalent in the press during these years. However, some tenant letters offered a different opinion of the role of residents in Hulme's deprivation. In July 1984, a letter outlined how Hulme tenants only had themselves to blame for poor living conditions. As the tenant wrote,

> It's alright going on about repairs. Repairs for what? People to ruin?...They pee on the stairs, leave old mattresses in the passages or under ramps…it's just utter selfishness. What happened to the Community Spirit? What happened to Working Class solidarity?[164]

This letter made similar accusations to another residents' contribution to the *Manchester Metro News* eight years later. Written amidst Hulme's redevelopment and titled 'Problem families', the letter questioned the effectiveness of improving housing in the area when 'it's the people that make the houses what they are'. It continued, 'there are some good families in Hulme, but there are a lot that are not, who don't know how to look after a house'.[165] That newspapers included tenants' perspectives such as this, rather than those advocating for a societal contextualisation of deprivation, indicates the restrictions placed upon the tenant voice within press representations of Hulme. A wider, structural analysis of the inequalities facing residents did not fit well with newspapers' typical framing of multi-storey decline.

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[163] MA: Q942.733913HU169, Anonymous letter, *Octopus*: *The Hulme Magazine,* No. 20, March 1986, p. 3. Examples of earlier letters that made similar points appeared in: *Octopus: The Hulme Tenant Magazine,* No. 9, November 1984, p. 2; *Octopus*: *The Hulme Magazine,* No. 12, March 1985, p. 2.

[164] Letters Page, *The Octopus,* No. 8, July 1984, p. 2.

[165] B. Wimpenny, 'Problem families', *Manchester Metro News,* 10 July 1992.

Visual representations of Park Hill and Hulme

With blocks reaching over ten storeys, high flats across England characterised the rapidly changing cityscapes of the post-war period. The dominance of Park Hill and Hulme over the skylines of Sheffield and Manchester ensured that photographs of both featured in local and national press coverage. Far from purely illustrative accompaniments to written reports, these images tied the physical spaces of each estate to their changing political and cultural associations, thereby shaping a visual discourse of multi-storey council housing. Although largely built to a different design to tower blocks, as this chapter has already shown, the press drew comparisons between this form of housing and the high-density, deck-access schemes such as Park Hill and Hulme. Emphasising the visual prominence of mass housing estates, Emily Cuming asserted that their occupation of a 'ubiquitous part of the physical landscape' made their images – especially those of their demolition – capable of 'narrating the fate of British council housing over the past century'.[166] With a focus upon the visual representation of architectural design and multi-storey tenants, this section studies the images that accompanied reports of Park Hill and Hulme in local and national newspapers from the late 1950s to the late 1990s. It highlights the endurance of themes of class, gender and race, and their alternate framing by the press to underpin the trajectory of the success and failure of multi-storey housing.

In approaching the interaction between newspapers and their readers, the section argues that visual representations constructed by the press influenced cultural attitudes towards these estates. The interrelationship between the images used by newspapers and their meaning according to readers has attracted considerable scholarly debate. In 1973, Stuart Hall wrote about the 'codes of meaning' embedded in news photography. According to Hall, photographs used to report news contain both 'denotative' and 'connotative' codes, with the former acting as a relatively straightforward definition of what the image is, while the latter points towards a range of possible alternative representations.[167] Hall's theory, however, relies upon the viewer having initially identified a 'preferred reading', a process complicated by the heterogeneous experiences and interests brought by an audience to an image.[168] As Roland Barthes later argued in 1977, images

[166] Cuming, *Housing, Class and Gender*, p. 176.
[167] Stuart Hall, 'The determinations of news photographs', in Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (eds), *The manufacture of news. Deviance, social problems & the mass media* (London, 1973), p. 176.
[168] Penny Tinkler, *Using photographs in social and historical research* (London, 2013), p. 30.

are 'polysemic', open to different interpretations by different people, even photographs that may initially appear as straightforward reflections of the world.[169]

From the perspective of crime reporting in the press, Maggie Wykes also contributed to this debate, stating that, '[the] photograph belies the selecting, transforming and reproducing and offers only the apparent evidence of an event. The history of the event and process of production are superseded by actuality and immediacy'.[170] Wykes's work stressed that, like language, images too could convey multiple meanings, although she conceded that more dominant media outlets could shape interpretations in line with their perspective.[171] Considering how far the production of newspaper images facilitated the communication of an editorial perspective, Patricia Holland highlighted the complex institutional decision-making processes that underpinned the use of photographs in the twentieth-century press. Holland's research asserted the significance of not only the content of an image, but the chain of editors behind it; its placement in relation to text and in the paper itself; and the photographer's aim to deliver 'what it is the newspaper wants'.[172] This suggests that, although images themselves retained the 'polysemy' articulated by Barthes to an extent, the connection between their presentation and a newspaper's editorial stance somewhat limited the context in which images were read.

While the analysis in this section thus pays attention to the institutional framework in which images were presented, in considering visual discourses of multi-storey council housing in conjunction with the written reports discussed previously, it takes an intertextual approach to the study of the photographs' meaning[s] and relationship to wider cultural representations.[173] Moreover, following earlier sections, it argues that, while readers did not passively absorb visual depictions of multi-storey estates, the frequency with which newspapers printed photographs of these places alongside certain stories, saw the press advocate for a particular 'reading' over another.[174] That coverage largely charted the 'decline' of multi-storey council estates by the end of the twentieth century meant that images of Park Hill and Hulme most often denoted the failure of this type of housing, apparent not only in the material deprivation of the built environment, but attributed also to the actions of certain tenants.

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[169] Patricia Holland, 'News photography: 'The direct appeal to the eye?' Photography and the twentieth-century press', in Adam Briggs and Paul Cobley (eds), *The Media: An Introduction* (Harlow, 1998), p. 417.
[170] Maggie Wykes, *News, Crime and Culture* (London, 2001), p. 47.
[171] *Ibid.,* p. 48.
[172] Holland, 'News photography', p. 419.
[173] Tinkler, *Using photographs,* pp. 27-29.
[174] On readers' 'understanding' of photographs in newspapers more broadly see, Curran and Sparks, 'Press and popular culture', p. 224.

In the early 1960s, *The Star* and the *Sheffield Telegraph* used photographs of Park Hill's façade, and artistic impressions of the layout of the prospective Hyde Park, to celebrate multi-storey construction. Local news photographs emphasised the flats' height through low camera angles in articles that marvelled at the new ways of living seemingly available.[175] The novelty of Park Hill's deck-access design also attracted national attention, with images of the 'streets in the sky' printed in the 'Architectural Notes' section of *The Times* in 1961 [see figure 8] and in a 1962 report in *The Guardian* celebrating the estate's achievement of an architectural award for housing design.[176] Notably, images of Park Hill in the years immediately following its construction also focused on the flats' interiors. In the series of articles dedicated to Park Hill in the *Sheffield Telegraph* in June 1961, a photograph [see figure 9] showed the fitted kitchens of flats, with the caption drawing attention to the 'cooker, balcony and a view'.[177] The following year, a report in *The Star* featured images of a woman using one of the estate's launderettes and children playing together in a flat respectively.[178] In focusing upon the flats' interiors to highlight the everyday lives of individuals, the photographs offered a more personal depiction of the estate to offset the standardisation of its high-density blocks.

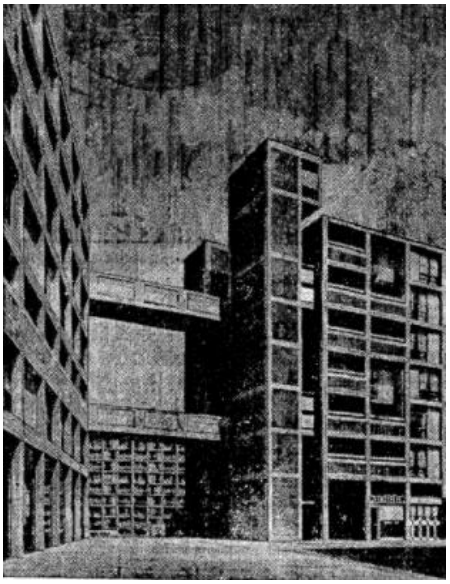


Figure 8: 'Impressive Planning for Rehousing in Sheffield', *The Times,* 15 September 1961.

[175] 'Layout plan for £5 million flats is approved', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 22 February 1958; 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.
[176] 'Impressive Planning for Rehousing in Sheffield', *The Times,* 15 September 1961; 'Better design for houses: past mistakes', *The Guardian,* 30 October 1962.
[177] 'How the Park Hill Flats Function', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.
[178] 'Park Hill – it's a success', *The Star,* 30 May 1962.

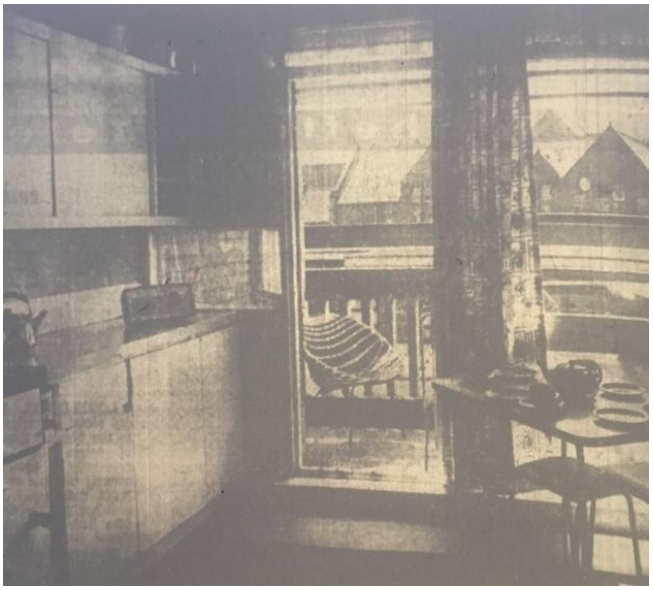


Figure 9: 'How the Park Hill Flats Function', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

However, the ways in which newspaper images framed multi-storey council housing had changed by the time of Hulme's completion in the 1970s. During this decade, newspapers began to report upon the physical features of high flats with far less enthusiasm. Images that stressed the height and scale of blocks accompanied articles that described estates like Hulme as a 'Legoland disaster' and Park Hill as a 'prison'.[179] These later photographs differed little from those used in earlier, more positive reports in terms of their content, but their use in the context of coverage of crime, anti-social behaviour and tenant dissatisfaction lent a different set of cultural meanings to the estates' appearance. For example, an image of Park Hill's façade [see figure 10] illustrated an article in *The Star* about a violent attack on a resident in October 1979. Taken from a wide angle, the photograph depicted one of the estate's curving blocks, but a small circle marking the site of the attack emphasised the relative scale of the housing.[180] While the circled area offered little indication as to the specific whereabouts of the attack, it presented a visual link between crime and the built environment. Photographs such as this seemed to justify the label of inhumanity often affixed to mass, multi-storey estates towards the end of the twentieth century, an accusation that the architects of Park Hill and Hulme's deck-access design had initially sought to avoid.[181]

[179] 'Gloom crescents facing hammer', *Manchester Evening News,* 4 July 1990; 'Prisoner of Park Hill', *The Star,* 6 August 1979.

[180] Phil Derbyshire, 'Man quizzed after brutal flats attack', *The Star,* 10 October 1979.

[181] SLSL: PAMP 1048 S, J. L. Womersley, 'Report of the City Architect', in Sheffield City Council, *Park Hill Redevelopment Proposals* (Sheffield, 1955), pp. 4-5.

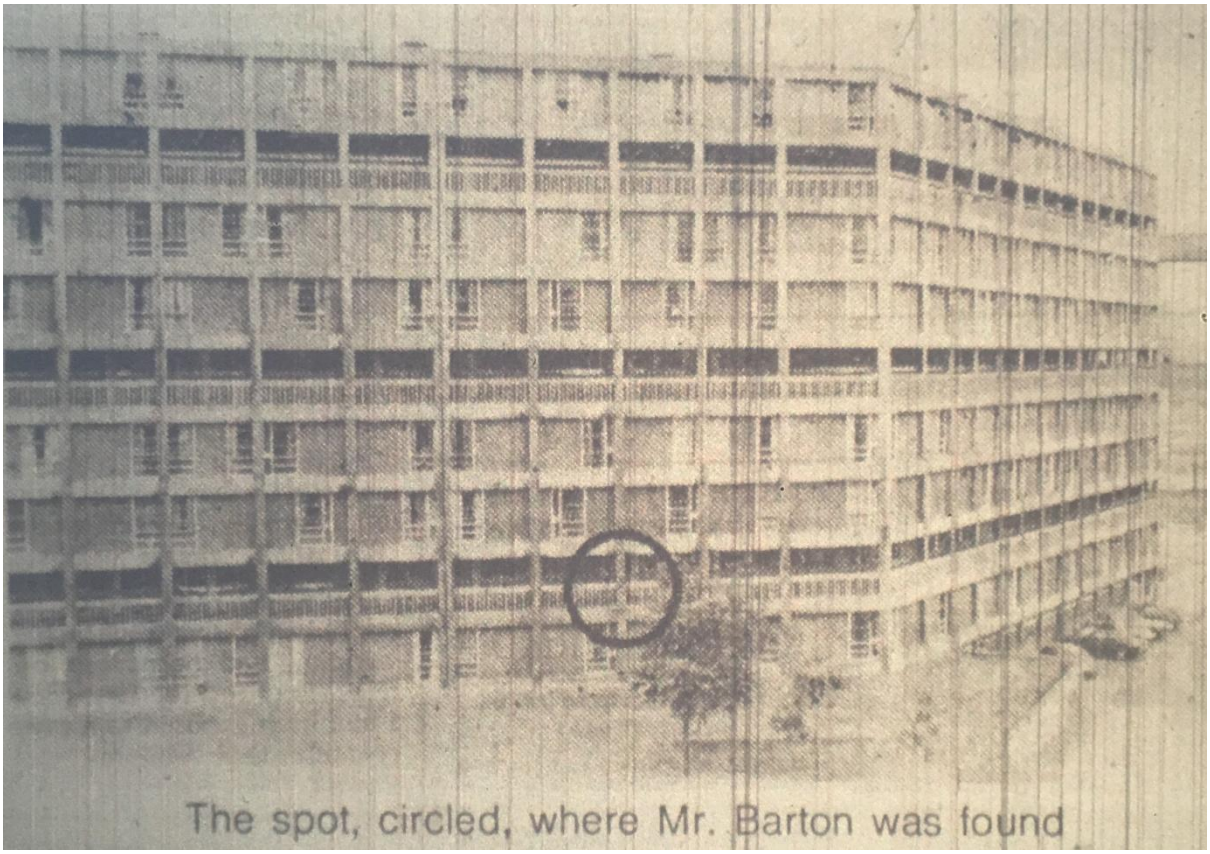


Figure 10: Phil Derbyshire, 'Man quizzed after brutal flats attack', *The Star,* 10 October 1979.

The changing context in which newspapers presented the built environment of these estates over time indicates how far similar images could suggest different meanings. Photographs of Park Hill in the 1950s and 1960s showed children playing in playgrounds in front of the blocks, in stairways and on street decks in photographs that at once emphasised the novelty of the estate's design while highlighting the seemingly enduring community spirit amongst its residents. By contrast, photographs of the buildings alone without residents fed into narratives of the isolation that reportedly came to pervade multi-storey estates. In 1996, news of English Heritage's decision to grant Park Hill Grade II status as a listed building saw photographs of the estate [see figures 11, 12 and 13] once again focus primarily on its architectural design. Taking an aerial view of the flats to capture the estate in its entirety with no residents in sight, photographs in *The Guardian* portrayed Park Hill as an anonymous, empty place.[182] On the same day, an image in *The Times* highlighted the estate's physical disrepair, showing two people walking along a street bordered by overgrown grass and a wall of graffiti, with the flats visible beyond.[183] Reacting to confirmation of Park Hill's listing

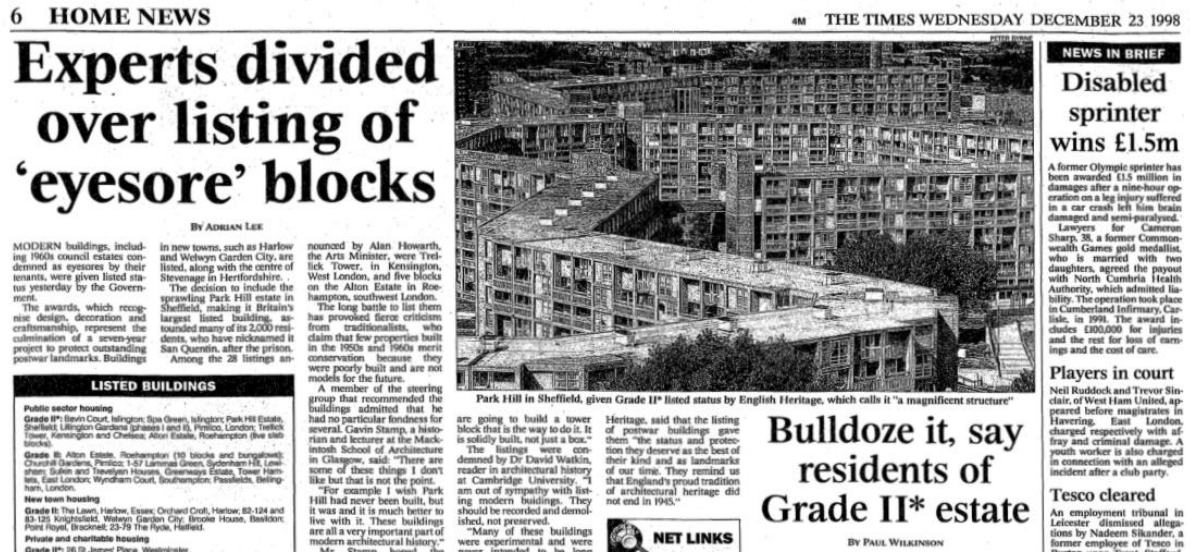
[182] 'Council blocks get concrete sign of cultural approval', *The Guardian,* 2 September 1996.
[183] Marcus Binney and Paul Wilkinson, 'Plan to list highrise 'blot' falls flat', *The Times,* 2 September 1996.

in 1998, *The Times* used a photograph of the flats to connect two separate articles, one of which highlighted differences of opinion between architectural experts over the estate's conservation, while the other purported to represent residents' perspectives. Although the content of the image itself differed little from photographs used to praise Park Hill's design in the 1960s, the photograph's position between two articles that featured "eyesore" and 'bulldoze' in their headlines encouraged readers to perceive multi-storey blocks as unwelcome.[184]

Figure 11: 'Council blocks get concrete sign of cultural approval', *The Guardian,* 2 September 1996.

Figure 12: Marcus Binney and Paul Wilkinson, 'Plan to list highrise 'blot' falls flat', *The Times,* 2 September 1996.

[184] Adrian Lee, 'Experts divided over listing of "eyesore" blocks', *The Times,* 23 December 1998; Paul Wilkinson, 'Bulldoze it, say residents of Grade II* estate', *The Times,* 23 December 1998.



6 HOME NEWS

4M THE TIMES WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 23 1998

Experts divided over listing of 'eyesore' blocks

BY ADRIAN LEE

MODERN buildings, including 1960s council estates condemned as eyesores by their tenants, were given listed status yesterday by the Government.

The awards, which recognise design, decoration and craftsmanship, represent the culmination of a seven-year project to protect outstanding postwar landmarks. Buildings in new towns, such as Harlow and Welwyn Garden City, are listed, along with the centre of Stevenage in Hertfordshire.

The decision to include the sprawling Park Hill estate in Sheffield, making it Britain's largest listed building, astounded many of its 2,000 residents, who have nicknamed it San Quentin, after the prison.

Among the 28 listings announced by Alan Howarth, the Arts Minister, were Trellick Tower, in Kensington, West London, and five blocks on the Alton Estate in Roehampton, southwest London.

The long battle to list them has provoked fierce criticism from traditionalists, who claim that few properties built in the 1950s and 1960s merit conservation because they were poorly built and are not models for the future.

A member of the steering group that recommended the buildings admitted that he had no particular fondness for several. Gavin Stamp, a historian and lecturer at the Mackintosh School of Architecture in Glasgow, said: "There are some of these things I don't like but that is not the point.

"For example I wish Park Hill had never been built, but it was and it is much better to live with it. These buildings are all a very important part of modern architectural history."

LISTED BUILDINGS

Public sector housing

Grade II*: Bevin Court, Islington; Spa Green, Islington; Park Hill Estate, Sheffield; Lillington Gardens (phases I and II), Pimlico, London; Trellick Tower, Kensington and Chelsea; Alton Estate, Roehampton (five slab blocks).

Grade II: Alton Estate, Roehampton (10 blocks and bungalows); Churchill Gardens, Pimlico; 1-57 Lammas Green, Sydenham Hill, Lewisham; Sutton and Trevelyan Houses, Greenways Estate, Tower Hamlets, East London; Wyndham Court, Southampton; Passfields, Bellingham, London.

New town housing

Grade II: The Lawn, Harlow, Essex; Orchard Croft, Harlow; 82-124 and 83-125 Knightsfield, Welwyn Garden City; Brooke House, Basildon; Point Royal, Bracknell; 23-79 The Ryde, Hatfield.

Private and charitable housing

Park Hill in Sheffield, given Grade II* listed status by English Heritage, which calls it "a magnificent structure"

are going to build a tower block that is the way to do it. It is solidly built, not just a box."

The listings were condemned by Dr David Watkin, reader in architectural history at Cambridge University. "I am out of sympathy with listing modern buildings. They should be recorded and demolished, not preserved.

"Many of these buildings were experimental and were

Heritage, said that the listing of postwar buildings gave them "the status and protection they deserve as the best of their kind and as landmarks of our time. They remind us that England's proud tradition of architectural heritage did not end in 1945."

NET LINKS

Bulldoze it, say residents of Grade II* estate

BY PAUL WILKINSON

NEWS IN BRIEF

Disabled sprinter wins £1.5m

A former Olympic sprinter has been awarded £1.5 million in damages after a nine-hour operation on a leg injury suffered in a car crash left him brain damaged and semi-paralysed.

Lawyers for Cameron Sharp, 38, a former Commonwealth Games gold medallist, who is married with two daughters, agreed the payout with North Cumbria Health Authority, which admitted liability. The operation took place in Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle, in 1991. The award includes £100,000 for injuries and the rest for loss of earnings and the cost of care.

Players in court

Neil Ruddock and Trevor Sinclair, of West Ham United, appeared before magistrates in Havering, East London, charged respectively with affray and criminal damage. A youth worker is also charged in connection with an alleged incident after a club party.

Tesco cleared

An employment tribunal in Leicester dismissed allegations by Nadeem Sikander, a former employee of Tesco in

Figure 13: Adrian Lee, 'Experts divided over listing of "eyesore" blocks', *The Times,* 23 December 1998 and Paul Wilkinson, 'Bulldoze it, say residents of Grade II* estate', *The Times,* 23 December 1998.

While the visual imagery that accompanied Park Hill's early coverage helped newspapers to celebrate the relative technological innovation of modern high flats, it also maintained the importance of classed and gendered social values perceived integral to the ground-level, Victorian streets that the multi-storey blocks replaced. Gender played a key role in the image of multi-storey council housing shaped by the press in the post-war years. Newspapers reinforced traditional ideas of domesticity, with photographs in the Sheffield press showing women doing the laundry and carrying children around new flats, while advertisements for grocery shops and kitchenware sought to appeal directly to women.[185] In the *Sheffield Telegraph* and *The Star* between 1959 and 1961, photographs of women residents accompanied articles attesting to tenants' satisfaction with Park Hill. Portrait-style photographs of resident women emphasised the importance of their verdict on the high flats, while effectively highlighting the sense of individuality that Sheffield City Council and its architects were keen to show was still attainable in the mass, multi-storey development.[186]

Although these images appeared in the late 1950s and early 1960s, later coverage of multi-storey housing continued to emphasise connections between women and the home. Reporting resident protests over rising electricity costs in Hulme in 1975, the *Manchester Evening News* featured

[185] 'The Verdict: Wonderful', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 6 June 1959; 'Park Hill – it's a success', *The Star*, 30 May 1962; 'The Children's Paradise', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 16 June 1961; 'How Life is Lived in Homes in the Sky', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961.

[186] 'Park Hill – it's a success', *The Star,* 30 May 1962.

close-up photographs of four women accompanied by captions that stressed the individual stories behind the estate's issues.[187] In the same year, the newspaper used images of Hulme tenants participating in a protest march for the rehousing of families to tell a story of mothers defending the safety of their children. Photographs showed women holding placards that read 'give us homes not death traps' and 'no more death, get us out'.[188] In the newspaper's later coverage of residents' demands to remain in the redeveloped Hulme, a photograph of a woman and her baby wearing a t-shirt affirming '75% want to stay!!' [see figure 14] appeared beneath the headline, 'Fighting Maureen speaks for families'.[189] While these visual representations attested to the centrality of women residents to calls for better housing conditions, the presentation of their images within the realms of the home and the family set limits upon the reach of their agency.

Figure 14: Carl Palmer, 'Fighting Maureen speaks for families', *Manchester Evening News*, 15 June 1991.

By contrast, images of men lent weight to reports of crime and anti-social behaviour on multi-storey estates towards the end of the twentieth century. In the 1990s, newspapers used photographs of groups of young men to illustrate articles that described instances of violence and drug abuse in Hulme and its neighbouring Moss Side.[190] This was especially apparent in the press reports that followed Benji Stanley's murder in Moss Side in January 1993. As outlined in the first section, Benji's death and its aftermath received national coverage, with articles attributing the

[187] 'Children join high bills protest', *Manchester Evening News*, 1 August 1975.
[188] 'Get us out of flats: mothers', *Manchester Evening News*, 28 July 1975.
[189] 'Fighting Maureen speaks for families', *Manchester Evening News*, 15 June 1991.
[190] 'Moss Side Story', *Daily Mail*, 9 January 1993; 'Moss Side Story', *Observer Magazine,* 21 February 1993.

killing to the 'gang rule' prevalent in Manchester's 'inner city'.[191] The images connected to these reports offered a gendered and racialised depiction of tenants of estates like Hulme. In the *Daily Mail,* a photograph showed a group of young people – described by the paper as 'idle youths' – wearing dark clothing with their hoods pulled up, walking away from the camera along a Moss Side street at night [see figure 15]. In the same article, another photograph showed a billboard featuring a young man receiving treatment from his hospital bed, with the warning, 'Drugs: sometimes the effects never wear off'.[192]

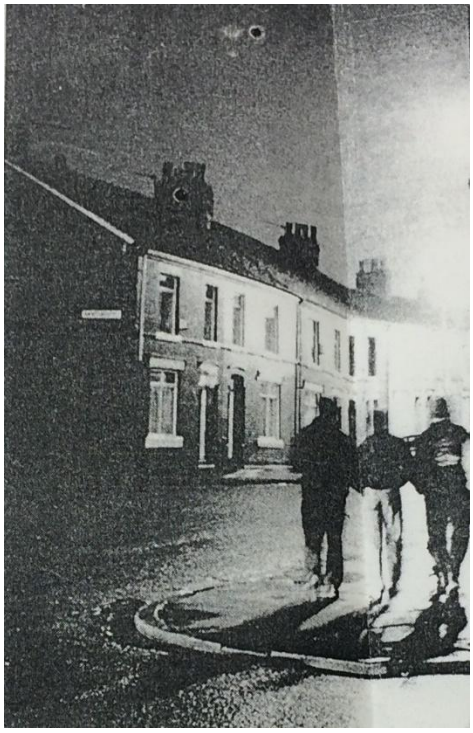


Figure 15: Dan Ehrlich, 'Moss Side Story', *Daily Mail*, 9 January 1993.

Figure 16: Dan Ehrlich, 'Moss Side Story', *Daily Mail,* 9 January 1993.

[191] 'Moss Side Story', *Observer Magazine*, 21 February 1993; Michael Horsnell, 'Gun gangs rule the rat-runs of Moss Side', *The Times*, 29 June 1993; 'War fear on new Bronx's killer streets', *Daily Express*, 1 July 1993.
[192] 'Moss Side Story', *Daily Mail*, 9 January 1993.

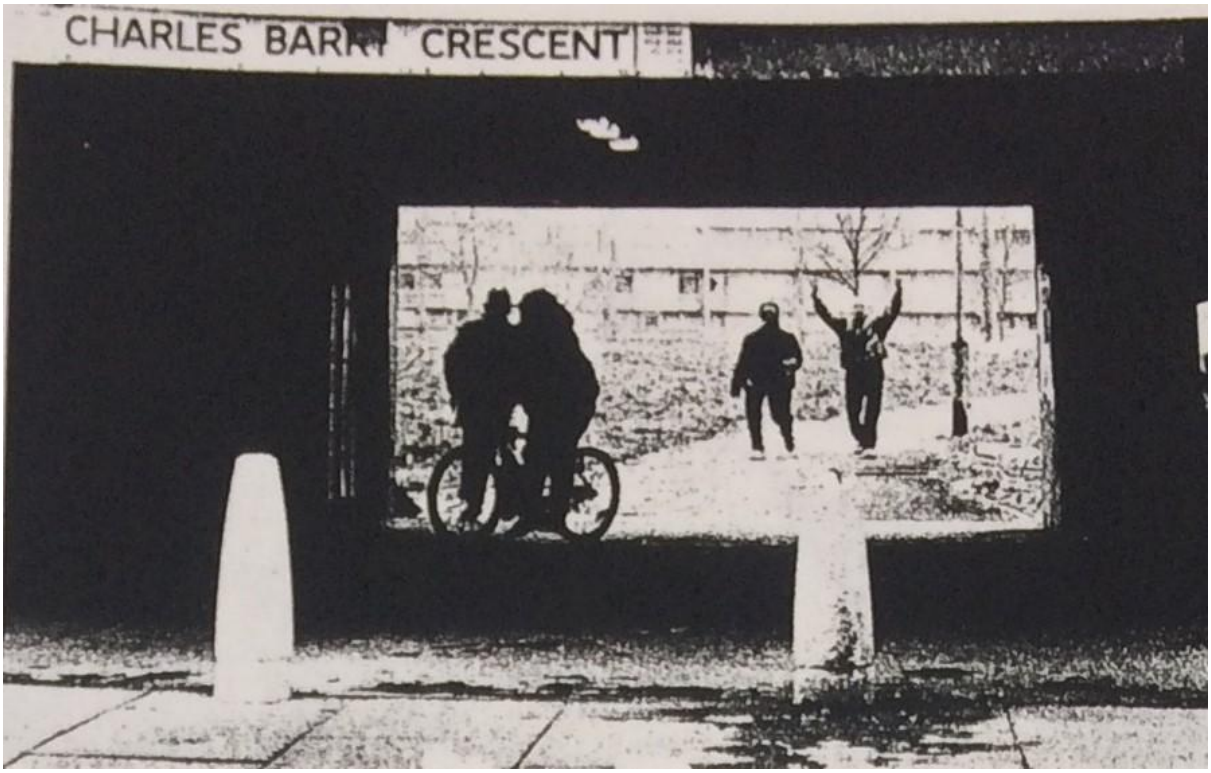


Figure 17: Gordon Burn, 'Moss Side Story', *Observer Magazine,* 21 February 1993.

Figure 18: Michael Horsnell, 'Gun gangs rule the rat-runs of Moss Side', *The Times*, 29 June 1993.

The article's second photograph [see figure 16] featured Hulme, showing a lone figure moving between Crescent blocks surrounded by rubbish and abandoned furniture. Both photographs communicated a dual sense of intimidation and abandonment, evident in their relative lack of people and Hulme's state of disrepair. Both also implied a connection between young people, drug abuse, and the material environment of the multi-storey estate. Used to accompany an article with the same headline in the *Observer Magazine* in February 1993 [see figure 17], another image showed a group of young people near Hulme's Charles Barry Crescent. Due to their positioning in a poorly lit walkway beneath one of the street decks, the figures appeared only as silhouettes, with the curve of the next section of the multi-storey block beyond only partially visible behind them. Although the photograph did not depict the people in detail, the figures' movement and clothing indicated their adolescence, which the photograph's caption verified.[193]

While these articles did not overtly mention race in the text, their use of photographs of 'shadowy' or silhouetted figures [see figure 18] to convey a sense of threat or illicit behaviour encouraged readers to make links between race, the built environment and emotions such as fear. The photographs must be understood in the context of broader visual representations of black people in the post-war period; from images that portrayed black immigrants in the 1950s as "colour problems" to those that depicted black tenants amidst squalid housing.[194] The images in the *Daily Mail* and *Observer Magazine* may not have depicted black or minority ethnic individuals, but there remained an implicit connection between the danger implied by the framing of these figures in darkness that is indicative of the racialisation of the urban landscape during this period, with images like these going hand in hand with descriptions of multi-storey estates as 'slums' or 'ghettos'. Further, the threat implied by the *Observer Magazine* image is also reinforced by the photograph's placement on the page above the sub-heading, 'gun law is running Manchester'. Although the photograph's caption absolved the teenagers pictured from involvement in the local drugs trade, the surrounding text and the article's association of young people with anti-social behaviour somewhat muted its clarification. This approach to representation followed that of newspaper images in the 1980s, which pathologized young black men as dangerous and violent, particularly in the context of press coverage of riots in places like Handsworth, an urban area on the outskirts of Birmingham's city centre.[195] In emphasising the visibility of young people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and depicting them in a negative light, the *Daily Mail* and *Observer*

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[193] 'Moss Side Story', *Observer Magazine,* 21 February 1993.

[194] Kieran Connell, *Black Handsworth: Race in 1980s Britain* (Berkeley, 2019), pp. 54-55.

[195] Kieran Connell, 'Photographing Handsworth: photography, meaning and identity in a British inner city', *Patterns of Prejudice,* 46/2 (2012), p. 133.

Magazine photographs therefore further fuelled concerns over the role of certain groups in the increasing deprivation of local areas.

Photographs like these are key examples of how the visual representation of multi-storey council estates encouraged blanket perceptions of these places as inherently dangerous, crime-ridden areas by the 1990s. As Stuart Hall argued, this meant that '[rather] than trace the complex links between the deteriorated physical environment, patterns of cultural organisation and individual acts of crime, the inference is that a derelict and neglected house or street infects the inhabitants with a kind of moral pollution'.[196] The standardisation of mass, multi-storey blocks suggested in turn a uniformity of experience, allowing newspapers to position images of estates like Hulme as illustrative of social problems on a wider geographic scale. Regardless of whether an article's written content revealed that an event had occurred elsewhere, the type of housing most prevalent in Hulme had become an archetype for crime and anti-social behaviour. Moreover, in focusing upon the behaviour of certain tenants, the photographs used by the *Daily Mail* and the *Observer Magazine* encouraged an individualistic framing of issues of deprivation, rather than acknowledging the structural inequalities of late twentieth-century society. In the absence of this recognition, newspaper images of multi-storey council tenants perpetuated understandings of a 'culture of poverty'. As Golding and Middleton have argued, this culture 'suggests the creation of poverty by and from within the world of the poor, a land untouched by any hint of relational disadvantage to the rest of society or to social structures of power and privilege'.[197] Moreover, as Elizabeth Anne Stanko demonstrated, representations that linked young, working-class men with violent crime masked the tendency for these groups to be victims as well as perpetrators.[198] In taking this approach to framing the image of these places, the press reinforced stereotypical depictions of 'problem' council tenants.

The selectivity inherent to representations of this type of housing and its tenants demonstrates how far attitudes towards mass, multi-storey living had shifted between the 1950s and the 1990s. In October 1977, the *Daily Mirror* printed a photograph [see figure 19] of children in the terraced streets of Hulme in 1953 alongside an image of the Hulme Crescents in 1977. The caption beneath read: 'Old Slum, Hulme in 1953 and (right) New Slum, the Hulme beehive as it is today'.[199] While the 1953 houses formed only the backdrop to the photograph, with the focus primarily upon children playing in the foreground, the Crescents dominated the image of the 'New

[196] Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke and Roberts, *Policing the Crisis,* p. 118.
[197] Golding and Middleton, *Images of Welfare*, p. 239.
[198] John Muncie, *Youth & Crime* (London, 1999), p. 32.
[199] 'Close-Up: The Concrete Jungle', *Daily Mirror,* 28 October 1977.

Slum' in 1977. In the latter, the larger size and wider angle of the photograph in comparison with its earlier counterpart, emphasised the scale and uniformity of the blocks dubbed 'the concrete jungle' in the article's headline. In comparison, the image of Hulme prior to its multi-storey redevelopment offered a more idealised and romanticised glimpse of the past, contrary to its description in the opening lines of the article as 'one of the worst slums in Europe'.[200] In April 1995, *The Guardian* took a similar approach to charting changes to the material environment over time, juxtaposing an image [see figure 20] of the partial demolition of Hulme's multi-storey blocks with a photograph of the estate's new, 'neat brick houses' to depict another cycle in the area's housing development.[201]

Figure 19: Alfred Gibbon, 'Close-Up: The Concrete Jungle', *Daily Mirror,* 28 October 1977.

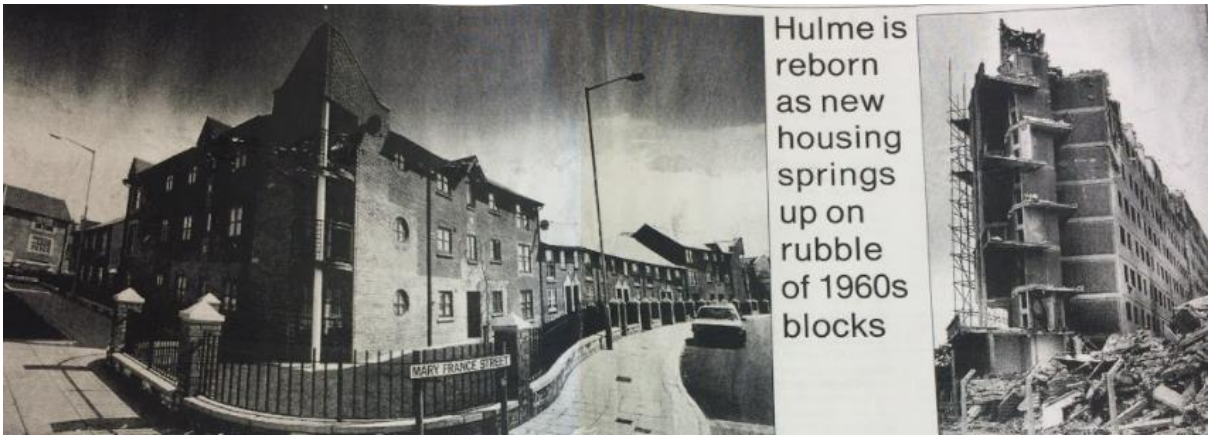

Figure 20: David Ward, 'Hulme is reborn as new housing springs up on rubble of 1960s blocks', *The Guardian,* 27 April 1995.

[200] *Ibid.*

[201] David Ward, 'Hulme is reborn as new housing springs up on rubble of 1960s blocks', *The Guardian,* 27 April 1995.

Although photographs of housing and textual references to building materials in their captions seemed to stress the importance of the physical landscape of Hulme, they also offered social commentary on the estate. In the *Mirror's* comparison between Hulme in the 1950s and the 1970s, the absence of children in the later photograph suggested that multi-storey flats had not only failed to improve local housing conditions, but had also destroyed the community life encapsulated by the image of children playing in the terraced street. In a similar vein, the image of the rubble-strewn Hulme in *The Guardian* symbolised the crime and social breakdown so often ascribed to the multi-storey estate, while the photograph of houses in the redeveloped Hulme surrounded by low fences and gardens seemed to epitomise a return to order. These interpretations followed the pattern of textual newspaper reports of Hulme, which often referenced the disorder and social isolation seemingly inherent to multi-storey life and ultimately lent a sense of inevitability to the estate's demolition and return to low-rise housing once more. The flattening of Hulme's multi-storey blocks in the early 1990s constituted a visual spectacle that garnered newspaper coverage at both a local and national level. Images showed the physical devastation wrought by the bulldozers in detail, with photographs in *The Guardian* offering glimpses of demolition work through the lens of a cracked glass window and security fencing, while three images in the *Manchester Metro News* [see figure 21] depicted each stage of Medlock Court's destruction until only a solitary lift-shaft appeared in a cloud of dust.[202] The visibility of mass, multi-storey flats and their seeming embodiment of a time of post-war housing 'experiment' made the symbolism behind these images particularly prominent. Visual documentations of Hulme's demolition only validated understandings of its 'decline', with newspaper images once again positioning Hulme's physical landscape as the source of its problems. Photographs of demolition used by the press seemed to mark a visible ending to the deprivation that had blighted the estate since the mid-1970s, irrespective of any socioeconomic issues that endured in the local area.

[202] Erlend Clouston, 'Hulme steels itself for brighter future', *The Guardian,* 12 November 1991; 'Time runs out for 60s flats', *The Guardian,* 30 October 1991; Claire Stephenson, 'Flats go out with a bang!', *Manchester Metro News,* 17 June 1994.

Figure 21: Claire Stephenson, 'Flats go out with a bang!', *Manchester Metro News,* 17 June 1994.

Figure 22: Carl Palmer, 'Hated homes go with a bang', *Manchester Evening News*, 29 March 1993.

Just as they had served to represent the estate over the previous two decades, images of the Crescents' demolition attracted the most attention from the press. In outlining redevelopment plans, Council Leader Graham Stringer and Inner Cities' Minister John Redwood cited the centrality of the appearance of the Crescents specifically to past attitudes towards the local area.

Redwood saw the Crescents' demolition as "'essential for lifting morale in the area, and will be a visible sign that a fresh start is underway'".[203] Refusing to leave any of the Crescent blocks standing, despite appeals from tenants, Stringer stated, "'the Crescents had a symbolic stigmatising effect on the whole area and retaining them would blight the new estate and discourage private investors'".[204] By 1993, demolition work at the Crescents began, but not before residents held a large party to commemorate their end, reports of which appeared in both the *Manchester Evening News* and *The Guardian*. The event featured live music and dancing, but the most eye-catching spectacle was the moment at which a car fell from the roof of one of the multi-storey blocks [see figure 22].[205] The image was a powerful one, evoking Hulme's reputation as a place of violence and disorder on the eve of its redevelopment, as well as the particular role played by the Crescents played in shaping this perception. In addition to this, the *Evening News'* caption 'driven wild' harked back to reports of 'high flat neurosis' popular in the late 1960s, when medical practitioners wrote of an apparent correlation between psychoneurotic disorders in young mothers living in multi-storey flats in comparison to houses.[206]

The depiction of children also represented a significant feature of photographs of Hulme's demolition. The *Metro News* showed children gathered around the detonator that sparked the charges attached to Medlock Court, preparing to initiate the demolition process [see figure 23].[207] The *Evening News* printed a similar photograph [see figure 24] on the day of the Crescents' collapse, showing a long line of children and their parents posing for a final time in front of the multi-storey blocks. Both images conveyed an air of excitement and celebration, with residents smiling and coming together to have their photograph taken.[208] The images symbolised a turning point in the area's housing history. While children had continued to live in some parts of the multi-storey Hulme after the council's housing allocation policy changed in the late 1970s, they had remained absent from visual representations of the estate. The depiction of children seemingly returning to Hulme on the eve of its low-rise redevelopment, provided the definitive conclusion as to debates over the suitability of multi-storey flats for families waged by the press since the estate's construction.

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[203] Jim Pendrill, 'Take a last look', *Manchester Metro News,* 6 November 1992.
[204] Stephen Rawling, 'New place like Hulme', *The Guardian*, 4 August 1991.
[205] Carl Palmer, 'Hated homes go with a bang', *Manchester Evening News*, 29 March 1993; "Safe as houses' party marks end of a high-rise estate long branded unfit for habitation', *The Guardian*, 29 March 1993.
[206] Lynn Abrams, Linda Fleming, Barry Hazley, Valerie Wright and Ade Kearns, 'Isolated and dependent: women and children in high-rise social housing in post-war Glasgow', *Women's History Review* 28/5 (2019), p. 804.
[207] 'Flats go out with a bang!', *Manchester Metro News,* 17 June 1994.
[208] Ray King, 'The crescents come crashing down', *Manchester Evening News,* 2 March 1993.

Figure 23: Claire Stephenson, 'Flats go out with a bang!', *Manchester Metro News,* 17 June 1994.

Figure 24: Ray King, 'The crescents come crashing down', *Manchester Evening News,* 2 March 1993.

Echoes of the past were prevalent in images relating to Hulme's demolition. Photographs of construction workers and representatives of housing associations in the *Manchester Evening News* in the mid-1990s mirrored newspaper images of the architects and politicians who praised multi-storey flats in in the 1950s and 1960s, albeit with some important distinctions. These later photographs showed the rise of public-private partnerships in housing development. An article claiming that the 'Boom's back in Hulme' for the *Manchester Evening News* in February 1995 showed a photograph of the architect of the new Hulme, the managing director of Crudens Construction,

a representative of the Guinness Trust, and a Hulme tenant.[209] While early reports of Park Hill had emphasised the people behind the plans, featuring portrait-style photographs of individuals such as Sheffield City Council's Director of Housing, the grouping of varied local actors in the later Hulme photograph demonstrated how far approaches to redevelopment had changed by the 1990s.

Hulme's demolition was a gradual process that took several years, but throughout, newspapers described the replacement of its multi-storey flats and low-rise redevelopment as evidence for the estate's 'rebirth'.[210] This characterisation looked to the past as well as the future. Photographs meant to depict everyday life in Hulme's latest incarnation echoed popular images of street life in the 1950s. In June 1994, the *Manchester Metro News* reported news of a street party held to celebrate the completion of the new Hulme, with the article's photograph showing a crowd of residents choosing food from tables lining the street.[211] With the new housing barely visible in the shot, the image suggested that the community had become the focal point of the estate once more. Coverage in *The Guardian* in 1997 also presented an idealised view of street life in the past. Accompanying an article reflecting in part upon the success of Hulme's redevelopment, a photograph showed three women who had stopped to talk in a street of terraced houses. The image offered few clues as to when or where the scene took place, befitting an article that discussed the 'renaissance of life in the terraces' across Britain, including the redeveloped Hulme.[212] This reworking of the past did not always yield entirely positive coverage, with a photograph of a child [see figure 25] walking over the detritus left in the wake of the multi-storey flats' demolition in 1995 echoing images of children playing amongst the rubble of slum clearance areas in the 1960s.[213] Nevertheless, the primary shift again from focusing upon the housing itself – an approach common in visual representations of the multi-storey Hulme – to highlighting instead the presence of groups of residents suggestive of a community, indicates how far newspaper images had helped to shape discourses of multi-storey housing decline by the end of the twentieth century.

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[209] Janine Watson, 'Boom's back in Hulme', *Manchester Evening News,* 7 February 1995.

[210] Janine Watson, 'The heart is beating again', *Manchester Evening News,* 31 July 1991; 'Hulme is reborn as new housing springs up on rubble of 1960s blocks', *The Guardian,* 27 April 1995; Ian Marrow, 'Minister sees inner-city rebirth', *Manchester Evening News,* 9 June 1995; Ray King, 'Hopes are realised in new-look Hulme', *Manchester Evening News,* 24 January 1996.

[211] 'Street party time to 'warm' estate', *Manchester Metro News,* 17 June 1994.

[212] Ena Kendall, 'Close for comfort', *The Guardian,* 12 March 1997.

[213] Janine Watson, 'Regeneration gap', *Manchester Evening News,* 20 May 1995.

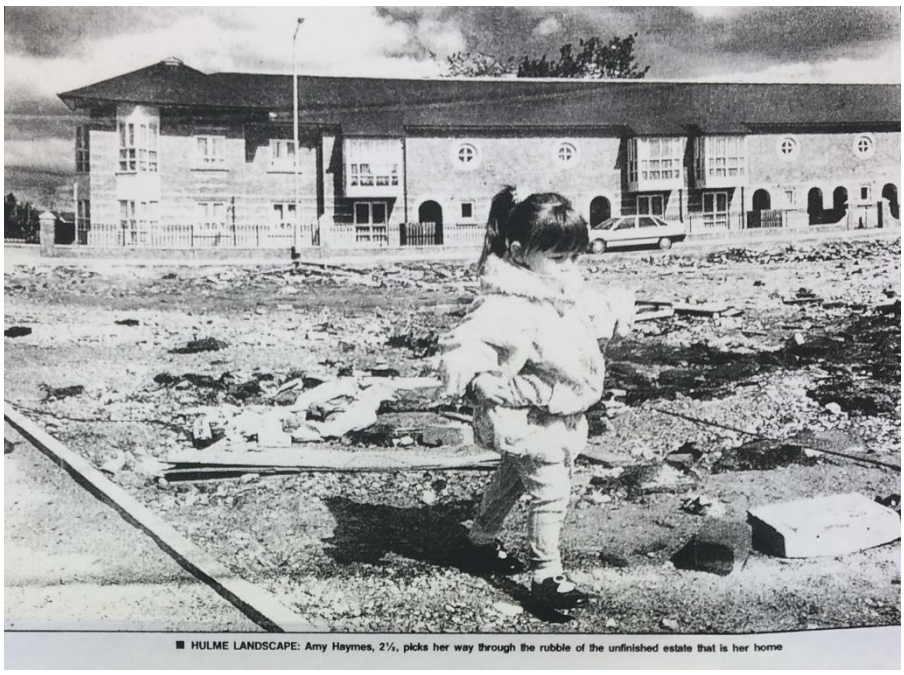

Figure 25: Janine Watson, 'Regeneration gap', *Manchester Evening News,* 20 May 1995.

Conclusion

Newspaper coverage of Park Hill and Hulme illuminates the discourses that underpinned understandings of the 'success' and 'failure' of multi-storey council housing during the post-war period. While the design of the estates remained unchanged, their reception in the press altered significantly between the 1950s and the 1990s. From the celebration of multi-storey living apparent in reports of Park Hill's construction, newspapers met Hulme's demolition and the end of high-density, multi-storey council developments that it seemed to mark, with a similar enthusiasm. The alternate framing of these estates, built at different points in the late twentieth century, indicates the shifting cultural significance attached to this type of housing during a period of societal change. Newspapers followed political attitudes towards multi-storey living to a degree, praising Park Hill as the embodiment of ambitious post-war plans in the 1950s, yet welcoming the transition to private housing and home ownership heralded by Hulme's redevelopment in the 1990s. To a large extent, the estates' respective reputations are thus a product of their time, with their framing in the press offering more of an insight into the wider social context of the late twentieth century than the architectural merits of high flats.

Newspapers presented the built environment as capable of shaping the behaviour of tenants, whether in its initial offer of modern ways of living, or through its later association with

crime and deprivation. Certain tenants were central to these representations. The press used women and children to support evaluations of Park Hill's success in the 1950s and 1960s, drawing upon gendered assumptions of their relationship to the home. In relation to Hulme, newspapers used women and children to illustrate this connection again, but applied it to reports of the unsuitability and dangers of multi-storey living. Representations of men, especially young adults, also underscored reports of the latter, in articles concerning violent crime and in images of the 'gangs' that stalked these multi-storey estates. In highlighting the significance of the form of housing at the heart of these reports, newspapers rendered tenants the passive victims or perpetrators of the conditions in which they lived. As such, coverage largely failed to acknowledge the wider socioeconomic developments that shaped the realities of life on each estate. While local and national newspapers' reliance upon official sources fluctuated over the post-war period, the use of tenants' voices remained limited, with tenants' perspectives often presented in alignment with the prevalent view of Park Hill and Hulme adopted by the local and national press.

Both the language and the photographs used to accompany articles tied the material reality of Park Hill and Hulme to their shifting cultural connotations. While reports of increasing deprivation reflected the reality of the estates in the 1980s and 1990s, the language and imagery used to frame this process as the fault of individuals and their interactions with the material environment of high flats, once again restricted the extent to which newspapers communicated wider societal inequalities. This also served to reinforce the simplistic chronology of rise and fall in relation to Park Hill and Hulme. The textual and visual discourses constructed by the post-war press made multi-storey council housing an archetypal symbol of architectural ambition and failure respectively, with the frequency with which newspapers used certain words and images to denote estates shaping the context in which readers understood their meaning. This restricted framing enabled newspapers to influence cultural attitudes towards this form of housing and its tenants, with the press ultimately packaging reports of multi-storey estates that entrenched their stigmatisation. While this chapter has demonstrated how far press coverage aligned with political attitudes towards multi-storey council housing, these representations also played a vital role in shaping tenants' narratives of their homes, as demonstrated by the oral testimonies considered in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Space and Tenants' Narratives of Multi-Storey Living

In his recent study of British cities in the mid-twentieth century, James Greenhalgh considered the relationship between space and experience in the context of council housing estates. Building on the work of scholars such as Henri Lefebvre and Michel Foucault, Greenhalgh's research demonstrated the salience of considering residents' lived experiences through a spatial lens.[1] He contended,

> Housing estates were not static, unchanging impositions of spatial order; rather, inhabitants used unfamiliar and ambiguous new spaces in ways that challenged prescriptions of correct or productive usage through practices that were routine, quiet and highly practical.[2]

Following Greenhalgh's contention, this chapter argues that not only was the space of the multi-storey estate key to shaping residents' lived experiences, but so too were the patterns of residents' everyday lives capable of influencing the physical makeup and meanings of the multi-storey estate. As discussed in Chapter One, post-war architects, planners, and local authorities had competing visions for multi-storey living; this chapter shows how these contradictions and inconsistencies facilitated tenants' adaptation of the function of estate spaces in practice. It complicates purely state-led histories of the urban environment, through which understandings of rigid spatial prescriptions institutionally imposed from above have largely obscured residents' perspectives. In studying residents' accounts of their lived experience through a spatial lens, the chapter expands upon the themes of architectural design, housing policy and cultural representation explored in the first chapters of the thesis, considering how residents negotiated aspects of each through their everyday interactions with the built environment.

Historians of modern Britain have begun to use space as a category of analysis connected to lived experience. In the context of Tower Hamlets in the 1980s, Stephen Brooke argued that 'emotional and political communities' stemmed from the spatial ramifications of political practices, such as the allocation of funding. His contention that this could in turn create 'material and discursive spaces against neo-liberalism' has links to residents' spatial practices in Hulme during the 1980s and 1990s, when the prevalence of squatters in some blocks fuelled perceptions of the

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[1] Key texts include, Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space,* trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, 1991); Michel Foucault, *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972-1977* (Harlow, 1980); and Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York, 1995).

[2] James Greenhalgh, *Reconstructing modernity: space, power and governance in mid-twentieth century British cities* (Manchester, 2017), p. 159.

estate's 'alternative community', as the first section will discuss.[3] Similarly, David Adams used the case study of Birmingham between 1945 and the 1970s to suggest that a better understanding of the relationship between space, representation and experience could help to inform methods for tenant participation in 'future planning discourse' across the country, an argument particularly relevant to the ongoing regeneration of Sheffield's Park Hill.[4] The intersection of space and experience is an especially interesting notion to explore in relation to the modernist, brutalist architecture that characterised the Sheffield and Manchester estates at the heart of this study, with these design forms associated with social prescriptions to a greater extent than their traditional counterparts. While the thesis has thus far considered architectural design, policy, and cultural representations separate to residents' personal narratives of lived experience, this chapter illustrates the interconnections between these aspects of multi-storey council housing through the lens of space.

It adopts a threefold approach to 'space' as an analytical tool, following to some extent the framework of Lefebvre's 'perceived-conceived-lived' triad, and elements of its more recent adaptation by urban historians.[5] It understands space in its physical form to discuss the ways in which residents moved between and within the material environment of the multi-storey council estate, but in examining these interactions, the chapter also explores how far representations of space influenced their use. This aspect of the analysis builds on the political and cultural constructions of space outlined in the previous two chapters, to compare the intended function of spaces with their changing use by residents over time. Considering the latter, the chapter uses oral history to shed light on interviewees' conceptions of space, highlighting how their stories interlaced with aspects of the physical and represented multi-storey estate. As such, the following discussion treats the materiality of space as indivisible from its discursive and narrative production. Here, Matthew Kingle's words on historical analyses of space seem particularly apt. As Kingle wrote, '[the] challenge is how to tell stories that bring space and time together into a coherent whole without mistaking the map for the account'.[6]

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[3] Stephen Brooke, 'Space, emotions and the everyday: the affective ecology of 1980s London', *Twentieth Century British History,* 28/1 (2017), p. 124; Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Relations Resource Centre (hereafter RRRC): GB3228.3/5/21, Manchester City Council, Director of Housing, *Hulme 5: Local Management Initiative Proposals* (Manchester, 1987), p. 5.

[4] David Adams, 'Everyday experiences of the modern city: remembering the post-war reconstruction of Birmingham', *Planning Perspectives,* 26/2 (2011), p. 238.

[5] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*; Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor, *Moving Histories of Class and Community: Identity, Place and Belonging in Contemporary England* (Basingstoke, 2011), p. 17; Adams, 'Everyday experiences of the modern city', p. 238.

[6] Matthew Kingle, 'Introduction: Making Places, Shaping Cities – Narrating Spatial History in Three American Cities', *Journal of Urban History,* 44/4 (2018), p. 578.

Ben Rogaly and Becky Taylor argued that the spatial study of residents' lived experiences of local housing estates is limited without the consideration of broader, influential factors, such as fluctuations in the national economy or levels of state intervention.[7] Thus, despite its focus on Park Hill and Hulme, the chapter situates its findings in the context of wider socio-political developments of post-war England. This includes the withdrawal of economic provision for multi-storey council housing and the increasing centralisation of government.[8] As national and local economies shifted in the late twentieth century, residents' testimonies revealed the difficulties of keeping certain communal spaces open for local people, particularly young adults and children, and maintaining the material environment of each estate. Further, interviewees' accounts indicate the spatial politics of class and gender during this period. Mike Savage, Gaynor Bagnall and Brian Longhurst have sought to reassert the importance of interconnections between space and class in the study of local areas of the late twentieth century, while feminist geographers have emphasised how architectural expectations as to gendered spatial practices of the 1950s and 1960s largely fell out of step with the changing nature of late twentieth-century society.[9]

Even the material spaces of the multi-storey council estate transformed during this period, as national housing policy began to redefine local authority stock as a 'safety net' option for people of most dire housing need. The shift from council renting to owner occupation championed by housing policies, influenced residents' changing use of space in Park Hill and Hulme, although tenants' accounts of the reach of central government directives differed. On the subject of home ownership at Park Hill, one former resident claimed that it became common practice for people to buy their flats under the Right to Buy from 1980, while others stated that tenants moved elsewhere to take advantage of the scheme, or else simply could not afford to alter their tenure.[10]

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[7] Rogaly and Taylor, *Moving Histories,* p. 6.

[8] On the introduction and withdrawal of central government financial for council housing of greater heights and densities, see Rodney Harrison, 'Towards an Archaeology of the Welfare State in Britain, 1945-2009', *Archaeological Journal of the World Archaeological Congress*, 5/2 (2009), p. 245; On central government involvement with council housing in the 1950s and 1960s, see Alison Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture: The History of a Social Experiment* (London, 2001), p. 111. On the centralisation of governance in the 1980s, see Michael J. Oliver, 'The retreat of the state in the 1980s and the 1990s', in Francesca Carnevali and Julie-Marie Strange (eds), *20th Century Britain* (2007), pp. 262-278.

[9] Mike Savage, Gaynor Bagnall and Brian Longhurst, 'Local Habitus and Working-Class Culture', in Fiona Devine, Mike Savage, John Scott and Rosemary Crompton (eds), *Rethinking Class: Culture, Identities and Lifestyles* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 95-122. On feminist geographies of the city, see Clara Greed, *Women and Planning: Creating Gendered Realities* (London, 1994), p. 141; Kristine B. Miranne and Alma H. Young, 'Introduction', in Kristine B. Miranne and Alma H. Young (eds), *Gendering the City: Women, Boundaries, and Visions of Urban Life* (Oxford, 2000), p. 3; Ruth Madigan and Moira Munro, 'Gender, House and Home – Social Meanings and Domestic Architecture in Britain', *Journal of Architecture and Planning Research,* 8/2 (1991), p. 127.

[10] Paul argued for the popularity of the Right to Buy at Park Hill, while Carol and Lisa pointed out its limitations. See Paul Brown, interview with author (22 June 2018); Carol Williams, interview with author (4 February 2019); Lisa Crossley, interview with author (6 March 2020). A 1991 report by the Department of the Environment based on two national surveys conducted in 1986 and 1989 found that 'most tenants would ideally prefer to be homeowners',

A report of the Sheffield estate in *The Times* in 1999 suggested that the uptake had been limited.[11] In Hulme at least, the policy's reach certainly did not extend far. By March 1992, only 35 dwellings – representing 0.6 per cent of Hulme's total housing stock – had been sold under the scheme, with the council still owning 98 per cent of Hulme flats by 1993.[12] Manchester City Council's success in the City Challenge initiative therefore heralded significant change to the estate's housing stock in the early 1990s, reducing the number of socially rented dwellings to make room for privately rented and owner-occupied housing. Historians have viewed the shift from council renting to home ownership, accelerated by the Right to Buy, as instrumental to the residualisation of council housing across England.[13] This chapter shows how this process played out at a local level, through the socio-spatial practices tied to its development.

It does so by tracing the influence of wider political developments and their accompanying cultural discourses in the narratives of past tenants, with the site of the multi-storey estate remaining central throughout the analysis. The chapter reinforces the conclusions drawn earlier in the thesis to argue that architecturally deterministic accounts of both Park Hill and Hulme have overstated the extent to which their deck-access designs could influence residents' spatial practices, but it also sheds light on the ways in which tenants' interactions with the material environment shaped their lived experience, with oral history interviewees using references to the height and density of Park Hill and Hulme to frame discussions of childhood, community and security. Although residents' personal testimonies considered aspects of everyday life reminiscent of other working-class areas of post-war England, many of their experiences were specific to a multi-storey context. This chapter therefore looks beyond the framing of deterministic design to argue that, rather than following competing prescriptions of the built environment, multi-storey council tenants at Park Hill and Hulme acted as agents of their own spatial practices, capable of influencing the materiality and meaning of the spaces in which they lived.

The chapter draws upon the personal testimonies of 18 former residents of Park Hill and Hulme, collected through semi-structured interviews. It follows a thematic analytical approach to highlight how far the space of the multi-storey estate and its surroundings constituted a focal point

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but identified financial concerns as a barrier to using the Right to Buy, as Park Hill tenants' testimonies suggested. See Department of the Environment, *The Right to Buy: A national follow-up survey of tenants of council homes in England* (London, 1991), p. 10.

[11] 'Park Hill Sheffield: ugly council estate or design icon?', *The Times,* 11 August 1999.

[12] MA: GB3228.3/5/43, Manchester City Council Planning Department, *Hulme Baseline Study: A Portrait of Hulme Before Hulme City Challenge* (Manchester, 1993), p. 38.

[13] Aled Davies, "Right to Buy': The Development of a Conservative Housing Policy, 1945-1980', *Contemporary British History*, 27/4 (2013), pp. 421-444; Emily Cuming, Housing, class and gender in modern British writing, 1880-2012 (Cambridge, 2016), p. 212; Peter Shapely, *Deprivation, State Interventions and Urban Communities in Britain, 1968-79* (London, 2017), p. 14.

around which interviewees shaped their narratives. While the chapter acknowledges the uniqueness of each narrative, constructed by individuals from their personal experiences, it also pays attention to the common themes and images of multi-storey living and urban life more generally that fed into participants' stories. This helps to demonstrate the interplay between the social and the spatial, revealing how ideas of class, gender, and community shaped the stories tenants told. It also shows how – through references to estate spaces and those of the city – participants drew on conventional elements of existing discourses of Park Hill and Hulme to organise their narratives. Rather than just replicating external perspectives to tell a familiar tale, this approach saw interviewees situate 'their own unique lives in an urban context'; a process that Ruth Finnegan has argued is evidence for the role of individual stories in 'formulating – creating – the city and its life'.[14]

The chapter begins with an analysis of residents' perspectives of certain spaces such as the street decks, pubs, and community centres. It explores how far the initial use of these spaces corresponded with their intended function, as well as their changing use over time. This section shows the extent to which housing policy and cultural representations of deck-access housing shaped spatial practices, while highlighting residents' capacity to adapt the uses of the spaces they inhabited. The second section concentrates on practices of socio-spatial 'boundary-making' within each estate, demonstrating the ways in which understandings of class and gender during the post-war period underscored residents' interactions with the built environment. Finally, the chapter extends this focus on movement within Park Hill and Hulme to study residents' connections to the wider city. Throughout, the analysis emphasises the interplay between interviewees' accounts and political and cultural discourses, suggesting the points at which residents alternately reinforced and subverted stereotypical representations of the spaces of multi-storey council housing.

Estate spaces: tenants' interactions with the material environment

The street decks – or 'landings' as some interviewees referred to them – were often one of the first aspects of multi-storey housing mentioned by former residents in oral history interviews. Constituting such a key element of the designs of Park Hill and Hulme that set them apart from other council estates, it is unsurprising that these walkways featured so prominently in residents' narratives of their lived experiences. The use of the street decks throughout the post-war years demonstrates the changing nature of residents' everyday lives and the influence of political and cultural attitudes in shaping spatial practices over time. Some residents' memories of the street decks fell broadly in line with their evolving representation in housing policy and the press, with residents who grew up on the estates initially likening the walkways to playgrounds, before

[14] Ruth Finnegan, *Tales of the City: A Study of Narrative and Urban Life* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 158.

associating them with an increasing sense of insecurity as time went by. The following accounts indicate the centrality of the street decks to the spaces of former residents' childhoods. Karen moved to Park Hill in 1962 aged three and lived on the estate for twenty-five years. When asked what she used to do in her spare time as a child, Karen replied instantly, 'well, the landings were quite big so you could play on [them]', while Patricia, who moved to the flats a year later than Karen when she was seven, remarked that the decks were 'fantastic for roller-skating'.[15] Carol, who was nine years old when she moved to Park Hill in 1962, offered a similar view, stating, 'all the kids played out, down on the bars, in the park areas, on the landings we used to have roller skates and skate along'.[16]

In Hulme, Lee-Ann also found the street decks an ideal space for play. Born on the estate in 1970, Lee-Ann lived in a first-floor, deck-access flat with her mother and grandfather, just across the road from the Crescents. In her interview, Lee-Ann reflected, 'my memories of playing and learning to throw a ball and ride a bike was all done on the landing. You learned how to do it all there'.[17] According to Jason, who moved to Hulme from Moss Side as a child in the late 1970s, 'the landings, they were our playground…you made your own entertainment on the landings'.[18] Nevertheless, the layout of the flats meant that children's use of the street decks for play caused problems for other tenants. The decks were situated directly above – and connected to – rows of flats, meaning that those traversing the walkways often did so above the ceiling of another resident's bedroom. As a result, children's use of the decks for play was not always looked upon favourably. 'We got complained [about] because obviously it made a lot of noise for the people who lived under them', Carol explained of Park Hill. Another resident of the Sheffield estate, Paul, whose family formed part of an early wave of residents who moved to the flats in 1959, remembered how, 'often you were actually playing on top of somebody's room or somebody's bedroom. So, there was hell to pay if you were kicking a ball or riding a bike, they'd be running up saying 'stop that! Get off!' All that sort of stuff you know'.[19]

These examples offer children's perspectives of the street decks as spaces linked primarily to play. According to these interviewees across both estates, the decks had fulfilled an aspect of their intended function, providing safe and sheltered leisure space for children's use throughout the year. However, this relationship between the construction of space by architects and planners,

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[15] Karen Hill, interview with author (15 February 2019); Patricia Johnson, interview (8 February 2019).
[16] Carol Williams interview.
[17] Lee-Ann Igbon, interview with author (24 November 2019).
[18] Jason Shaw, interview with author (3 March 2020).
[19] Paul Brown interview.

and the representational space of interviewees' accounts, differed somewhat in narratives told from the perspective of adult residents. Unlike the interviewees referenced above, Mary moved to Park Hill in 1969 when she was 28 years old with her husband and three young children. She found that once her initial excitement at moving to a flat with indoor plumbing and all mod cons had worn off, a sense of isolation took its place, compounded by the deck-access layout of the flats. Mary recounted how she had felt 'closed in', living in a top floor flat in Park Hill's highest block. 'Once your door was closed, you didn't see anybody', Mary explained. '[You were] up in t' sky really and you were looking down on buses going up and down Duke Street'.[20] This became a recurring point of Mary's narrative, as she revisited her feelings of isolation throughout the interview. At another point, she reiterated once more,

> You never saw anybody unless you were looking down at street because your door was locked [and] it was just a landing, no windows to look at people passing, windows were other side where you were looking down at traffic.[21]

Although she had a part-time job as a cleaner and tried to pass the time visiting or hosting relatives, Mary often spent her days alone in the flat, with her husband out at work and her children at school. For working-class women especially, rising rates of employment and the decreasing size of families meant that the post-war period was a time of considerable social change. However, the nostalgia for traditional gender roles provoked by these developments led some commentators to reinforce stereotypical images of working-class women, misrepresenting their lived experience to eulogise a culture presumed lost.[22]

Paul Watt has shown that elderly council housing tenants most often retrospectively articulated this sense of loss, drawing unfavourable comparisons between the 'youthful disorder' and crime seemingly inherent to new estates and the apparent ease of neighbourly relations in previous neighbourhoods. This approach characterised Mary's approach to narrating her time at Park Hill as a now elderly and former tenant, with Mary recounting how she struggled to adapt to multi-storey living without the social networks she had previously formed in Attercliffe, an industrial suburb to the north-east of Sheffield.[23] Richard had a similar view of Park Hill's street decks to Mary. Having worked as a butcher in one of the shops located on the estate's retail street

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[20] Mary Thomas, interview with author (11 February 2019).

[21] *Ibid.* Mary's words are presented here as she spoke them to avoid erasing her accent in the text. The rest of the interview extracts used in this thesis follow the same approach.

[22] Stephen Brooke, 'Gender and working class identity in Britain during the 1950s', *Journal of Social History,* 34 (2001), p. 775.

[23] Paul Watt, 'Respectability, Roughness and 'Race': Neighbourhood place images and the making of working-class social distinctions in London', *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 30/4 (2006), p. 780.

the 'Pavement' throughout the mid-1960s, Richard had been familiar with Park Hill for several years without having ventured onto the walkways above. This changed when he began to work as a milkman for the estate and its surrounding area. As he recalled in his interview,

> When I was working at the butcher's, I'd never been on any of the landings, and when I did…you didn't see people. On a normal milk round you'd walk past people's windows and you'd see them, and you'd stop for a chat and a cup of tea and all of that stuff. But you didn't [at Park Hill] because all the doors were closed.[24]

Despite the image of the milk float on the street decks having formed part of Park Hill's symbolic association with working-class community in the early 1960s, especially due to its depiction in BBC documentaries and those produced by Sheffield City Council like the *Park Hill Housing Project,* Richard's words indicate the differences between the estate's initial public image and its reality towards the end of the decade.[25]

As well as places of potential loneliness, from the 1970s, the street decks of Park Hill and Hulme gained a reputation for crime and vandalism. Within five years of Hume's construction, Manchester City Council's Director of Housing began to consider altering its approach to the management of deck-access housing. According to a report by the Housing Committee, one option even favoured 'abandoning the 'streets in the sky' concept on which the original design brief was based'.[26] Instead, however, the Committee recommended a series of security measures to restrict access to the decks and the flats situated along them.[27] The council had already implemented some of these by the time Anthony moved to Hulme in 1976, where he lived for three years in William Kent Crescent. Describing his flat, Anthony recalled a small porch-like area that stemmed from the landing and acted as another barrier to his front door, with both entrances fitted with locks. However, Anthony saw this as a precaution only, stating that the locks were there 'just to be on the safe side' because 'there was never really any trouble over here'.[28]

The differences between Anthony's perspective of the street decks and those of Stephanie and Louise, highlight the gendered aspects of residents' use of certain spaces. Recalling their memories of Hulme, Stephanie and Louise both tied its deck-access design to feelings of insecurity.

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[24] Richard Taylor, interview with author (6 February 2019).

[25] Yorkshire Film Archive (YFA): YFA3315, *Park Hill Housing Project* [film] (Sheffield City Council, 1962); Cuming, *Housing, Class and Gender,* p. 168.

[26] MA: GB127/74: Manchester City Council Housing Committee, R. G. Goodhead, Director of Housing, 'Management Concept for Deck Access Scheme, 7 April 1975', *Minute Book 74: 14 April 1975-14 July 1975* (Manchester, 1975), p. 150.

[27] *Ibid.,* pp. 151-153.

[28] Anthony Clark, interview with author (3 December 2019).

Both interviewees narrated how their attitudes towards the street decks had changed over time, whether due to growing older in Stephanie's case, or moving to another part of Hulme for Louise. By the time she entered her teenage years in the 1980s, Stephanie found using the stairs and walkways of her block of flats on Boundary Lane a difficult daily ritual. 'I remember running up the stairwells,' she stated. 'Even when I was older, you'd run up because you'd feel like someone might be lurking around the stairwells.'[29] For Stephanie, this feeling was exacerbated by the presence of increasingly transient tenants on the estate in the mid- to late 1980s. As she continued, 'especially as people started moving out, you used to get odd bods round there a lot. That way, you were sort of, you weren't living in fear, but you were running the gauntlet. I'd come home from work and be legging it up the stairs'.[30]

Louise moved to Hulme during the second year of her studies at Manchester University in the summer of 1980. Initially, she had shared a flat with other students on Otterburn Close, to the north of Hulme. Despite moving to the estate at a time typically associated with its declining community spirit, during her interview Louise reflected that, in comparison to the private housing developments elsewhere in which she lived later, the street decks around her block on Otterburn Close had fostered a sense of sociability on the estate. 'People tended to be out on their balconies and walkways [more so] than in the private sector', Louise described, 'where I guess [houses] were more self-contained'.[31] Irrespective of the fears of sociologists like Michael Young and Peter Willmott, post-war residential redevelopments did not necessarily constitute the permanent breakdown of community networks, with new residents mixing with more established tenants even in atypical forms of council housing.[32] More recent studies of council housing in Nottingham and Beverley in East Yorkshire support Louise's perspective, attesting to the endurance of community spirit despite post-war redevelopment.[33]

However, after 18 months at Otterburn Close, Louise relocated to John Nash Crescent. There, she lived with two friends in a three-bedroom, ground-floor flat previously occupied by a family. Despite describing Otterburn Close as being 'only a stone's throw away' from the Crescents, for Louise, life at John Nash differed from her earlier experiences of Hulme. As she explained in her interview,

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[29] Stephanie Palmer, interview with author (4 March 2020).
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] Louise Miller, interview with author (25 February 2020).
[32] Michael Young and Peter Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (London, 1957).
[33] For example, Lisa Mckenzie, 'A narrative from the inside, studying St Anns in Nottingham: belonging, continuity and change', *The Sociological Review*, 60/3 (2012), p. 458; and Stefan Ramsden, *Working-Class Community in the Age of Affluence* (Abingdon, 2017).

> LM: We had about 18 months in Otterburn and then I moved over to John Nash Crescent.
>
> IC: *Can you tell me a bit about what that was like?*
>
> LM: Yeah, that wasn't quite so friendly. [Laughs]. That was a bit more intimidating. I think because the whole length of the Crescents was much longer, each floor was much longer, and there were many more flats on each floor than there had been when we were at Otterburn.[34]

As this exchange illustrates, the layout of the Crescents themselves played a key role in shaping Louise's attitude towards them. Accommodating a larger number of people than the flats of Otterburn Close, the higher density of the Crescents contributed directly to Louise's feelings of intimidation, with her description evoking the anonymity often ascribed to mass, standardised multi-storey blocks. This impression served to restrict Louise's movement around the estate.

> I lived with two lads that time [at John Nash]. I felt a bit more, well, I felt a bit more protected there with two guys, I wasn't worried about living there. But we tended to go out as a threesome much more. When I lived in Otterburn, I was quite happy to walk back on my own, come into the flat on my own. But at John Nash I tended to stick with the other two guys.[35]

Louise predicated her assertion that 'I wasn't worried about living there' on her association with her two male flatmates, highlighting the gendered facets of her sense of security. The accounts of other interviewees reinforced the influence of these fears in relation to women's spatial practices, with Conor, Jason and Stephanie all speaking of sexual assault against women local to Hulme and Moss Side in their interviews.[36] Moreover, in 1983 – during Louise's time at the Crescents – over 200 women participated in a protest march through the streets of Hulme and Moss Side to raise awareness of the number of attacks on women in the local area. The organising group called themselves 'Hulme Women Against Rape', but their efforts focused mainly on the tone of media coverage and approaches to policing, rather than a discussion of Hulme's built environment.[37] While these attacks clearly constituted a significant issue for local people, during her interview Louise also noted that the context of the time had played a considerable role in exacerbating her safety concerns. Her move to Hulme had coincided with the time at which the

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[34] Louise Miller interview.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] Conor McShane, interview with author (28 February 2020); Jason Shaw interview; Stephanie Palmer interview.
[37] MA: Q942.733913HU169*: Octopus: The Hulme Magazine,* No. 3, July 1983.

Yorkshire Ripper was at large, and, as she stated, 'I certainly was more scared about the Yorkshire Ripper than wandering about Hulme'.[38] Staff of the Hulme Girls Project, a resident-led group established with the help of Manchester City Council, recorded similar issues in 1982, as parents' anxieties over the safety of their children began to hinder girls' attendance at evening club activities. The group's report detailed, 'fears about the [Yorkshire] Ripper and recently now the judgement on 'negligence' in rape cases means that parents are not willing to let their daughters out after dark'.[39] As a result, volunteers began to escort young attendees home to reassure parents of their daughters' safety.

While residents like Stephanie and Louise dreaded using Hulme's walkways, maintenance issues meant that the street decks often represented the only route of access for residents to their flats. Of Hulme, Anthony stated, 'the lifts never worked, or hardly ever. And when they did, they smelled of urine'.[40] Yet, as Stephanie described, using the stairs presented another set of problems that disproportionately affected women. Jason remembered witnessing women attempting to carry pushchairs and shopping up the stairs rather than using the lifts in Hulme, while Mary spoke of her struggle to move around Park Hill during the day when the lifts had broken down: 'you were walking all the way up them stairs because we were top floor', Mary recalled.[41] Although recognising the multiplicity of tenants' experiences of living off the ground, commonalities between residents' accounts of certain spaces provide a clear indication of how feelings of insecurity – often gendered in nature – were exacerbated by the context of mass, multi-storey housing. As a study of high-rise living in post-war Glasgow recently established in relation to this period, 'Women were still the primary carers, homemakers and sustainers of everyday life and it was certainly they who bore the brunt of poor design and quality'.[42]

Aside from the street decks, Sheffield's City Architect saw pubs – alongside shops and other communal areas – as having long provided the 'core' around which communities develop. For Park Hill's architects and planners, such spaces played an important role in the context of multi-storey developments, facilitating connections between the interior spaces of individual dwellings and the external spaces of the wider estate in the absence of traditional streets or

[38] Louise Miller interview.

[39] Working Class Movement Library (hereafter WCML): 36021178/AG/Manchester, Box 4/A: Hulme Girls Project, *Annual Report*: *1982* (Manchester, 1982), p. 5.

[40] Anthony Clark interview.

[41] Mary Thomas interview.

[42] Lynn Abrams, Linda Fleming, Barry Hazley, Valerie Wright and Ade Kearns, 'Isolated and dependent: women and children in high-rise social housing in post-war Glasgow', *Women's History Review*, 28/5 (2019), p. 799.

gardens.[43] By 1980, there remained signs that Park Hill's pubs were functioning in a similar fashion to a community centre, hosting meetings of the fishing club and darts team, as well as dominoes and crib competitions.[44] Interviewees such as Paul and Patricia highlighted the importance of the estate's pubs as social spaces for residents, with Paul even using them to characterise Park Hill as a 'village within the town centre'.[45] Yet for Lee-Ann, a resident of Hulme still today, Hulme's pubs symbolised the community's changing nature over time. 'We used to be notorious for pubs in Hulme', she remarked. 'We used to have thirty-four. Now we've got one. As in [terms of] community connections [Hulme has] not only changed physically but in terms of who's here, where they are from'.[46] For the historian Peter Shapely, the decreasing number of pubs in Hulme constituted, 'a critical blow to the social life of the neighbourhood'.[47] From Lee-Ann's perspective, the apathy and conflict that she occasionally encountered as someone who lived and worked in Hulme as a local Labour councillor, could be traced to the gradual erasure of certain communal spaces like the pub from the local landscape, as well as the arrival of new residents.[48]

Paul's account of Park Hill instilled these spaces with the nostalgia he felt for a culture since lost. As he described, 'There must have been fifteen or twenty pubs within easy walking distance in those days. There was a pub on every street in those days. There was a pub on every street'.[49] For Paul, the declining number of pubs around Park Hill exemplified not only changes to the material environment, but the working-class culture he associated with his youth, seemingly absent in the present day. Yet residents' narratives also suggested that the estate's pubs were not always so central to their spatial practices, with the Park Hill interviewees often mentioning its pubs in conjunction with those they visited in the nearby city centre. Although Patricia described the Park Hill pubs as an important social space for her parents, she conceded that she preferred to visit pubs in the wider city instead as a teenager.[50] Likewise, while Paul emphasised the connections between its pubs and Park Hill's role as a 'village' to assert that, despite living 'literally a few hundred yards from the town centre…everything you wanted was [at Park Hill]', his memories of the estate's pubs often blurred with an account of those of the city centre.[51] Similar

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[43] SLSL: 728.314SQ, City of Sheffield Housing Committee, 'Report of the City Architect: Park Hill Redevelopment Part 1, Provision of amenities' (Sheffield, 1959), p. 2.
[44] Stephen Garnsey, *The Community in the Sky: Life on the Park Hill Flats* (Sheffield, 1980), p. 10.
[45] Paul Brown interview; Patricia Johnson interview.
[46] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.
[47] Peter Shapely, 'The Press and the System-Built Developments of Inner-City Manchester, 1960s-1980s', *Manchester Region History Review*, 16 (2002-2003), p. 31.
[48] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.
[49] Paul Brown interview.
[50] Patricia Johnson interview.
[51] Paul Brown interview.

tensions appeared in Karen's account of other spaces. She recalled fondly how Park Hill's laundrette had once served as a key social space for women during her childhood in the 1960s, with her mother often staying to chat to friends and neighbours when her washing was finished. Yet Karen remarked that she never used the laundrette for this purpose herself as she grew older.[52] These narratives speak to the attempts of some participants to locate 'community', and ambivalent ideas of working-class culture now perceived as lost, in certain spaces. Their stories correspond with the cultivation of what Finnegan describes as 'a deeply entrenched English mythology' of community and place, even if – in reality – tenants' spatial practices contributed to the process of erasure they lamented.[53]

Despite the fond memories voiced by some residents, pubs on the estates also represented spaces of conflict, with residents recalling instances of anti-social behaviour and violence in their interviews. Paul recounted how people walking home from the pubs at Park Hill would urinate in the lifts, 'even from the early days', a complaint common among residents of the nearby Hyde Park flats too, who referred to the vandalism and damage to lifts caused by so-called 'malevolent tenants' by the late 1980s as one of several justifications for their support for the flats' demolition.[54] Karen also held pubs responsible for problems at Park Hill, linking them in her interview to stealing, drug abuse, and child neglect. As she recalled,

> [Parents] would be in the pub, and they'd come out of the pub to go to the betting shop. And the kids would be sat outside. I mean, little, tiny kids, not had any tea or anything…there'd be kids wandering round, a three-year-old wandering round the flats at half eleven at night because the parents were in the pub.[55]

According to Carol, pubs only exacerbated feelings of isolation among some women residents of Park Hill, acting as a social space primarily for men. As she explained,

> People were – like my Mum – they didn't have gardens, didn't have social space in the same way that they did [before moving to Park Hill]. The men were alright because they used to go to the pubs and down to the clubs and that, and those days it was mainly

[52] Karen Hill interview.
[53] Finnegan, *Tales of the City,* p. 155.
[54] Paul Brown interview; Sheffield Archives (hereafter SA): LD2481/15/1, Hyde Park Community Action, *The Case for the Bulldozers* (Sheffield, 1989).
[55] Karen Hill interview.

> men who went, although Mum would go down occasionally with Dad to the railway club.[56]

In alluding to the relative sociability of traditional streets containing houses with gardens, Carol's account indicated how aspects of Park Hill's design exacerbated the gender imbalance of its limited social spaces. Lee-Ann had a similar view of Hulme. 'I always found it weird that all the men went to the pub all the time, every day, even though we had no money', she reflected. 'Everybody went to the pub, [but] women didn't, they stayed at home'.[57] Although she acknowledged the social links potentially fostered by such communal spaces, Lee-Ann also found their prominence in some aspects of everyday life problematic. She drew a direct correlation between these spaces and domestic violence in Hulme, stating, 'because we had a lot of pubs, I think that's the reason that we had a lot of domestic violence'. Later in her interview, she elaborated,

> There wasn't that violence, not in every household, but there was – they'd go to the pub and come back drunk and there was lots of domestic violence, lots of it then, and that was just normalised. You couldn't tell the police. You couldn't go to anybody. You just had to go through it.[58]

While acting as a hub of sociability to an extent, the unintended consequences of the provision of pubs as social spaces also made life in Hulme especially difficult for some women residents, an aspect of her experience that Lee-Ann was still coming to terms with at the time of her interview.

Having moved to the estate at the age of twenty-one, Anthony's use of social spaces was distinct from Hulme's more well-established tenants. A student at the University of Manchester, Anthony met friends at pubs outside of Hulme, being the only member of his social circle who lived in a flat on the multi-storey estate. In his words, 'the pubs and whatever [in Hulme] were busy enough with people, although we didn't tend to use them because we drank over at the University or in pubs near the University with friends'.[59] While his use, or lack thereof, of certain spaces in Hulme centred on the location of his social circle, it was also predicated on a sense of detachment from other residents on the estate. When asked about his involvement with any community events in Hulme, Anthony replied, 'There must have been [community events], but we were never part of it'.[60] According to his narrative, the only local facilities he used were the

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[56] Carol Williams interview.
[57] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.
[58] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.
[59] Anthony Clark interview.
[60] *Ibid.*

library and the small, art-house cinema called the Aaben, situated on Jackson Crescent, where he regularly watched old or international films shown to attract the local student population. Anthony's account reveals the ways in which class influenced residents' use of space. Identifying himself as a middle-class student, Anthony did not see himself as 'part' of the estate's 'community'; a distinction that he made clear in his narrative by using a dichotomy of temporary, student tenants using Hulme as a stop-gap before moving elsewhere, and more well-established residents to frame the reasoning behind his interactions with the material environment.

Far from the vision of harmonious neighbourly relations imagined by their architects, conflict was an integral aspect of the use of social spaces in Hulme and Park Hill. In Sheffield, despite organising events for the estate in its entirety, the leadership positions adopted by a select group of residents led others to limit their involvement in social activities. Karen used the community centre at Park Hill less over time as one family began to dominate its management. In her words,

> They were the mafia. We used to call them mafia. They thought they owned the flats…They just run everything and it was like you couldn't do anything unless [the family] said so. So, if there were like, a committee or something, or whatever, you wouldn't get on…or any trips and stuff. If you fell out with them, they were swines…they'd veto anything, and if your face didn't fit that were it.[61]

Greenhalgh found similar evidence in his study of tenants' use of space in cities across Britain during the mid-twentieth century, where the 'exclusionary tactics' employed by a select group of tenants hindered the participation of much of the local population in activities originating from community centres.[62] Although organised by residents, this did not necessarily mean that events catered to the community in its entirety. In Sheffield, the decision to use Hyde Park's community hall for sports purposes for Park Hill tenants adversely limited its appeal for some young women. Karen described how, although she had become friends with one of the women who helped to found the youth club at Park Hill, she did not participate in activities held at Hyde Park's community hall because she saw it as a place that was mainly for boys.[63] These perceptions of

[61] Karen Hill interview.
[62] Greenhalgh, *Reconstructing modernity,* p. 161.
[63] Karen Hill interview.

communal spaces were also apparent in Hulme, evident in residents' differential memories of the 'Proctors youth club' or 'Proctors lads' club'.[64]

The availability of recreational provision was a longstanding issue for residents of both estates. Park Hill tenants had been instrumental in ensuring their access to Hyde Park's community hall from December 1963, with the tenants' association making an application to the council and agreeing to meet the cost of heating and lighting the hall, in addition to paying an annual rent, in a bid to provide more communal spaces for young people on the estate.[65] Despite some limitations in practice according to Karen's account, the dual use of the hall demonstrates how tenants successfully adapted its function, with Sheffield City Council having initially intended for the community hall to serve youth clubs like the 'Boy Scout Association' and 'the Sheffield Association of Boys and Girls Clubs', groups that did not necessarily accommodate resident teenagers.[66] Through their adaptation and maintenance of this space, Park Hill residents sought to address the issue of scarce recreational provision for young adults highlighted by Housing Officers since 1960, who described in a report how a coffee bar on the estate had become 'responsible for gathering together a good many of the less desirable types of adolescents', and expressed concern over the effects of young adult behaviour upon feelings of safety among other residents at Park Hill.[67]

In Hulme, a lack of play facilities for children led residents to successfully lobby the council to set up adventure playgrounds, and in 1973, it became home to two; one to the north of the estate and another to the south. A broad commitment to 'safe play areas for the children', outlined in conjunction with a vision for 'a city of open green spaces', underpinned the council's approach to outdoor recreational provision in multi-storey developments from the late 1950s, with plans for Hulme specifically citing the provision of 'infant play spaces, hard ball areas and adventure playgrounds' for young tenants.[68] The council failed initially to deliver on the latter. As research has shown of outdoor play provision for the residents of flats in post-war Glasgow, limited policy structures and financial resources could hinder opportunities to put plans for play into practice.[69]

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[64] MA: GB127.M781, Hulme Views Project, *Views from the Crescents: writing photographs and illustrations by people from the Crescents area of Hulme* (Manchester, 1991).

[65] SA: CA-HMC/2/2: Sheffield City Council Housing Management Committee, 'Meeting 12 December 1963', *Minutes: 13th December 1962 to 25th July 1966* (Sheffield, 1966), p. 134.

[66] Sheffield Housing Committee, 'Report of the City Architect', p. 7.

[67] SA: CA-HMC/2/1, Sheffield City Council Housing Management Committee, 'Park Hill Part One: Sociological Report', *Minutes and Associated Papers: Draft Minutes and Papers, May 1959-November 1962* (Sheffield, 1960), p. 98.

[68] MA: GB127/45, Manchester City Council Housing Committee, 'Report of the visit to Berlin, Hamburg and Amsterdam, 14 July 1958', *Minute Book 45: June 1958-February 1959* (Manchester, 1959), p. 215; MA: Q711.4Ma4, Manchester City Council Planning Department, J. S. Millar, City Planning Officer, *A new community: the redevelopment of Hulme* (1968), p. 6.

[69] Valerie Wright, Ade Kearns, Lynn Abrams and Barry Hazley, 'Planning for play: seventy years of ineffective public policy? The example of Glasgow, Scotland', *Planning Perspectives*, 34/2 (2019), pp. 257-258.

Nevertheless, in the 1980s, Lee-Ann's family became heavily involved with the organisation of north Hulme's adventure playground, where she also volunteered as a playworker for several years from the age of sixteen. It was her primary play space as a child, as she recalled, 'the adventure playground was the place where the people from the north of Hulme went and you'd go there every day…that was our main thing'.[70] Initially opened in Britain on the bombsites of the Second World War, adventure playgrounds allowed children more creativity at play. With access to land and building materials, children could act as the architects of their own play spaces, making dens, digging holes, and building obstacles to climb.[71] Manchester City Council expressed some resistance to the idea of adventure playgrounds during the immediate post-war years, with its Director of Parks arguing that children preferred more traditional playground equipment.[72] However, the site of the playground changed as the years went by. In the decades between the creation of the country's first adventure playgrounds in 1945 and the establishment of Hulme's in the early 1970s, the initial bombsites had been cleared and redeveloped, yet the ethos of the playgrounds endured. As Lucie Glasheen has suggested, rather than indicating only a desire to increasingly regulate the spaces of children's play, the newer wave of adventure playgrounds – like those in Hulme – displayed 'a recognition that the right of children to have 'a place of their own' could not be limited to bombsites'.[73]

While functioning as 'a place of their own' – a notion particularly important to the young residents of Hulme in the context of the estate's growing deprivation throughout the 1970s and 1980s – the adventure playgrounds and their associated playschemes also acted as a gateway to life beyond the estate for young people. Conor's older brother worked at the adventure playground opposite their home in William Kent Crescent in the mid-1970s, where they had moved when Conor was ten years old. 'They had some fantastic youth workers [at the adventure playground], they were all brilliant youth workers', he remembered. 'Supervising the kids, helping out with injuries and stuff…They used to go out on day trips, especially in the summer, they used to go on day trips to Blackpool and things like that, take the kids there when the summer schemes were on'.[74] As Lee-Ann explained, these schemes were vital for introducing young residents to areas outside of Hulme. 'We used to go on lots of trips. We used to go horse riding, roller skating, and

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[70] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

[71] For more on adventure playgrounds, see Roy Kozlovsky, 'Adventure playgrounds and post-war reconstruction', in Marta Gutman and Ning de Connick-Smith (eds), *Designing Modern Childhoods: History, Space, and the Material Culture of Children* (New Brunswick, 2007), pp. 171-188.

[72] Mathew Thomson, *Lost Freedom: The Landscape of the Child and the British Post-War Settlement* (Oxford, 2014), p. 145.

[73] Lucie Glasheen, 'Bombsites, Adventure Playgrounds and the Reconstruction of London: Playing with Urban Space in Hue and Cry', *The London Journal,* 44/1 (2019), p. 61.

[74] Conor McShane interview.

that was done through the adventure playground. None of us really went on holidays. You could only go on day trips if someone took you'.[75] For Jason, the playgrounds and their workers represented something more fundamental. As he described, 'the people that worked on the adventure playground were role models for everybody on Hulme. Positive role models. They were from Hulme, they grew up in Hulme, same place, but you looked up at them. You could aim to be like them'.[76] In Jason's experience, the space of the adventure playground offered liberation not only in terms of play, but also in terms of his aspirations for adulthood. His interactions with the adventure playground as a teenager informed his decision to become a youth worker himself, and from the age of fifteen Jason worked for the Hulme Sports Programme, an initiative created to encourage more local young people to get involved in team sports and outdoor pursuits. Access to resident-led spaces like the adventure playground could therefore play an instrumental role in shaping the future perspectives of some young tenants.

As the post-war period progressed, central government funding cuts to local authorities limited the availability of designated community facilities in areas of multi-storey council housing. These developments frustrated Hulme tenants, with long-term resident and member of the Repairs Committee, Joe Fleming, asserting that, 'the unbalanced make-up of the community allowed politicians to make short-sighted cut-backs – shutting down laundries, reducing library services, removing play facilities, even closing a community-run rights centre'.[77] The 'community-run rights centre' to which Fleming referred was the Hulme People's Rights Centre, initially located at the centre of the four Crescent blocks from the mid-1970s. In June 1976, Manchester City Council's Housing Committee agreed to allow volunteers to make use of the space to run an advice and welfare centre for Hulme tenants, and in its first five weeks alone, the centre received requests for support from over 400 residents.[78] Despite this uptake, the centre closed, following in the footsteps of other local facilities, most of which did not survive Hulme's later redevelopment. By the late 1990s, after the demolition of multi-storey sections of the estate, those residents who remained shared few local resources. In May 1997, a group of tenants staged a protest against the decision to redevelop the Birley Community Centre to build student accommodation, a decision that engendered the loss of not only the Centre itself, but its accompanying playing fields and

[75] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

[76] Jason Shaw interview.

[77] MA: q352.75Ma(874): Manchester City Council, *Deck Access Disaster: Report of the Hulme Conference held at Birley High School, Manchester on 22nd February 1985* (Manchester, 1985), p. 7.

[78] MA: GB127/77: Manchester City Council Housing Committee, Hulme Peoples Rights Centre, 'Application for Extension of Use by this Project of 137, Bonsall Street Hulme (September 1976)', *Minute Book 77: 12 April 1976-14 June 1976* (Manchester, 1976), p. 467.

swimming pool too. Residents held banners that read, 'Bring back Birley' and 'Land is Freedom', but their demonstration was unsuccessful. [79]

To some extent, however, the geographical mapping of deprivation as part of inner-city initiatives in the late 1970s and early 1980s helped to facilitate the creation of social spaces for young people in Hulme, particularly young women. The establishment of the Hulme Girls Project, which ran between 1979 and 1984, stemmed from residents' participation with students of the Manchester Polytechnic and staff of the City Council after receiving funding from a grant under the Inner Cities programme. Project workers organised activities for young women from playschemes to music lessons, attempting to combat the social problems attributed to 'inadequate and poorly maintained housing, high unemployment and a lack of imagination in environmental planning' in the area.[80] Residents organised a similar scheme in conjunction with Sheffield City Council at Park Hill, with Karen helping to found a youth club named Club '81 after the year of its creation, organising activities and day trips for young people, as well as ensuring that they had a place to find food if this was not available at home. Over the years, the club extended its support of vulnerable tenants to supply weekly dinners to elderly residents, supplementing a hot dinner scheme already operating from Park Hill's community centre, but children remained its predominant focus until its funding was withdrawn by the council in the late 1980s.[81]

Even as the power of local authorities declined alongside increasingly centralised forms of governance, tenants in Hulme could still use the council's limited managerial reach to their advantage. Rachel's story of her first six months on the estate demonstrates tenants' capacity for taking up and reconfiguring spaces outside of design and housing policy structures. Born in Stockport in 1955, Rachel's family moved to Somerset for most of her childhood, but she returned to Manchester to attend university as a mature student in 1981. Rachel lived initially in Runcorn, a town situated between Manchester and Liverpool – where her partner at the time worked – but after the relationship broke down, she began to search for accommodation in Manchester. By this time – early 1985 – Rachel had finished her studies but had yet to secure a job. She recalled the difficulties she encountered when trying to find somewhere to live alone in Manchester, describing her frustration at 'getting absolutely nowhere with finding private rented accommodation', while also being ineligible for local authority housing because she had lived outside the city for so long.[82] Eventually, in May 1985, Rachel discovered flats available to rent in Hulme. In the following

[79] David Pye, "No reasons to be cheerful' protest', *Area News*, 29 May 1997.
[80] Hulme Girls Project, *Annual Report,* p. 5.
[81] Karen Hill interview.
[82] Rachel Hardy, interview with author (11 January 2021).

extract, she describes this process, from initially moving into a shared flat to finding a place to live independently.

> Somebody told me, or I found out somehow, that because so many of the system-built blocks in Hulme had been classified as unfit for families, Manchester City Council were letting them outside the normal waiting list you might say, to groups of adult tenants. So, I initially found this room in a shared flat on Gretney Walk and I moved in there as a temporary thing. And then just at the time I got a job, I learned through the block grapevine that a whole flat was becoming vacant. So, in effect, I squatted it, and because I was working and could afford to pay, I paid the rent and the council accepted the rent and accepted me as a tenant. There was a lot of that sort of thing going on in Hulme.[83]

The council's efforts to re-let multi-storey flats to groups of adults, rather than families, worked in Rachel's favour. While at first it meant that she had to live in shared accommodation between May and October 1985, she then used the social contacts around her to identify and access a new flat independently of the council. Rachel squatted her second flat, a three-bedroom dwelling on the fourth-floor of a deck-access block, for two months before Manchester City Council approved her tenancy. Matt Cook has shown that squatting had become 'more embedded in the urban landscape' of Britain from the late 1960s and 1970s, and as Rachel stated, it had become common practice in Hulme by the time of her arrival, no doubt facilitated by its large number of empty dwellings.[84] Rachel's experience of squatting does not fit with the more high-profile, organised movements of late twentieth-century cities like London, but it does show signs of local activism at work. Helped by an unstructured network of new, established, and outgoing tenants, Rachel subverted the council's allocations system to occupy residential space in a way that challenged the neo-liberal shift towards homeownership in the 1980s. Once in her flat, Rachel continued to maximise on the council's supervisory absence to change the layout of her home. She recounted that it had been 'a very simple matter' to knock through the wall and create an archway opening that connected her living room to one of the bedrooms. 'Nobody batted an eyelid', Rachel explained. 'I know of at least one flat, possibly two, on Gretney Walk where tenants had taken out the entire internal walls [laughing] and made it completely open plan! The council never bothered!'[85]

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[83] *Ibid.*

[84] Matt Cook, "Gay Times': Identity, Locality, Memory, and the Brixton Squats in 1970's London', *Twentieth Century British History,* 24/1 (2013), p. 88.

[85] Rachel Hardy interview.

Later becoming an elected tenant representative for Hulme City Challenge, Rachel had some involvement in the estate's redeveloped spaces. As she described, 'I got – not quite hands-on experience of brick laying – but certainly hands-on experience of talking builders' jargon and understanding the nuts and bolts of the building process'.[86] Rachel offered a different perspective of tenants' involvement with the City Challenge to that recorded by the tenants' associations considered in the first chapter of the thesis. She spoke with a sense of pride and enthusiasm about her role in developing different housing types and designs for the new Hulme, with her preference for three-storey town houses leading to their inclusion in redevelopment plans. 'It was almost the equivalent of having your own architect-designed dwelling', Rachel reflected, indicating the differences in approaches to design and consultation between Hulme's two post-war redevelopments. While her role as a tenant representative gave Rachel opportunities to work within official organisational structures to physically transform the spaces around her, the extent of her individual involvement in the redevelopment did not reflect that of most tenants. In fact, as Rachel described, many of her former friends and neighbours chose not to involve themselves in the consultation process for the new Hulme, preferring instead to take the chance at being allocated housing in more affluent and sought-after areas of Manchester like Chorlton and Didsbury.[87]

However, undoubtedly the most dramatic example of residents' redefinition of the use of space in the absence of close council supervision was the creation of 'the Kitchen' nightclub in Hulme. The movement of families with young children away from the Crescents in the 1980s rendered several flats empty and difficult to let. This in turn allowed those residents who remained to adjust the physical space around them. By 1987, only 43 per cent of the housing stock in the Crescents was let to tenants, with the remainder of the flats deemed void by Manchester City Council and largely occupied by squatters.[88] Although the council noted that the block in which the club was located – Charles Barry Crescent – contained a more stable population relative to its three counterparts, its residents nevertheless built on Hulme's growing reputation as a playground for young people to knock down the walls dividing three flats and create the Kitchen.[89] The club attracted people from Hulme and further afield, as Andy Vaughan, who lived in Charles Barry, recounted in 1991, 'hundreds of non-residents flood into the area for the night (and morning)'.[90]

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[86] *Ibid.*
[87] *Ibid.*
[88] Manchester City Council, *Hulme 5: Local Management Initiative Proposals*, p. 1.
[89] *Ibid.,* p. 2; Hulme Views, *Views from the Crescents.*
[90] Hulme Views, *Views from the Crescents.*

The Kitchen added further damage to Hulme's reputation in the eyes of some, but for others, it was a space that brought together longer-term tenants who had grown up in the area, and the students who lived in Hulme only temporarily. Jason described the mix of the Kitchen's clientele,

> You'd have everybody from all over. You'd have middle-class degree students who just threw everything away to piss off mummy and daddy, you had chemical engineers who used to make sweeties for parties, and they'd be mingling with the school kids and the druggies and the people who were working nine to five but at the weekend liked to let their hair down.[91]

Although not a venue exclusively for residents, the Kitchen epitomised the alternative community for which Hulme had become known by the 1990s, plugging the gaps in social and recreational provision left in the wake of decreasing local authority funding. Its creation indicates how tenants interacted with changing political approaches to, and cultural representations of, the estate; using Hulme's marketisation for student accommodation to attract a cross-class mix of visitors and tenants alike to participate in the destruction of formerly working-class housing. Through the transformation of residential spaces like this, Hulme residents articulated new ways of living that were entirely separate to aspects of the estate's planned function.

Practices of socio-spatial 'boundary-making'

The testimonies of oral history interviewees offer a key insight into how tenants' use of space marked boundaries between and within multi-storey estates. As Rogaly and Taylor established in the context of council housing in Norwich, an analysis of residents' notions of boundaries helps to highlight the importance of 'perceptions of the micro-geographies of an area in individual and collective identification processes and spatial practices'.[92] In narrating their interactions with different parts of each estate as well as their links with the wider city, residents revealed the ways in which understandings of class and gender underpinned their use of space, ultimately dispelling homogeneous depictions of the spatial mobility of multi-storey council tenants. This section follows residents' identification of 'boundaries', rather than imposing spatial limits upon their testimonies, an approach that also helps to show how residents determined the limits of 'community' along socio-spatial lines.[93] While the notion of boundaries led to constraints upon

[91] Jason Shaw interview.
[92] Rogaly and Taylor, *Moving Histories,* p. 66.
[93] In considering 'boundaries' and 'community' as interrelated elements subjectively defined by individuals, it follows aspects of Savage, Bagnall and Longhurst, 'Local Habitus and Working-Class Culture', pp. 95-122.

some residents' spatial mobility, particularly if informed by ideas of security or respectability, for others, it allowed them to assert a sense of agency and belonging over the material environment.

Interviewees' accounts of Hulme suggested that tenants' use of space reflected the estate's division into smaller, separate neighbourhoods. As Lee-Ann explained, 'you more or less stayed in your own little area. Even though Hulme was a bigger area, you didn't ever go into it'.[94] Jenny offered a similar perspective of her interactions with the wider estate. Jenny's family had moved when she was six months old to a first-floor maisonette on Royce Road in Hulme in 1967, where she lived until she married at 23. In her interview, Jenny described how, as she and her friends got older, they began to make use of different parts of Hulme, occupying what she referred to as 'little pockets'.[95] By claiming certain spaces as their own, Jenny and her friends ensured that 'we knew where everybody was. We knew where to meet up'.[96] The notion of boundaries also formed part of Alison's narrative. From 1973 to 1988, between the ages of three and 18, Alison lived in traditional housing situated on what she described as the 'borders' of Moss Side and Hulme. This categorisation stemmed primarily from her distance from the main hub of Moss Side, as well as her separation from most of Hulme's flats due to the Princess Parkway. As Alison explained, 'although it's classed as Hulme now, we were sort of on the borders of Moss Side. So, you had playschemes and adventure playgrounds in Hulme and playschemes like Moss Side youth club in the middle, [but] there was nothing for sort of like, *this* community'.[97] This sense of having slipped through the gap between the two areas became particularly apparent to Alison when she ventured further into either Moss Side or Hulme as a child. She described how, 'you'd go there and you'd sort of feel like, that was their territory, not ours'.[98]

Distinctions like this led Alison's mother and friends who lived locally to start a playscheme to keep children occupied during the summer holidays, an initiative funded by Manchester City Council. For Alison, the playscheme helped families with young children to experience a sense of belonging; to 'feel it was part of us'. It enabled residents to claim the area between Moss Side and Hulme as their own, 'rather than going in somebody else's community and using theirs'.[99] For Jason, spatial boundaries clearly differentiated what it meant to belong in Hulme as opposed to Moss Side or the nearby Salford. As a member of a group of young residents who called themselves

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[94] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.
[95] Jenny Young, interview with author (24 February 2020).
[96] *Ibid.*
[97] Alison Reid, interview with author (11 March 2020).
[98] *Ibid.*
[99] *Ibid.*

the 'Hulme Boys', Jason described how specific parts of Hulme represented the limits of the group's territory.

> Moss Side was anything from Chichester Road, near Birley High School, my old school, anything from across that side. Chichester Road, that was Moss Side, anything else was Hulme. Loreto [the area around the Loreto College] was no-man's-land because no one knew what was going on in Loreto. Loreto was for, like, posh kids. So, we had really distinct boundaries. Chichester Road was the boundary for Moss Side, and the top of Bonsall Street as well, top of Bonsall Street, then to – can't remember – you're remembering it now and you can hear them saying: 'we own this'. We didn't own anything and that was the fucking problem. We had nothing.[100]

According to Jason, the practice of boundary-making stemmed from residents' lack of ownership over the spaces around them. It constituted a process through which residents reasserted their agency over the use of the material environment, as well as its cultural meaning, with ideas of class – implicit in Jason's assertion that the area around the Loreto College was 'for…posh kids' – also apparent throughout. As such, Jason's account indicates how far the intersections of space and power shaped understandings as to who belonged to which part of the local area.

The characterisation of Hulme as alike to a 'bubble' separate to other parts of Manchester, or even Britain more broadly, also evinced a process of socio-spatial boundary-making.[101] This saw residents adapt aspects of Hulme's demarcation as an 'inner city' area to assert a sense of pride in its difference. As Stephanie explained,

> There's no community like it, or there was no community like it. I mean, it was so diverse. Everyone says, or everyone seems to think, it was a really black area – it wasn't. It was so diverse back then. We just didn't experience [racism]…it was just really diverse and quite ahead of the times like that really. I think we lived in a kind of bubble.[102]

For Stephanie, a woman of Jamaican heritage, Hulme's diversity set the estate apart, fostering an environment insulated from [overt] racial discrimination. The spatial dimensions of this were apparent in a story she told about a visit to Rhyl in Wales as part of a school trip in the 1980s. Stephanie recalled how the trip marked her 'first experience of racism' at thirteen years old, after

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[100] Jason Shaw interview.

[101] The metaphor of the 'bubble' seems more widespread than just Stephanie's account, with former residents using it to describe Hulme's racial tolerance relative to other parts of Manchester in a community-produced film about the estate's past and present. See, *The Spirit of Hulme* [film], directed by Terry Egan (Heritage Lottery Fund, One Manchester, Reel MCR, 2017). The film is discussed in more depth in the thesis Conclusion.

[102] Stephanie Palmer interview.

being ignored by white members of staff in shops and cafes in favour of her white classmates.[103] Alison, a white British woman, also spoke of Hulme as distinct from other parts of Manchester due to its black and minority ethnic population. Her description of encounters with people from the wider city presented Hulme as a space of relative racial tolerance, especially considering her father's reactions to comments made about the area around Moss Side.

> When I was really young, because you're brought up in a multi-cultural area and this, that and the other, and you just, I remember once we was out somewhere with my dad, I think we were in some club or something, I can't remember it really well, and then I think this man asked my dad where we lived and my dad said, 'near Moss Side', and he said, 'oh I've heard you need a passport to live there these days', because obviously there was a lot more people from foreign countries or black, Asian, or whatever, and my dad sort of said, 'there's no need' and my dad had a bit of a go at him, and that's when you start realising then.[104]

In both Alison and Stephanie's narratives, this approach to socio-spatial boundary-making allowed them to rework the sense of difference intrinsic to Hulme's inner-city status, as they reframed its contrasts with other areas to portray the estate in a more positive light.

Feminist geographers have shown how connections between 'socially constructed gender relations' and 'visible and invisible boundaries', influenced the movement of women through different urban areas.[105] For interviewees like Stephanie, estate boundaries were predicated on her perception of safe and unsafe spaces, which changed as she moved from childhood to adulthood. A Hulme tenant from the age of three to 25, Stephanie and her family were the first and last tenants of their multi-storey flat on Boundary Lane. Her description of Hulme divided the estate into two separate areas; one with which she felt familiar and secure, and another of which she felt fearful and uncertain. This distinction featured largely in Stephanie's account of the spaces where she played as a child. As she reflected,

> It was different for me, because we were sort of on the outskirts, where we lived, rather than in the middle of [Hulme] like the bullrings [the Crescents]. The bullrings were like a no-go area for us, it was just like you'd heard the stories that terrible things went on there, so you just didn't [go]. By the time we got to nine and ten, and we were sort of mobilising by ourselves, you just didn't go near the bullrings or over the bridge…[the bridge] was kind of the border between the two halves of Hulme. We always felt like Epping Walk and all that

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[103] *Ibid.*

[104] Alison Reid interview.

[105] Miranne and Young, 'Introduction', *Gendering the City,* p. 1.

> where the shops were, was our end of Hulme, and then over the bridge was a no-go area, you didn't feel quite safe.[106]

That Stephanie had learned from 'stories' she heard as a child not to venture into the central parts of Hulme, shows how unofficial representations of space – tied to wider societal constructions of gender and reproduced in conversations between residents – shaped interactions with the estate over time.

According to Stephanie, both the material environment and the increasing mobility of some tenants influenced her attitudes towards different parts of Hulme. She saw a direct link between the structural decline of flats in need of maintenance and Hulme's changing demographic structure, with a more transient set of tenants beginning to replace the people she used to know on the estate. While a familiar discourse surrounding Hulme, Stephanie's narrative indicates how this impression of movement influenced the remaining residents' uses of space in different ways. Changes to the local population occurred across each part of Hulme around the time that Stephanie described – the early 1980s – including the Epping Walk area in which she lived. That Stephanie described only the Crescents as a 'no-go area' on this basis, demonstrates tenants' replication of stigmatising attitudes towards these blocks, attitudes also apparent in external representations of the Crescents. Moreover, her differentiation between the Crescents and Epping Walk, despite the repetition of deck-access housing in both areas, suggests the influence of what the sociologist Loïc Wacquant has termed 'territorial stigmatisation'. According to Wacquant, this becomes apparent in residents' attempts to shift negative perceptions of their local area away from themselves and towards 'a faceless, demonised 'other" instead.[107]

For Shaima, these ideas of spatial – or territorial – difference went hand in hand with understandings of respectability. Shaima lived in an area of traditional, low-rise housing in near Princess Road with her parents and two siblings from 1969 to 1999, rather than a multi-storey flat; a fact that formed a core element of her narrative positioning, as the following chapter explores in more detail. In relation to her spatial experience, Shaima used examples of her movement around Hulme to emphasise distinctions between the 'nice' part of the estate in which she lived and 'rough' areas like the Crescents. In Shaima's words,

> In the days that we were growing up, we used to go to the library, but that was the rough part [of Hulme]. We lived in the nice part. So, you've obviously heard of John Nash Crescent

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[106] Stephanie Palmer interview.

[107] Loïc Wacquant, 'Territorial Stigmatisation in the Age of Advanced Marginality', *Thesis Eleven*, 91/1 (2007), p. 68.

> and all those, that was where the Crescents used to be, where the library was. We used to go to the library because there was a bridge that wasn't far from our school, the bridge went over the Mancunian Way, I think it's still there…But where the library is and where those horrible Crescents were, that was the bad part of Hulme, we were on the nice part.[108]

As Shaima went on to explain, the Crescents were home to the 'drugs and wild parties' for which Hulme eventually got a reputation, and represented an area that she viewed as 'very separate' to the part of Hulme in which her family lived. Shaima's parents played an influential role in shaping this perspective by limiting her movement around the area near to the Crescents as a child. As Shaima explained,

> Mum didn't like us going to the library. I couldn't ever go on my own, I could never go on my own. [I would go with] my brother or my sister or both of them, but I used to go with my brother more. It was better to have a boy with you because there'd always be rougher kids. There was a playground, it was all concrete, there was one not far from our school as well, but to get to it, it was all high up and encased, there were steps up to it, almost like a cage. I was never allowed to go to it because that was past the school and going towards the horrible parts. So, Mum always used to say, 'don't ever go that way'.[109]

Shaima had evidently learned to associate the Crescents with danger from an early age. Her references to the material environment and its inhabitants reinforced this perspective. Echoing comparisons between Hulme's multi-storey flats and 'prisons' made by the press, Shaima described the playground near to the Crescents as 'all concrete', 'encased' and 'almost like a cage'.[110] Her characterisation of the children who lived in this part of the estate as 'rougher kids', from whom her older brother provided protection, also made implicit connections between the physical spaces of Hulme and the behaviour of its tenants. As Alison Ravetz has argued, estate life often led to the cultivation of 'old social hierarchies' of the Victorian and Edwardian era in the post-war period, revitalising past dichotomies of the 'deserving' and 'underserving', as well as the 'rough' and 'respectable'.[111] In Shaima's view, the Crescents' concrete, multi-storey flats materially attested to

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[108] Shaima Walsh, interview with author (26 February 2020).

[109] *Ibid.*

[110] For examples of the language of entrapment and imprisonment in relation to multi-storey council housing in the press, see 'Mother saw her tower block flat as a prison', *The Times,* 9 September 1977; 'High-rise ban for families', *The Guardian,* 22 November 1977; Alfred Gibbon, 'Close-Up: The Concrete Jungle', *Daily Mirror*, 28 October 1977; 'A cry of despair from a Prisoner of Park Hill', *The Star,* 6 August 1979.

[111] Ravetz, *Council Housing and Culture,* p. 170.

the 'roughness' of this part of Hulme, with the area of traditional, low-rise housing in which she lived equating with ideas of respectability.

While Hulme's scale facilitated its separation into sub-areas – to which some tenants evidently attached different reputations – the design of Park Hill did not necessarily lend itself to similar treatment. The Sheffield estate consisted of one continuous building, albeit one that differed in height according to its place in the hillside. Nevertheless, interviewees' narratives illuminated the ways in which residents drew clear distinctions between Park Hill and its sister development, Hyde Park. For tenants like Lisa, who moved to Park Hill in 1981 aged 19, the physical appearance and unfamiliarity of Hyde Park in comparison, rendered the estate a threatening place. As Lisa described, 'it were a lot bigger at Hyde Park and I didn't like it, and I didn't know many people on there…the only time I went on there was to go to the launderette and I did used to be a bit frightened'.[112] Hyde Park's appearance also informed Karen's opinion of the estate, which she described as an 'eyesore'. Of the blocks that remained standing following the demolition of the majority of Hyde Park in the early 1990s, Karen remarked, 'we always said they'd made them look posh [when the remaining flats were re-clad], but they're not. And if you lived round there, you just knew it were…mutton dressed up as lamb, is what we all said'.[113] Despite the similarities between the two estates' designs, Karen portrayed Hyde Park as Park Hill's inferior counterpart.

Martin, a Park Hill resident from 1960 to 1986, expressed a sense of frustration at what he saw as inaccuracies about Park Hill's history, with people attributing events that occurred at Hyde Park to the older estate. Wider representations of the two developments had exacerbated Martin's feelings on this subject, with the closeness of the two estates both geographically and architecturally often leading external observers to conflate one with the other.[114] For Martin, however, their differentiation remained important because Hyde Park had been 'much worse' than Park Hill. Describing how he had come across a story on social media about how residents used to throw televisions from the windows of their multi-storey flats, Martin asserted that such events happened at Hyde Park, not Park Hill. In Martin's words, 'they seemed to have that sort of problem on Hyde Park where things were being thrown. I remember we used to throw things on Park Hill…balloons

[112] Lisa Crossley interview.

[113] Karen Hill interview.

[114] For examples of the press viewing Park Hill and Hyde Park in conjunction with one another, see 'Layout plan for £5 million flats is approved', *Sheffield Telegraph*, 22 February 1958**;** 'The Children's Paradise: A Triumph of Design and Planning that Challenges all Europe', *Sheffield Telegraph,* 16 June 1961; 'The Park Hill 'Nightmare'', *The Star*, 19 May 1980; 'Building the quick way', *The Times,* 22 June 1966; Paul Kimball, 'Massive facelift marks new prosperity', *The Times,* 10 November 1969; Ronald Kershaw, 'Planning series of communities with own corporate spirit', *The Times,* 30 June 1972.

filled with water, that were the only thing we used to throw'.[115] Relative to Hyde Park tenants, Martin portrayed those of Park Hill as having engaged in little more than harmless fun. However, other interviewees provided contradictory accounts. Richard, Paul and Lisa also spoke of a television having been thrown from a Park Hill window, although Paul acknowledged that he had since 'found out' that this took place at Hyde Park instead.[116] According to Lisa, a Hyde Park tenant threw a television from their balcony that struck and killed a child walking below in the late 1970s, a version of events supported by a much more recent article about the estate in the Yorkshire Post.[117] These testimonies indicate the extent to which interviewees used parts of the stories they had heard about Park Hill to complement their narratives, interweaving aspects of the estate's representation with an account of their first-hand experiences.

While these participants did not draw distinctions between one another along spatial lines, as initial visitors to the estate rather than residents, Richard and Lisa offered a different perspective in their interviews. Richard moved between jobs based at Park Hill and its surrounding area as part of his work as a butcher and a milkman in the mid-1960s. His daily interactions with other areas of the city and the part of Sheffield in which he grew up, created an opportunity for comparison unavailable to some other interviewees. As he explained, 'I come from Parson Cross – which I thought were rough – but it weren't as rough as some of the families that lived on Park Hill, I have to say. It sounds awful but it's true. All communities have somebody to look down on'.[118] Lisa had first-hand experience of this attitude. Although she did not live far from Park Hill during childhood, as a resident of the Stepney Buildings, a collection of tenement-like houses divided into flats situated just across the road from Park Hill, she encountered negative attitudes towards her home from the children that she went to school with on the multi-storey estate. Lisa explained in her interview,

> People used to call us names for living on Stepney Buildings. We were tramps and things like that, they used to say. But we weren't, we weren't, but that's what they used to say. And even now, like, they call us Broadie – I don't know if you've heard that term – it was near Broad Street, where we lived. People that lived on Stepney Buildings and Bernard Buildings were classed as being tramps and things like that and they weren't. That's what people on Park Hill used to say.[119]

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[115] Martin Wood, interview with author (23 November 2018).
[116] Richard Taylor interview; Paul Brown interview.
[117] Lisa Crossley interview; 'City's 'San Quentin'', *The Yorkshire Post,* 2 August 2016.
[118] Richard Taylor interview.
[119] Lisa Crossley interview.

As these examples show, some Park Hill residents also evidently partook in the spatialization of the 'rough' and 'respectable' paradigm apparent in accounts like Shaima's of Hulme. Nevertheless, for other participants, the process of the oral history interview allowed some former residents the opportunity to reflect on their views of different parts of Hulme. During Alison's interview, she recalled what it was like to visit her uncle, who lived in the nearby Hulme Crescents. Initially, Alison's account seemed to tread familiar ground in its framing of this part of the estate, referencing the limitations of the built environment and alluding to the trope of 'problem families'.

> I suppose over to that side [where the Crescents were], I always thought – me, personally – I always thought that side [of Hulme] was a bit rougher. Everything was just like, because obviously there was less, people didn't have their own gardens and stuff like that, so kids played on balconies or on stairwells and stuff. So, as you were walking up there, it did seem that way, like it was a bit more rough and ready over there and you had to be a bit more careful.

However, this impression of the Crescents did not reflect Alison's experience. As she continued to explain,

> But I never experienced anything like that. I think you just have that vision that that's how it could be, but I never, ever experienced anything. I never felt scared or anything. So, if I was ever visiting my uncle and we was out with the kids round there, it wasn't like they wanted to fight you or anything like that, it was pretty much like, 'right, you're playing with us then as well'. But I think some people probably used to think, 'yeah, that's the rough side of Hulme', but I never found it like that really. Yeah, the housing wasn't as good, it wasn't up to standard really at all, but people just got on with it. They had no choice really, did they?

The differences between Alison's initial impressions of the Crescents and her subsequent re-evaluation, demonstrates how far the process of the interview itself facilitated the opportunity to reflect upon and reconsider her perspective of Hulme. When describing the area of the estate where the Crescents were located as 'a bit rougher', Alison had laughed almost self-deprecatingly, as if to acknowledge how this attitude mirrored the external perceptions of Hulme that she had disputed earlier in the interview. In telling her story about visiting her uncle, she reconstructed her memory of these encounters, ultimately situating her personal experience in the framework of the ongoing material deprivation experienced by Crescent tenants. In this sense, Alison's reflection on the Crescents indicates the ways in which individual and popular memories of Hulme continue to interact, with Alison outlining established, collective attitudes towards the Crescents in her

references to the thoughts of 'some people', while simultaneously seeking to emphasise the personal perspective from which she spoke.[120] From a spatial viewpoint, Alison's account sheds light on the vital role played by representations of space and the material environment in shaping the perceptions of its inhabitants. For Alison, the lack of private outdoor space, children's use of the flats and stairwells for play, and the Crescents' poor-quality housing, all reinforced her initial assumption of the area's deprivation. While she ultimately concluded that these factors had little effect upon her experience of visiting the Crescents, that she used these impressions to foreground her narrative of this part of Hulme, denotes both their enduring influence over the stories told about the estate and the difficulties inherent in attempting to separate understandings of lived experience from its wider representation.

As well as these internal movements, spaces outside of Park Hill and Hulme underpinned some interviewees' narratives. While the practice of boundary-making saw residents limit their movement to different parts of each estate, residents' interactions with external spaces offer an important counterpoint to understandings of their mobility. These interconnections demonstrate the need to look beyond Park Hill and Hulme as entities separate to the wider city and indicate the maintenance of social ties across different spaces. By framing their narratives in relation to spaces outside of the multi-storey estate, interviewees' testimonies challenged depictions of residents' movements as largely involuntary, whether due to slum clearance or demolition and redevelopment. Instead, they affirm the role of residents as the agents of their own spatial practices, capable of overcoming the geographical distance imposed upon social networks by post-war housing schemes. Karen's account shows this process at work. Although just a toddler when her family moved to Park Hill, Karen's memories of the Penistone Road area of Sheffield where she lived as a baby were strengthened by frequent return visits, with her parents having retained connections with friends and relatives who had previously lived nearby. They reunited at the Hillfoot Working Men's Club, a space predominantly visited by Karen's male relatives who worked in the steel industry. Although separated by just over two miles, Karen's connection to the Hillfoot club took precedence over her interaction with other community facilities at Park Hill when she was a child, primarily because the club enabled former neighbours to maintain the social networks that slum clearance may have otherwise disrupted. In Karen's words,

[120] On the interrelationship between individual and popular memory, see Popular Memory Group, 'Popular memory: Theory, politics, method', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader* (London, 1998), pp. 75-86.

> My auntie – my Nan's sister – she went up Parson Cross, Wordsworth Avenue, so not everybody moved to the same area. They dispersed. But they all came back together to the club. Whitsun and Easter and Saturday nights, that sort of thing.[121]

Although post-war sociologists connected slum clearance with more limited familial and kinship networks, Karen's testimony demonstrates that residents overcame geographic separation by maintaining well-established spatial practices where possible. The links of Karen's family to Sheffield's steel works also meant that she often interacted with children outside of Park Hill when growing up, travelling to nearby seaside towns with other families in the summer as part of trips organised by the Hillfoot club. Social ties beyond Park Hill meant that Patricia often visited friends and relatives who lived on the Norfolk Park flats, post-war multi-storey blocks once located close to Park Hill before their demolition in the early 2000s. Patricia also attended the Norfolk Secondary School, meaning that most of her friends lived on the Norfolk Park or Arbourthorne estates. Her aunt and uncle volunteered at a social club at the Norfolk Park flats and Patricia recalled how she would walk over to participate in activities designed for young people.[122] These connections between estates also featured in Lisa's interview. Despite moving to Park Hill in her late teens, days spent playing around the flats as a child, and her attendance at the Park Hill Primary School, had already familiarised Lisa with the estate. She often spent her afternoons on the multi-storey estate, describing how, 'if I could, I'd go across to Park Hill because that's where all my friends were from school'.[123] Residents' spatial practices were not, therefore, always limited to the area of housing in which they lived.

In Hulme, Lee-Ann's were one of few local families who had access to a car. The novelty of this was not lost on Lee-Ann, which, for her, was even more remarkable considering that her grandfather was Nigerian. As she stated, 'my grandad had a car in the '70s, he didn't go out in it that often, but he had a car. That was like – a black man from Nigeria in the 1970s having a car – that was like, wow. It was a big thing'.[124] Yet, as Lee-Ann acknowledged, the family did not use the car often, suggesting that its ownership was perhaps more a matter of status than practicality. This meant that if she wanted to leave Hulme to travel elsewhere, Lee-Ann had to walk or rely on public transport like most other residents. This presented its own set of problems, particularly as Hulme's reputation began to change for the worse. Lee-Ann described how there had been a bus to Hulme that drove past the Crescents to stop at the nearby Bonsall Street, but that the service was cut

[121] Karen Hill interview.
[122] Patricia Johnson interview.
[123] Lisa Crossley interview.
[124] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

during the 1970s, a decision that she attributed to the area's increasing association with violent crime.[125]

Even when the bus service did stop near to the Crescents, residents encountered issues with walking to the bus stop itself. Lee-Ann's flat was located opposite the curving blocks, which meant that, if she wanted to use the bus, she had to walk through the Crescents first. Lee-Ann recalled one instance of walking to the bus stop at night when she was eleven years old,

> I remember in 1981, walking back from St Wilfred's, in the dark walking through the bullrings, to the bus stop, [and now] I'm thinking, why would you do that on your own? You were walking where people had been raped, mugged, beat up, some had been killed…It [was] not normal, but it was.[126]

Despite its location within walking distance of the city centre, the limitations of the transport connections that served Hulme, as well as some residents' restricted access to cars, ensured that there remained some boundaries to residents' use of spaces beyond the immediate area of the estate. Rachel, a tenant who owned a car and rarely walked in Hulme beyond the borders of her own home, reflected during her interview that she 'might have felt differently' about her safety had she been reliant on public transport to go from place to place at night.[127] For Lee-Ann, her restricted access to a car in Hulme also had practical ramifications for her sociability. She described how the parents of her friends from the secondary school she attended in Trafford would not allow their children to visit her flat in Hulme due to concerns about the journey home from what they perceived to be a dangerous area. 'Their mums and dads wouldn't let them', Lee-Ann explained. 'There was no one to take them home, to the bus stop. It just had such a bad reputation'.[128] For Lee-Ann, it was difficult to reconcile these attitudes with her sense of self, leading her to feel that, because her classmates lived in traditional houses, rather than deck-access flats, they were 'better' than her. As she explained,

> It was like a different world, they all lived in Trafford. And those who lived in Old Trafford lived in houses, I was just like 'oh I don't live in a house', it was very, very strange. I didn't realise for a couple of years that we were different. I did find it very hard to settle because I

[125] *Ibid.*
[126] *Ibid.*
[127] Rachel Hardy interview.
[128] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

> just thought that they were better. They wasn't, they didn't think that, but I did feel like I didn't fit in.[129]

Lee-Ann's account attests to the interconnections between the social and spatial in the ways in which both residents and non-residents created boundaries around the multi-storey estate.

Connections between the estate and the wider city

Despite interviewees' accounts of connections to the wider city, understandings of the immobility of working-class areas have endured since the latter years of the twentieth century.[130] When considered in the context of Park Hill and Hulme, these understandings speak to an interesting paradox in discourses surrounding multi-storey council housing, in which estates are simultaneously transient and static. Even the term 'sink', used as a catchall precursor to denote deprived estates since the late 1980s, reinforces this uneasy duality, conjuring at once a sense of entrapment and imprisonment, but also an impression of movement or transition. Despite the respective attempts of Sheffield and Manchester City Councils to manage residential stability, from allocation policies to the provision of different types of housing for residents at various stages of the life cycle, transience also characterised residents' spatial experiences of the estates. In a sense, this was somewhat inevitable. Each local authority developed Park Hill and Hulme specifically to meet the rehousing requirements stemming from areas designated for clearance, making some element of movement inherent to the estates' experience from their construction. Through the lens of spatial mobility, this section sheds light on residents' movements to and from each multi-storey estate, exploring how far dynamics of class and gender underpinned this aspect of residents' lived experiences.

This focus upon residents' movement to and from Park Hill and Hulme helps to reveal the changing meanings attached to its material spaces over time. Residents' personal testimonies showed the extent to which their prior housing experiences shaped their initial impressions of the multi-storey flats. Several of the former tenants interviewed for this project had moved to Hulme after living in relatively poor and overcrowded accommodation. Jenny had lived in a one-bedroom bedsit above a butcher's shop, while Jason moved to Hulme from an area of back-to-back housing in Moss Side, scheduled for clearance in the mid-1970s.[131] When Conor's family relocated to Manchester from Dublin, they moved between different tenement houses, living with other

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[129] *Ibid.*

[130] Joanna Bourke, *Working-Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: Ethnicity, Class and Gender* (London, 1994), p. 140.

[131] Jenny Young interview; Jason Shaw interview.

families in Moss Side and Gorton.[132] Stephanie, whose family had moved to the city from Jamaica, lived with relatives from her immediate and extended family in multi-storey housing on Claremont Road, also in Moss Side, before being offered a flat in Hulme.[133] Stephanie described how, at one point, she had lived with approximately 12 people, who had shared only three bedrooms between them.

This movement from previously inadequate housing meant that the interviewees' first impressions of Hulme were largely positive. Although less than a year old when her family moved to Hulme, Jenny speculated during her interview that, 'for [the neighbours] to come in a house, it was a brand-new build, and to people that have had nothing…to have three bedrooms, a bathroom, a kitchen, that type of accommodation, must have been like luxury'.[134] To characterise differences between the two flats, Jenny borrowed from the experiences of others, recounting first impressions that were not her own, but nevertheless steeped in the stories told by her family. Conor, on the other hand, remembered his earlier houses well. Describing how he felt after seeing his family's flat for the first time in William Kent Crescent in the early 1970s, he stated, 'I loved it. The rooms were just so big. It was so warm. So clean. We'd been living in slum areas – Moss Side was a real slum back then – and some of the places we lived in were like, they didn't have bathrooms in them or anything like that'.[135] The influence of previous housing experiences upon residents' impressions of Hulme is also apparent in Anthony and Louise's accounts of the multi-storey flats. Both moved to Hulme as students and had not encountered the same level of poor-quality accommodation as those tenants who had relocated more locally. Anthony had moved to the estate from Hazel Grove, an area of Greater Manchester that he described as 'very much suburbia', and saw his flat in the Crescents as damp and of poor quality.[136] Louise, meanwhile, had moved to the city from her family home in Worcester, which she saw as 'a whole world away' from Hulme.[137] Unlike Anthony, she recalled a sense of surprise at the size and standard of her first flat on Otterburn Close, remarking, 'I was quite impressed…considering, you know, it was *Hulme*'.[138] Placing special emphasis on 'Hulme', Louise indicated how, by the time she moved to the estate in the 1980s, its reputation had already begun to shape her expectations of the flats.

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[132] Conor McShane interview.
[133] Stephanie Palmer interview.
[134] Jenny Young interview.
[135] Conor McShane interview.
[136] Anthony Clark interview.
[137] Louise Miller interview.
[138] *Ibid.*

In the case of Park Hill, all the interviewees who had moved to the flats as children were relocated from housing designated for clearance locally. Patricia had lived in old, terraced housing that she shared with the rest of her family and grandparents in an area to the south of Sheffield's city centre, while Martin remembered his first house in Pitsmoor, to the north of the city, as a damp place infested with mice.[139] With most of the interviewees having grown up at Park Hill, they spoke of their first impressions of the estate largely from the perspective of young children. Carol moved to a flat on Park Hill's highest floor in 1962. As she recalled, 'we were very excited as children, as a family, to be moving into something that we saw as quite luxurious at the time'.[140] When Paul moved to the estate, he remembered telling people, 'it felt as though we'd won the pools. It was all so modern…it was so cutting edge; it was just like being in the future'.[141] Interviewees noted, however, that their parents' experience of moving to Park Hill was quite different, with their mothers in particular having initially struggled to come to terms with the new flat.[142] Patricia described how, 'moving from a two-up, two-down, my mum was sort of lost in all this space [at Park Hill]'.[143] During her interview, Carol reflected, 'I think Mum found herself quite isolated as a young mum moving onto the flats and moving away from people that had been support networks'.[144] When Lisa's mother moved to Park Hill in 1981, she began to develop agoraphobia, which Lisa attributed to the environment of the flat itself. As she explained, '[Living at Park Hill] made her poorly because we was on next to the top floor – there was only about four or five floors. She started getting agoraphobia. She did. She never left the house'.[145] As an adult herself once she moved to the flats, for Mary the advantages of access to modern domestic facilities were short-lived,

> [Her husband] liked it, I couldn't stand the place. But he were at work all day, I was shut in. Got a job cleaning at All Saints School up on Granville Road and then I got to know a neighbour a couple of doors away, so we palled up for a while when I worked, but no, to hell with the flats. Okay, you got a bathroom, which we never had, a toilet of your

[139] Patricia Johnson interview; Martin Wood interview.
[140] Carol Williams interview.
[141] Paul Brown interview.
[142] These accounts of the effects of multi-storey living upon women mirror the findings of the following studies: Abrams et al., 'Isolated and dependent'; Pearl Jephcott, *Homes in High Flats: some of the human problems involved in multi-storey housing* (Edinburgh, 1971); W. F. R. Stewart, *Children in Flats: A Family Study, NSPCC* (London, 1970); Elizabeth Gittus, *Flats, Families and the Under-Fives* (London, 1976); Anne Stevenson, Elaine Martin and Judith O'Neill, *High Living: a study of family life in flats* (London, 1967).
[143] Patricia Johnson interview.
[144] Carol Williams interview.
[145] Lisa Crossley interview.

> own that we didn't share with neighbours, that were good for it, but no. I didn't care for it.[146]

According to a report by the Hulme People's Rights Centre, less than a decade after Hulme's multi-storey redevelopment, most people in the area already saw it as 'some kind of transit camp', a feeling epitomised by one tenant's statement that, "[Hulme is] a sort of Remand Centre. We'll all get out eventually. It's just that the remand is longer than most sentences".[147] By 1988, Manchester City Council had begun to factor Hulme's transient population into their approach to managing the estate. 'Although there is an established community on the estate, with many tenants living there since it was built', a report outlined, 'some do not want to stay, and see their future lying elsewhere. Such people do not always treat the fabric of the buildings with due respect'.[148] Some tenants did mark their dissatisfaction with the built environment on the spaces around them through acts of vandalism and anti-social behaviour, adding to impressions of Hulme's deprivation.[149] However, interviewees' narratives of Hulme reveal a more complex network of links between and beyond the estate, undermining limited characterisations of residents' movement in terms of transience or involuntary permanence alone. Jason left the flat where he had grown up in Hulme in 1991, moving to the thirteenth floor of a tower block on the estate. He recalled his feelings about the transition in his interview,

> JS: I went into the housing, wanted to get into the high rise. Spent twelve months there and then got my own house in Hattersley. I hated every minute of the high rise.
>
> IC: *Which one was it?*
>
> JS: St Thomas's Court [in Hulme]. I hated it.
>
> IC: *Why did you hate it?*
>
> JS: The energy. You've got all that negative energy…you disassociate if you're in a high rise. You're not down there with the people. The people I grew up with, I had no contact with them. I had to get out. I spent twelve months trying to get out.[150]

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[146] Mary Thomas interview.

[147] MA: q391.942733Hu1: Hulme People's Rights Centre, *Inner City Crisis: Manchester's Hulme* (Manchester, 1977), p. 12.

[148] RRRC: GB3228.3/6/18, Manchester City Council, *An approach to policy and management for Hulme* (1988).

[149] MA: GB3228.3/4/6, Hulme Project, *Multi Storey Blocks in Hulme: A Survey of Tenants in Thirteen Blocks in 1986* (Manchester, 1986), p. 24.

[150] Jason Shaw interview.

Despite having wanted to move to a high-rise flat, relative to the deck-access housing in which he had lived previously, for Jason, the height and layout of the tower block made it an isolating space. His continuing proximity to his friends and family, as well as his familiarity with the area, did little to alleviate the sense of separation that Jason connected with the physical environment of the high flat.

Yet Lee-Ann recounted a different experience of moving from her family home to a higher flat. In her early twenties, she moved from a deck-access flat to the thirteen-storey tower block, Hulme Court, where she lived until she was 26. When she moved again, this time into traditional, low-rise housing for the first time, she initially left the downstairs rooms unoccupied and lived instead almost entirely upstairs, unable to adjust to living at ground level after so many years spent in multi-storey flats. Unlike Jason, for Lee-Ann, living in the tower block at Hulme Court represented her 'happiest time'. As she explained, 'you could lock yourself away, [you had] that privacy. So, you knew everybody down there and you could see a lot'.[151] Likewise, Conor also missed living in high flats after he relocated from Hulme. He stated, 'once I'd moved out to living in houses, I realised I actually liked living in flats. I liked being up high. I liked the balconies…I liked looking down. I just liked being high up, you could see what was going on, I used to enjoy that'.[152] Rather than connecting the height of these flats to isolation, the sense of distance sometimes produced by multi-storey living instead helped some residents to engage with their surroundings on their own terms, enjoying a newfound privacy while ensuring that they could still 'see what was going on'.[153]

By the 1980s, the transience of Hulme's population had become a core facet of perceptions of its deprivation, with tenants like Anthony and Louise increasingly turning to the estate for only temporary accommodation. For Anthony, leaving the flats after two years constituted a natural next step towards his ambition to buy a house and start a family. As a student during his tenure, Anthony felt that Hulme had only suited him for that period of his life, allowing him to live cheaply enough to save the money he needed to move elsewhere. As he explained,

> It had been a happy time, so it was just something you did [leaving Hulme], you just kind of moved on. I mean, by that time, friends I'd been to university with were moving

[151] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.
[152] Conor McShane interview.
[153] *Ibid.*

> out of the city anyway and down to London or abroad, so that group of friends was splitting up so it was kind of, you know, just off on your own.[154]

As a middle-class student from an affluent family, Anthony chose to both live in, and move away from, Hulme. He had never expected to remain on the estate for longer than his studies, seeking to capitalise in the short-term on its convenient location near to the university, as well as the cheaper rental price of its council flats relative to those available in the private sector. For Anthony, leaving Hulme in search of a house of his own was inevitable, because 'that's what everybody did then…it was what you'd been brought up to expect to do'.[155] While this formed part of Anthony's middle-class upbringing, by the 1980s, home ownership had become increasingly attainable for working-class council tenants, a factor that also influenced the relocation of Hulme residents. Stephanie felt the societal pressure to buy her own house when she reached her twenties. 'That's what you did. Everybody', she explained. 'It was the Right to Buy, it was 'you need to get a house', 'you need to buy your property".[156] Although her family considered buying in Hulme, they decided to 'hold out' for a better offer from Manchester City Council, buying the property to which they were eventually allocated in Withington instead. In 1988, Shaima's family did choose to buy their house in Hulme, which survived later redevelopment work due to its traditional design. When her family left the estate in 1999, they began to act as private landlords while they bought houses elsewhere, and continue to rent their former home in Hulme to new tenants today.[157]

Like Anthony, Louise had also known that she would not remain in Hulme once her studies had ended. This recognition helped to give her some perspective to the changes she witnessed on the estate over time. For example, during her interview, Louise stated,

> I think I was always a bit ambivalent towards [changes in Hulme] if I'm honest because I always knew that I wouldn't have to stay there forever. So, yes, I think, as families moved out more and they began to let more to – or just gave away the keys – there were more problems with drugs and muggings and yes, it became a slightly scarier place. By the time I moved out in 1985 it had changed. The demographic of the people who were living there were less students, less families, more people with lots and lots of issues, and it did become a more frightening place.[158]

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[154] Anthony Clark interview.
[155] *Ibid.*
[156] Stephanie Palmer interview.
[157] Shaima Walsh interview.
[158] Louise Miller interview.

While Louise did not consider herself part of the problems she outlined, she did represent one of the tenants to whom the council 'just gave away the keys'. Her description of acquiring a flat in Hulme had involved only a brief visit to the tenants' office at Moss Side Centre, where the council offered her housing almost immediately. Moreover, for most of her time on the estate, neither Louise nor her flatmates paid rent on either of the flats in which they lived, saving the money they would have spent instead. According to Louise, this was common among students who lived in Hulme, yet she made no connection between this practice and the area's increasing deprivation over time, framing this instead as a demographic problem exemplified by the arrival of tenants with 'lots and lots of issues', rather than a case of financing the estate's maintenance.

Nevertheless, several tenants maintained links with the area after they had left. Conor initially relocated from the estate with his parents, moving to Gorton when he was sixteen. However, he returned after only a few months to live with friends in William Kent Crescent.[159] In 1990, Jenny moved to her husband's hometown in Failsworth, just eight miles from Hulme, but with her father and sister still living on the estate – only moving temporarily during its redevelopment before returning – Jenny still regularly visits Hulme today.[160] Similarly, despite living in Wythenshawe, Shaima continues to visit Hulme occasionally for shopping, while Lee-Ann lives on the redeveloped estate. While cultural representations of Hulme focused primarily on the 'entrapment' of longer-term tenants and the disruption caused by short-term residents, the personal testimonies of these former – and current – tenants indicate a more fluid experience of mobility to and from Hulme, with some connections bridging both time and space.

In Sheffield, residents' movement away from Park Hill was closely tied to their perceptions of its decline, whether they relocated in the 1970s or the 1990s. Karen left the flats towards the end of the 1980s but continued to work nearby as a lollipop lady for Park Hill Primary School during the following decade, when she started to note changes at Park Hill for the worse.

> Between '95 and 2000, it just got worse, and a lot of shops had been shut and a lot of shops had been broke into and it just weren't the same. When I first moved up here [to Norton Lees, a residential suburb to the south of the city centre], I would say for at least three or five years I would have gladly moved back and then after that, I thought, no, I wouldn't go back living on [Park Hill].[161]

[159] Conor McShane interview.
[160] Jenny Young interview.
[161] Karen Hill interview.

Yet, for Paul, the estate's poor reputation had begun to develop twenty years earlier, when he left the flats in 1975, and had worsened by the time he left Sheffield altogether ten years later. As Paul explained,

> PB: By that time I used to hear about a lot of drug addicts and a lot of families that weren't too nice that were put on Park Hill.
>
> IC: *Where did you hear that?*
>
> PB: That was in the pubs and I came across it – I'd meet people…a guy used to come in [to the pub] who was a heroin addict. He was a nice enough guy, but I didn't want to mix with people like that. I know one of the guys had a punch up with him…But I don't mind those people, the issue was, the council lost interest with Park Hill…What happened you see, people found that people were on there that they didn't particularly like. So, then they moved off, so then there was a gap, so the council put some new people on who were alcoholics…but certainly, up to '74 there were no issues. You never heard of muggings either but later on you heard of that.[162]

Here, Paul used stereotypical understandings of 'problem' tenants to explain Park Hill's representation as a more dangerous place by the time he left Sheffield in the mid-1980s, reiterating stories he heard in the pub to plug the gaps in his narrative created by his move away from the city. Although he acknowledged the role played by Sheffield City Council's allocation policy in housing a disproportionate number of vulnerable people in the multi-storey flats, Paul's association of these new tenants with violence – claiming, 'I know one of the guys had a punch up with him' – drug abuse, alcoholism, and muggings, showed that he also held their behaviour responsible for Park Hill's decline. Importantly, however, Paul made it clear that this was not his experience of the estate. His references to time in the extract, for example, 'by that time' to indicate the point at which he left Sheffield and his affirmation that 'certainly, up to '74 there were no issues', allowed him to position himself as an external witness to, rather than a participant in, Park Hill's deterioration. As he began to outline its poor reputation, Paul also highlighted his separateness from it, both in a spatial and personal sense. Not only had he distanced himself from Park Hill by moving away, he had refused to 'mix with people like that'.

Martin, on the other hand, offered a different perspective of the connections between residents' movements to and from Park Hill and ideas of its decline. He had arrived at the flats as a child in 1960 and left in 1986 to start a family of his own. Martin saw spatial mobility as integral

[162] Paul Brown interview.

to changes on the estate over time, with the first wave of Park Hill residents moving away from multi-storey living in search of more traditional forms of housing. According to Martin,

> It didn't get run down as quick as a lot of the reports I've read, they said '70s and '80s. It weren't rundown in '70s but when I left in '86 I think it was just starting to get rundown a little bit but not massively. But a lot of the people who you knew were starting to move off because, I think, they wanted more than a flat. They were a different generation, they wanted different aspirations. So, you get a lot of people moving off and different people moving on who weren't part of the original people who were moving on.[163]

For Martin, moving away from the flats represented just another aspect of the life cycle and the context of the time, an impression supported by local and national housing policy by the mid-1980s, which accelerated a process of residualisation already at work on council estates across the country.[164] In 1981, the Department of the Environment recognised how the process of allocating new tenants and the relocation of established residents served to exacerbate issues associated with areas of housing designated 'difficult to let', identified by the Department as high-density, multi-storey flats built up to the early 1970s. As its report outlined, the physical environment had a direct influence upon this movement of people, with 'the variety of form and standards' of council housing consequently 'increasing social polarisation between estates', as those residents who could afford to either moved away or waited for an offer of rehousing that suited them, leaving the most unpopular dwellings, where lettings became available more often, to 'more desperate families'.[165]

Yet this perhaps exaggerates the influence of the material environment upon residents' movement. While their height meant that some residents looked to relocate to more traditional houses, others continued to live in multi-storey flats elsewhere after leaving Park Hill. Mary and Carol both cited a need for the social space offered by a house at street level with a garden, rather than a flat, as their reason for leaving the Sheffield estate.[166] Yet tenants like Paul and Lisa did not share this attitude, with Paul moving to the high-rise Claywood flats after leaving Park Hill and Lisa eventually moving back to the redeveloped Stepney Buildings where she had lived as a child.

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[163] Martin Wood interview.

[164] Ben Jones, 'Slum Clearance, Privatization and Residualization: the Practices and Politics of Council Housing in Mid-twentieth-century England', *Twentieth Century British History*, 21/4 (2010), p. 515. Jones argued that slum clearance, the sale of council housing from the mid-1950s, and the privatisation of estates instigated the residualisation of council housing before its typical dating in line with the Right to Buy.

[165] Department of the Environment, *An investigation of difficult to let housing, volume 2: case studies of post-war estates* (London, 1981), p. 2. For a broader overview of this study, see Department of the Environment, *An investigation into difficult to let housing: volume 1: general findings* (London, 1981).

[166] Mary Thomas interview; Carol Williams interview.

These tenants were not solely motivated by a desire to leave multi-storey housing, with most interviewees describing different reasons for relocating from Park Hill, from career progression in Patricia's case, or a more general notion of progression from childhood to adulthood – from dependence upon their parents and the family home to more independent living – as proved the case for Paul and Martin. Residents' movement was therefore tied to the life cycle, rather than their experience of the spaces of the estate itself, although their mobility paradoxically helped to enhance the impression of deprivation attributed to Park Hill in its later years. Still, while the clearance and ongoing redevelopment of the Sheffield estate has meant that former residents are unlikely to retain connections with Park Hill lasting until the present day, some continued to return to it for several years after they had left, visiting old neighbours, friends, and family.

Conclusion

This chapter has asserted the importance of considering the narrated lived experience of multi-storey council tenants through a spatial lens. Typically, policymakers and the press used residents' interactions with the material environment to discursively construct the early success and later failure of post-war multi-storey council housing. According to these representations, the initial novelty of modern domestic facilities like an indoor bathroom, new kitchen appliances, and spaces to socialise and play in the surrounding shops, pubs, and playgrounds, soon faded, giving way to the longer-term realities of estate life. As the tenant population began to change, with the initial wave of residents replaced by more transient, 'problem' tenants or families, so too did the spaces of the multi-storey estate. Flats sat empty and neglected, while stairwells and walkways were poorly lit and strewn with rubbish, transformed from sites of sociability and neighbourliness to spaces of violence and crime. This framing has lent a sense of inevitability to the demolition, redevelopment and privatisation of places like Hulme and Park Hill, standardising the spaces and experiences of multi-storey council developments across England by the end of the twentieth century.

Using residents' personal testimonies as recorded through oral history interviews, this chapter has complicated existing representations of multi-storey council housing, exploring tenants' spatial practices through the lenses of certain spaces, as well as residents' movements within and beyond the multi-storey estates over time, to interrogate stereotypical representations of the material environment. While showing that residents' accounts did not diverge from the prevalent discursive framework outlined above entirely – in some cases reinforcing common tropes – the chapter has argued that residents' narratives offer a more nuanced depiction of their interactions with estate spaces than political and cultural representations alone. As the first section showed, these interactions led to the adaptation of the intended function of spaces in a variety of

ways, with residents influencing both their physical composition and cultural meaning. In communal spaces meant for socialising, like the street decks, pubs, and community centre, residents met with friends, family members and neighbours. Yet these spaces could also represent sites of conflict and insecurity, an unintended consequence of their provision. Despite acting as play spaces for children, the street decks enhanced the sense of isolation felt by residents like Mary, while for Stephanie and Louise, they constituted spaces of fear and intimidation. Likewise, the provision of pubs facilitated local social connections on the one hand, but anti-social behaviour and domestic violence on the other, while the use of community centres or halls by some groups of residents created barriers to the involvement of people across the estate. Nevertheless, as social and recreational amenities reduced over time, residents responded creatively, organising social clubs for young people in community halls and physically reconfiguring the spaces of flats to enhance the local nightlife.

The chapter also highlighted how far ideas of class and gender underpinned residents' use of certain spaces, as well as their movement within each estate, with the second section considering residents' spatial practices in relation to ideas of 'boundaries' and socio-spatial demarcation. The categorisation of different parts of the estate as 'rough' or 'respectable', depending upon both the area in which residents had lived and the design of the housing elsewhere, featured in several interviewees' accounts of Hulme. Participants described the Crescents as a 'no go' area, due to differences in their density and layout relative to other local multi-storey blocks, replicating distinctions between tenants that stemmed from the Victorian era in a late twentieth-century context. At Park Hill, residents like Martin, Paul and Lisa expressed similar views of Hyde Park, again attributing notions of difference to the density and height of the newer estate, as well as its unfamiliarity. The chapter's final section explored how far the material environment shaped residents' movements to and from Park Hill and Hulme. It argued for the importance of the spaces of the multi-storey estates, especially their interiors, in shaping residents' initial impressions of their homes, but used residents' personal testimonies to assess how far the attitudes towards the estates formed the basis for residents' relocation to housing elsewhere. While finding some correlations between the point at which the Park Hill interviewees left and their chronology of the estate's deprivation, it found that the life cycle played a central role instead. As most tenants who lived at Park Hill and Hulme as children grew older, their movement away from the estate fit with different points of the life cycle, as they left to live independently of their family or student homes. Despite this, some residents maintained links to both estates after moving away.

By adopting a spatial lens, this chapter has explored the extent to which the environment of the multi-storey estate shaped tenants' lived experiences. It has shown how residents negotiated

spaces physically and interacted with the political and cultural meanings attached to them over time. Concentrating on a period of significant change in the management and cultural reception of multi-storey council housing between the 1960s and the 1990s, the personal testimonies drawn upon in this chapter have shown that residents' experiences were varied despite the similarities of the built environment of each case study. They provide an important supplement to the architectural and planning perspectives considered in the first chapter, as well as the cultural frames of multi-storey council housing popularised by the press. While the narratives considered as part of this chapter intersect with these representations of space, they indicate how tenants' reactions to, and adaptations of, the built environment belied the uniformity of its appearance, demonstrating that generalisations of lived experience commonly attributed to this type of housing require considerable reassessment.

Chapter Four: Tenants' Narratives of Community, Stigma and Identity

Reflecting during an oral history interview upon the thirteen years he spent at Park Hill between the ages of ten and twenty-three, Paul summarised, 'The sun always shone, we always had fun, we always had plenty of money'.[1] Paul had moved to the estate with his mother, father, brother and sister in 1961, and spoke enthusiastically about its influence upon his life since. From playing out on the street decks with friends to drinking as a young adult at one of the estate's pubs, he offered a romantic view of an 'idyllic childhood' at Park Hill that only improved as he grew older. 'Everybody knew everybody', Paul asserted. 'You knew all your neighbours, and you know, people would walk into each other's houses. Doors were never locked, only at night, so you could walk in'.[2] Initially, Paul told a coherent and composed story of his time at Park Hill.[3] Punctuated by references to community, respectability, and classed notions of authenticity and belonging, his narrative rendered the multi-storey estate a fading symbol of traditional, working-class life and the 'common sense' world it occupied; a world incompatible with the overly cautious approaches to parenting and health and safety, rising crime and family breakdown, that he viewed as characteristic of 'these days'. 'Park Hill, it made me the man I am', he concluded.[4]

Yet later aspects of Paul's testimony contradicted his assurances of an entirely carefree existence at Park Hill. Stories of visits to the pub with family were interspersed with memories of drunken arguments between his parents and his father's tendency to gamble away his wages. Cracks in his depiction of an 'idyllic childhood' revealed how 'mum could knock us about', altercations with other, occasionally 'aggressive', children on the estate, and the everyday struggles of making ends meet with limited financial resources.[5] The initial hyperbole of his description of the flats' modernity, boasting fitted kitchens the likes of which he had 'never seen before', inside bathrooms, and 'cutting edge' lifts also waned under later evaluation. 'The lifts were an innovation and they were amazing', Paul stated. 'Unfortunately, they were often used as toilets, so they always stunk of urine, even from the early days'.[6] In addition, the Garchey waste disposal system – another

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[1] Paul Brown, interview with author (22 June 2018).

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] On composure in oral history, see Alistair Thomson, 'Anzac memories: putting popular memory theory into practice in Australia', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The oral history reader* (London, 1998), pp. 300-310; Penny Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews', *Cultural and Social History,* 1/1 (2004), pp. 65-93; Lynn Abrams, 'Memory as both source and subject of study: The transformations of oral history', in Stefan Berger and Bill Niven (eds), *Writing the History of Memory* (London, 2014), pp. 99-102.

[4] Paul Brown interview.

[5] *Ibid.*

[6] *Ibid.*

example of 'cutting edge' technology for Paul – sometimes backed up, flooding the kitchen so that 'our house stunk to death for a little bit'.[7] Such factors led Paul to revise his earlier statement about his time on the estate, affirming instead, 'We never had no money, the sun don't always shine, and we probably didn't always have fun, but it's what you remember, isn't it?'[8]

The structure of Paul's account offers a key insight into the ways in which discourses relating to estates like Park Hill and Hulme have shaped residents' narratives of their lived experience and social identity. Although he acknowledged the existence of hardship in his everyday life, Paul first sought to portray his experience of Park Hill in far more positive terms, seeking to minimise any of its associated shortcomings during his tenure. In depicting the multi-storey estate chiefly as an architectural marvel, through which the ideals of working-class community imbued in its design translated into reality, Paul attempted to evoke a Park Hill deserving of its initial acclaim. Similarly, the focus on his childhood and early teenage years allowed him to concentrate on the 1960s and early 1970s, years typically associated with ideas of 'success' on the Sheffield estate, before stories of rising crime, deprivation and the apparent dangers of multi-storey living more broadly began to tarnish its reputation. Although he struggled to reconcile the public image of Park Hill's early years with difficult aspects of his personal life, which led to a sense of discomposure within his narrative, Paul's testimony demonstrates his efforts to reframe the history of Park Hill.[9] The chronology he presented of the estate was not, however, the only way in which Paul sought to achieve this. Throughout his interview, Paul spoke of his identification with the estate as an individual to challenge generalised depictions of multi-storey council tenants, but he also sought to emphasise the representativeness of his account to speak for a wider group of residents. Despite these changes in perspective though, Paul's narrative ultimately adhered to the framework of 'rise and fall' in which Park Hill and Hulme have both become entrenched.

Building upon the work of earlier chapters, which have considered how multi-storey tenants interacted both directly and indirectly with political, cultural and spatial constructions of their homes, this chapter uses oral history to explore how tenants like Paul used elements of these wider representations to frame new narratives of multi-storey living, often rooted in a sense of identity. Oral historians have warned against attaching too great an influence to cultural scripts or 'external understandings', and their capacity to alter retellings of lived experience, with some

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[7] *Ibid.*

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] On discomposure in oral history narratives, see Penny Summerfield, 'Dis/composing the subject: Intersubjectivities in oral history', in Tess Coslett, Celia Lury and Penny Summerfield (eds), *Feminism and Autobiography: Texts, Theories, Methods* (London, 2000), p. 93.

arguing that this approach risks a top-down imposition of discourse upon personal narrative.[10] However, as Penny Summerfield has argued, to consider 'lived experience' as formed independently of wider discourses is to presume access to 'a social reality…[that] cannot exist outside discourse'.[11] The chapter follows this approach, viewing the oral testimonies of former residents and representations of Park Hill and Hulme as discourses and narratives in dialogue with one another, representative of an interrelationship evoked both consciously and subconsciously by interviewees in their accounts of everyday life. It argues for the recognition of tenants as agents of their own narratives, demonstrating how tenants not only *reacted* to the discursive construction of Park Hill and Hulme, but *produced* accounts that can also be characterised in terms of their contradictions and tensions.[12] In this sense it borrows from Sherry Ortner's conception of 'agency' as the key to understanding how 'social subjects, as empowered or disempowered actors', reinforce or reconstruct the cultural and ideological scripts within which their narratives are embedded.[13]

Tenants' narrative strategies form the basis of the chapter's analysis, which explores the enmeshment of narrative with culturally-produced discourses, the ways in which tenants presented themselves as individuals or sought to speak behalf of the wider tenant population, and how decisions to include or exclude, emphasise or minimise certain points, shaped stories of Park Hill and Hulme. Summerfield stated that oral history is 'inherently more likely to produce instabilities in the telling of life-stories than other, more casual, ways of encouraging reminiscence'.[14] Following this, the construction and communication of personal narratives can engender a sense of 'discomposure', dependent upon factors shaping the oral history event such as the interview participant's 'memory frame' and the scope of the research project and the relationship between personal narratives and public discourses.[15] While former residents often overtly acknowledged that their motivation for participating in this project was to offer an alternative account of Park Hill and Hulme to those steeped in stigmatisation, as the extract from Paul's testimony has shown, the complexity of their narratives resisted such a simplistic retelling.

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[10] For examples, see Graham Smith, 'Beyond Individual/Collective Memory: Women's Transactive Memories and Conflict', *Oral History*, 35/2 (2007), p. 85; Michael Roper, 'Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal,* 59 (2005), p. 58; Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory': Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, 32/2 (2004), p. 39.

[11] Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing women's wartime lives: Discourse and subjectivity in oral histories of the Second World War* (Manchester, 1998), p. 11.

[12] On understanding tensions produced through the interrelationship between subjectivity and discourse, see Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Abingdon, 2010), pp. 68-70.

[13] Sherry B. Ortner, *Anthropology and Social Theory* (London, 2006), p. 152.

[14] Summerfield, 'Dis/composing the subject', p. 93.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

Through the lens of oral history theory, the chapter shows how former residents selectively drew upon elements of external understandings of Park Hill and Hulme to support their accounts, reinforcing and challenging stereotypical representations of the estates as either beacons of community or deprivation, even during interviews in which residents directly stated their desire to undermine the prevalence of this dichotomy. It draws upon the accounts of 18 former residents of Park Hill and Hulme, whose stories encompassed the final decades of the twentieth century, touching upon key developments relating to council housing more broadly during this period, as well as discourses of affluence, social mobility and the inner city. This chapter explores how, and to some extent why, former residents sought to frame their lived experience of the Sheffield and Manchester estates in relation to these wider developments. Its focus upon oral history interviews allows for an understanding of discrepancies between and within individual accounts that cannot be explained only by the recognition of their inherent subjectivity. In attempting to understand interviewees' 'frames' of experience through narrative, the analysis therefore avoids having to ascribe measures of truthfulness or reliability to former residents, considering instead the factors that informed their choice to construct accounts of Park Hill and Hulme in different ways, and how this fostered the communication of a sense of identity relational to specific historical contexts, settings, and discourses.[16]

The chapter begins with a focus upon residents' interactions with external discourses of Park Hill and Hulme, representations that encompassed the estates' early acclaim both architecturally and culturally, in addition to their later condemnation. This first section demonstrates how far the content of residents' testimonies supported ideas of multi-storey success and failure, terms often considered separately in chronologies of the estates' decline, but which coexisted in the narratives of several interviewees. The second section then explores how the perspective from which residents told their stories, whether as individuals, members of a community, or adults reflecting upon childhood, shaped their interrelationship with representations of Park Hill and Hulme. At certain points, interviewees sought to enhance the individuality of their accounts, reinstating the place of personal experiences lost amidst stereotypes of multi-storey council housing. Yet, at others, they attempted to speak on behalf of other residents, erasing the singularity of their narratives to defend the estate's wider population from

[16] On the construction of relational identities in life stories, see George C. Rosenwald and Richard L. Ochberg, 'Introduction: Life Stories, Cultural Politics, and Self-Understanding', in George C. Rosenwald and Richard L. Ochberg (eds), *Storied Lives: The Cultural Politics of Self-Understanding* (New Haven, 1992), pp. 4-8; Peggy J. Miller, 'Narrative practices: Their role in socialization and self-construction', in Ulric Neisser and Robyn Fivush (eds), *The remembering self: Construction and accuracy in the self-narrative* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 172-175; Kenneth J. Gergen, 'Mind, text, and society: Self-memory in social context', in Ulric Neisser and Robyn Fivush (eds), *The remembering self: Construction and accuracy in the self-narrative* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 91.

stigmatisation. Continuing to follow this approach, the final section highlights how interviewees sought to emphasise the authenticity of their narratives. Tied to residents' understandings of class, this approach to authenticity allowed interviewees to assert a sense of belonging to Park Hill and Hulme selectively founded upon the estates' wider representations.

Reframing the stigmatisation of Park Hill and Hulme

Jenny lived in Hulme from just six months old, after her family moved from a one-bedroom flat in Ancoats in north Manchester, to a three-bedroom flat in the newly redeveloped Hulme in 1967. From her first descriptions of her childhood home as alike to living in 'luxury', Jenny's narrative seemed to follow a well-established trajectory, reiterating tropes common to early representations of the 'success' of multi-storey council housing in post-war England.[17] Alongside descriptions of her flat, however, Jenny highlighted another key aspect of her experience of Hulme. 'We just, well, we loved it. We didn't know anything different, and we felt safe. I didn't feel scared of anything living in the maisonettes', she remarked. Jenny's first mention of safety on the estate came early in the interview, intermingled with an outline of her flat that had, up until that point, concentrated only on describing its layout and facilities. That Jenny chose to weave an assertion of safety into her account at such an early stage, indicates the extent to which external discourses of Hulme's insecurity shaped her narrative from the outset. That her statement of having 'felt safe' also directly preceded a description of the estate's 'concrete landings' is telling, with the street decks and their apparent facilitation of crime viewed by Manchester City Council and the press alike as an essential component of Hulme's swift deterioration.

Safety became a repeated element of Jenny's interview thereafter. When responding to a question about her leisure time as a child, she described how she would play out around Hulme, visiting the estate's adventure playground and neighbouring parks with friends. 'We were like free little spirits, but safe, we were safe', Jenny summarised. Later, she sought to emphasise Hulme's association with 'family-orientated housing' and the presence of young children, using this to again justify her feelings of safety. 'There was a lot of children, so you went to school with them, and you played out with them…the same people who you grew up with. But it was safe, yeah'.[18] Jenny made such claims to safety in Hulme without prompting, responding instead to broader questions about her everyday life. When asked about the motivation behind her frequent insistences, Jenny

[17] Jenny Young, interview with author (24 February 2020).
[18] *Ibid.*

outlined the process by which external discourses of Hulme had permeated her narrative, as the following extract demonstrates.

> IC: *What makes you want to tell me 'I felt safe'?*
>
> JY: I think that's only because, like I mentioned the Moss Side riots. That didn't scare me, I just thought, there's a little bit of a rebel in me. I don't know, it didn't scare me…Growing up, I think people – and that's why I always say I'm proud of where I'm from. Proud of my roots. I mean, I'm only speaking for me and my family. I don't know for other people. But the people who are still there like my dad, they didn't move away from Hulme, they stayed in Hulme, so they must like it. I only moved away because my husband was from Failsworth…But yeah as a kid [people] used to think 'eurgh Hulme' [mimicking a derogatory tone], even when I was sitting on the bus going to school, 'where did you live?' Hulme. And you'd say 'Hulme!' [in a sing-song voice] you know, dead proud, because people say 'it's not a nice place, look at all the buildings', and it was a lot of concrete, it was, when you think. But when you're a kid you don't think of it like that. I didn't know any different. We all just grew up and mucked in, got on with it, played. We just played. I'm not saying that we were all angels, but I never did anything bad.[19]

Jenny's narrative spoke to several interrelated discourses that surrounded Hulme in the late twentieth century. Her mention of the Moss Side riots, which took place in 1981 in an area neighbouring Hulme with which the estate was often viewed interchangeably, downplayed the influence of the ensuing violence and local unrest, rendering the riots an almost unremarkable occurrence that played little part in her everyday life. This is despite the significance attached by press coverage of the riots to the actions of young tenants of local estates like Hulme.[20] Jenny spoke about Hulme with a sense of pride. Rather than internalising its associated stigma, Jenny only expressed her contentment with living in Hulme more vocally against its vilification: 'you'd say 'Hulme!' you know, dead proud'.[21] That she sought to clarify the reasoning behind her move away from the area, despite her father and sister having remained residents, suggests Jenny's commitment to highlighting the enduring liveability of the estate, a narrative that ran contrary to discourses surrounding the demolition and redevelopment of its multi-storey blocks. For Jenny, concerns over Hulme's security articulated by cultural observers and policymakers of the period, scarcely permeated her everyday life as a child and teenager. She distanced herself from these

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[19] *Ibid.*

[20] Shirin Hirsch and David Swanson, 'Photojournalism and the Moss Side Riots of 1981: Narrowly Selective Transparency', *History Workshop Journal,* 89/1 (2020), pp. 221-245.

[21] Jenny Young interview.

debates, stating that she 'got on with it', because 'when you're a kid you don't think of it like that'.[22] Yet, Jenny's narrative also indicated some understanding of the poor reputation ascribed to Hulme, as she conceded, 'I'm not saying we were all angels, but I never did anything bad'.[23] Here, Jenny used the construction of her own sense of self to counter aspects of Hulme's stigmatisation, especially its association with young people, indicating the ways in which the estate's reputation had become central to the communication of her life history.

Rachel demonstrated a similar level of confidence in her safety in Hulme during her interview:

> Hulme was fairly notorious not just for the disrepair of its blocks but also for being something of a crime hotspot. I don't remember what year, but there was actually a time when there was a shooting on the flats, on the ground floor of my block, and when my parents heard about it, because of course it got onto the national news as an example of how awful a place Hulme was to live, they were appalled and would have been very much happier if I'd found myself somewhere else to live. But even though I was actually at home and I heard when the shooting happened, I certainly didn't feel in the least unsafe.[24]

When asked if she could explain why she still felt safe, Rachel did not respond by articulating her feelings, but by talking again about Hulme's reputation in the media, focusing on the press and stating, 'there was an awful lot of coverage in the *Manchester Evening News*, very damning coverage you might say'.[25] Rachel was reluctant to allow the publicly represented version of Hulme to dominate her story, even when describing incidents that corresponded with aspects of media coverage, but still used the estate's treatment in the press to foreground a description of her feelings of safety and pride in the area. Rachel went on to explain, 'I agreed with [media coverage of Hulme] but I also felt a certain pride that there I was living in the middle and my experience – even though all these bad stories were put out by the *Manchester Evening News* and local TV – my experience was that there was an awful lot of positive qualities to set off against these very damning stories'.[26] Rachel only became aware of Hulme's negative reputation after moving to the estate, and did so primarily through local newspapers, which supports research into the development of 'area reputations' through the press conducted in relation to housing estates elsewhere in Britain.[27]

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[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] Rachel Hardy, interview with author (11 January 2021).
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] Ade Kearns, Oliver Kearns and Louise Lawson, 'Notorious Places: Image, Reputation, Stigma. The Role of Newspapers in Area Reputations for Social Housing Estates', *Housing Studies*, 28/4 (2013), pp. 579-598.

But Rachel's account also suggests the complexities of the relationship between tenants' personal testimonies of Hulme and its cultural representation. This was not a straightforward case of challenging reputation with a new, 'positive' narrative.

Rachel 'agreed with' Hulme's notoriety as a 'crime hotspot' as she referred to it, but did not want this to eclipse other facets of her story. Instead, she sought to distance herself from this depiction of Hulme to some extent with statements like: 'in all those years – six years and three flats within that time – I was only burgled once…only one burglary in all that time, I thought that was pretty good going'.[28] Nevertheless, her attitude towards the estate's reputation reflected elements of other interviewees' narratives, especially concerning the transference of stigmatisation onto other tenants. Rachel attributed the burglary she experienced to her neighbours, recalling how her fire exit had acted as the burglars' route of entry and escape, and how she saw footprints in the dust of the little-used shared walkway between this exit and that of her neighbours' flat, rather than down the street deck itself, which indicated the neighbours' involvement. While Rachel characterised most of her fellow tenants as 'friendly' and capable of upholding a 'very good community spirit' to demonstrate the selectivity of this 'othering', her narrative still sustained aspects of Hulme's negative reputation. Like other participants such as Paul, this reputation also underpinned a sense of identity, with Rachel describing it as having given her 'the street cred of living in an area that was in its day notorious'.[29]

Jason's account offers another perspective of the ways in which participants positioned their personal testimonies in relation to public discourses of Hulme. Jason lived on the estate at the same time as Jenny and also spoke about his experience of Hulme primarily from a child's perspective, but his account of his adolescence intermingled with wider understandings of young people and multi-storey flats. As a teenager, Jason had been part of a local gang called the 'Hulme Boys', a group that he described as one of several 'tribes' that occupied the estate during the 1980s.[30] During his interview, Jason sought to downplay any connection between the Hulme Boys and the young people rendered synonymous by the local press with the 'inner city decay' of estates like Hulme, describing his group as merely 'a gang of kids'.[31] However, parts of Jason's account undermined his allusions as to the harmless actions of young tenants in Hulme, reinforcing to some extent prevalent understandings of the estate's decline. In the following story, Jason recalled

[28] Rachel Hardy interview.
[29] *Ibid.*
[30] Jason Shaw, interview with author (3 March 2020).
[31] Russell Jenkins, 'Horrors of the Concrete Jungle', *Manchester Evening News*, 22 February 1985; Jason Shaw interview.

a confrontation between the Hulme Boys and the police that indicated the extent of conflict between young people and representatives of the law.

> We did loads of naughty stuff, but we were naughty, we weren't bad, and that was the difference. We still got battered by the coppers and stuff like that but for different stuff. I remember losing it once with the police, we all lost it. We got really pissed off with them. [Laughs] We was on the Addy [Mark Addy Bridge], they come on, moved us off the Addy, but they'd said summat to one of the lads, again, another racial thing. So, we climbed over the fence of St George's, and we got all the milk bottles, and we barricaded the road at the side of the Grey Parrot [pub], and we waited. Just for the police, we let all the cars through. We was really mad, there was all these kids with bottles.
>
> We were letting cars through, there was only one way in and that came from the front of my house, off Jackson Road, and you had to come round like that. So, if you'd got a barricade there and a barricade there, they can't get to you, because you're at the Grey Parrot, that was your little bit…We barricaded it across the road. So, the only way they were coming if they were coming for us was through the Grey Parrot car park and we knew if they were in there, we'd go on the maisonettes and [mimes throwing bottles]. We emptied them, we emptied all the bottles on the coppers…But again, that's what we did, one of our lot got hurt by them so we caused them some problems. It got to the stage where you'd very rarely see the police, the only time you'd see the police was when it was proper serious.[32]

The conclusion of Jason's story, in which he and his friends threw glass bottles from the estate's multi-storey street decks onto the police below, somewhat contradicted his opening assurance that 'we were naughty, we weren't bad'. To an extent, it legitimised claims made by architects and geographers of the period, and reiterated in the national press, that the height and layout of street decks facilitated criminal activity.[33] His presentation of young people, members of a 'gang' capable of reworking the physical landscape of the estate into a makeshift battleground complete with 'barricades', similarly served to validate depictions of Hulme as a space akin to a 'warzone'.[34] Yet Jason's testimony also provided contextual information often lacking in wider representations of youthful disorder on the inner-city estate, hinting at the racial discrimination practiced by the police officers themselves, as well as their brutality on other occasions – 'we still

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[32] Jason Shaw interview.

[33] Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space: Crime Prevention through Urban Design* (New York, 1973); Alice Coleman, *Utopia on Trial: Vision and Reality in Planned Housing* (London, 1990); Peter Evans, 'The built-in crime wave of tower blocks', *The Times,* 11 February 1974.

[34] 'Horrors of the Concrete Jungle', *Manchester Evening News,* 22 February 1985.

got battered by the coppers and stuff like that', Jason stated.[35] Most significantly, the story demonstrates how Jason saw himself; how he sought to challenge stereotypes of Hulme's young adult population to construct a sense of self during the interview, continuously framing his identity around stories intended to subvert the assumptions about young tenants that underpinned much of Hulme's growing stigmatisation in the 1970s and 1980s.

Like Jason, Conor moved to Hulme as a child in the early 1970s. Despite the overlap between the two interviewees' residence, Conor's account of the estate diverged from Jason's on several key points, most significantly concerning the criminal activity of residents. As Conor remembered,

> [There were] a lot of burglaries. We got burgled a couple of times. People would break in to steal the meter [money]. They were so easy to break in, we could even do it ourselves…As a young kid, I remember doing it myself, when I walked up to the house, knocking on the door and putting my hand through the letterbox and you could open the door. They were so easy to break into.[36]

Conor's narrative echoed those stereotypes of the estate's young tenants that Jason had, overall, sought to dispel. In admitting that he also broke into people's homes as a teenager, Conor's account contradicted assertions like Jason's that 'Nobody from Hulme was a burglar'.[37] Although indicative of the variation among residents' lived experiences despite their shared context, the differences between Jason and Conor's testimonies also show the extent to which interviewees interacted differently with the scope of this research project. While Jason used his interview to contest aspects of the estate's negative reputation, Conor used his account to reinforce it.

As such, much of Conor's testimony corresponded with representations of Hulme's criminality, especially the connections Conor drew between the estate's deck-access design and instances of violent crime. His account indicated the extent to which his perception of Hulme had changed since growing older and moving elsewhere. This was particularly apparent in his discussion of 'problem families', which showed how far Hulme's reputation in the late twentieth century continued to spark adaptations in Conor's personal account of the estate. As Conor noted,

> I get the impression, looking back, that the Crescents, they were used as a dumping ground for problem families. And I think we were probably classed as a problem family, but the ones

[35] Jason Shaw interview.
[36] Conor McShane, interview with author (28 February 2020).
[37] Jason Shaw interview.

> we knocked about with would've been, looking back now they were sort of really wild families.[38]

Here, Conor distanced himself from representations of 'problem families' even while acknowledging his past association with these residents. He and his relatives may have been 'classed as' a problem family by observers, but they were not as 'wild' as other families on the estate. This distinction, alongside Conor's ongoing revision of the perspective from which he narrated his lived experience, served to delineate his identity more clearly in the present from that of a past sense of self. It shows the selectivity of Conor's interaction with Hulme's discursive construction, as he acknowledged the part his family may have played in consolidating the Crescents' reputation, but refused to absorb its stigmatisation passively.

This selectivity was apparent in other aspects of Conor's narrative. For all its breadth, in many ways the story Conor told did not reveal much about his personal life. Admissions in his interview suggested a difficult relationship with his family and a sense of instability due to having moved houses and schools several times during his childhood, until he left his parents' home to live with friends aged sixteen. These were not, however, topics that Conor spoke about in detail. As his interview continued, it became apparent that there was a chronological gap in his life story, with some of his early teenage years unaccounted for. Conor revealed partway through the interview that he had gone to prison during this time, but again, this was a subject on which he was unwilling to dwell further. In terms of narrative construction, Conor used Hulme's infamy to mask his personal experiences in wider discourses. He thus told a story about Hulme that reflected part of his time on the estate, but did not encompass it entirely. His account showed some evidence of a kind of dissonance, with Conor speaking freely about aspects of estate life only when reconstructing the experience of others, as if to distance himself from certain events. This was especially apparent when he discussed how girls he had known at school started to engage in underage sex work, and when he recounted the experiences of friends who had witnessed sexual assaults on the Crescents. Lenore Layman has contended that signs of 'reticence' in oral history interviews is evidence for the narrator's assertion of authority, as they use their agency to direct and limit the conversation accordingly.[39] This may apply in part to Conor's narrative; he certainly would not be drawn to talk much about his family.[40] However, it also seemed that he did not

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[38] Conor McShane interview.

[39] Lenore Layman, 'Reticence in Oral History Interviews', *The Oral History Review,* 36/2 (2009), p. 210.

[40] Conor might have spoken at greater length about his family had I questioned him more closely, but the clipped nature of some of his earlier responses when speaking about them very broadly suggested his discomfort with this topic of conversation. It did not seem necessary or ethical to press him for further information. On silences and

consider this information relevant to his understanding of the research frame, and therefore sought to keep the more intimate details of his personal experiences of Hulme separate from a broader account of its history.

While the narratives of former Hulme tenants like Jenny and Jason demonstrate how some interviewees tried to reframe their experiences and identities against prevalent representations of decline, for the interviewees of the Sheffield estate, this interaction centred more overtly around the chronology of Park Hill's 'rise and fall'. As past residents of Hulme focused primarily upon adapting understandings of its deprivation, those of Park Hill sought instead to emphasise the estate's earlier years of apparent 'success', shifting the parameters of typical representations from Park Hill's 'decline' to support a more positive retelling of its lived experience. These interviewees did not deny the existence of deprivation at the Sheffield estate entirely. Instead, they positioned themselves as external witnesses to its development, using their narratives to separate their lived experience from aspects of Park Hill's discursive construction in ways that frequently involved the replication of stigmatisation onto other multi-storey council tenants. Patricia's testimony shows this process at work. She characterised her time at the flats between 1965 and 1975 as 'fantastic', describing Park Hill as 'a very social place, very neighbourly and friendly'.[41] Her narrative adhered to ideas of the estate's early years, concentrating on community facilities, the pubs, and the flats' amenities as facilitators of sociability between neighbours. Although she spent much of her spare time as a child with school friends who lived on the nearby Norfolk Park estate, Patricia's wider family, including her grandparents, were also residents at Park Hill, with their presence helping to enhance her fond memories of this period in her life. Patricia's narrative justified connections between Park Hill's architectural design, local authority management, and sense of community among tenants up to the mid-1970s.

However, just as Patricia's account of Park Hill emphasised its initial triumph, so too did it echo representations of its later failure. Stigmatising discourses of the estate from the 1980s became integral to Patricia's account of the period after which she moved away from the flats. Her parents lived at Park Hill for another ten years and although Patricia visited them during certain holidays like Easter and Christmas, she spent little time on the estate. Her recollection of her parents' move, therefore, relied heavily upon borrowed and stereotypical stories of Park Hill. As she recounted, 'I don't know in any depths what it was like [in the mid-1980s] but generally there were drug addicts, problems with alcohol, noise, and, of course, [her parents] were getting older as well so having all

ethics when interviewing, see Carrie Hamilton, 'On Being a 'Good' Interviewer: Empathy, Ethics and the Politics of Oral History', *Oral History,* 36/2 (2008), pp. 35-43.

[41] Patricia Johnson, interview with author (8 February 2019).

these young people with problems probably was a step too far'.[42] Similar generalisations shaped other interviewees' perceptions of decline. Carol left the flats when she turned eighteen in 1980, having spent most of her childhood at Park Hill. After moving, Carol remembered how 'the word went round', that, "troubled families' or 'problem families" had taken over Park Hill.[43] Despite displaying her scepticism towards the classification of these groups of residents, evident in her stipulation that she referred to them 'in brackets', Carol also wanted to assert that 'it wasn't like that when we were there'.[44] Regardless of her uncertainty then, Carol's mention of these groups in the context of Park Hill's decline nevertheless suggested that some degree of responsibility for the estate's supposedly newfound deprivation lay with another group of residents.

Lisa also saw Park Hill's later families as having contributed to its change for the worse. Six years after moving to the flats with her family in 1981, she moved elsewhere in Sheffield to buy a house with her husband and daughter. Yet, with the cost of mortgage repayments exceeding their income, Lisa returned to Park Hill in 1988, keen to live closer to her family again and recreate the life she had on the flats before. Her impressions of Park Hill did not, however, match those she had held previously. As Lisa explained,

> Things were changing round about then. What was happening was one-parent families – not that there's anything wrong with one-parent families – and people that they [the council] didn't know what to do with, they could be anything. They could be on drugs or anything, they'd put them on Park Hill. And it changed, it just changed. So, I lived there for about two years and I just thought, I can't bring my child up around all of this. They'd started taking drugs and you weren't as safe as what you used to be. So, whilst we could afford it, we bought somewhere else.[45]

Lisa's absence constituted only one year, but the scale of the change she saw upon returning to Park Hill seemed the work of longer-term developments. That she had not noticed these before suggests a degree of insulation from the estate's 'decline' that only dissipated when Lisa relocated, perhaps due to her exposure to wider stigmatising discourses about Park Hill. Indeed, broader representations of the flats have played some part in helping Lisa to form conclusions about Park Hill's changes over time. Her association of 'one-parent families' with people who 'could be anything...could be on drugs or anything', saw Lisa invoke common indicators of deprivation in

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[42] *Ibid.*
[43] Carol Williams, interview with author (4 February 2019).
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] Lisa Crossley, interview with author (6 March 2020).

her narrative. Her attempts to nuance her perspective of later residents by stating, 'not that there's anything wrong with one-parent families', failed to dispel their association with deprivation. That Lisa referred to these families at all, despite her personal disagreement with their negative categorisation to some degree, indicates the ways in which participants sometimes relied upon cultural and political understandings of Park Hill to shape their narratives. It serves as a reminder of the extent to which former tenants' narratives operate in dialogue with the stigmatisation of multi-storey estates, with Lisa's testimony indicating her internalisation and reproduction of aspects of Park Hill's reputation, even while she sought to resist its influence over her retelling.

In the present, developers often look to mixed forms of tenure and housing stock to counter the well-established reputations attached to deprived areas, seeking to foster social cohesion and boost economic growth by attracting more middle-class residents.[46] In the context of Hulme's redevelopment in the 1990s, Rachel saw this approach as a key component for the creation of a 'sustainable community'. While research has demonstrated that places largely retain their stigma despite changes to the material environment, Rachel connected the introduction of owner-occupied dwellings and reduction in social housing stock, to improvements in Hulme's reputation post-redevelopment.[47]

IC: *When you moved to this new Hulme – the redevelopment – did you get a sense of how the area's reputation changed? Did it change at all?*

RH: It certainly did change because part of the commercial side of the redevelopment was actually developing homes for sale and that was something absolutely unheard of in Hulme, because Hulme prior to City Challenge had been something like better than 90 per cent council-owned…

IC: *So, did you feel like the homes for sale in the new Hulme, you think that was part of the reason why it got a better reputation?*

[46] Paul Watt and Peer Smets discuss the merits of this approach in Paul Watt and Peer Smets, 'Social Housing and Urban Renewal: Conclusion', in Paul Watt and Peer Smets (eds), *Social Housing and Urban Renewal: A Cross-National Perspective* (Bingley, 2017), p. 465. They argue for greater recognition of the role of mixed tenure developments in obscuring persisting 'class, ethnic and racial differences' and, in some cases, displacing 'welfare agendas' in favour of a project of gentrification.

[47] On the retention of stigma in redeveloped housing estates in a temporary and historic context, see Annette Hastings, 'Stigma and social housing estates: Beyond pathological explanations', *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 19/3 (2004), pp. 251-254; Ben Jones, *The working-class in mid-twentieth-century England* (Manchester, 2012), pp. 77-78.

> RH: I think so because of course you got lots of people moving to new Hulme who had no previous experience of it.[48]

In highlighting the role of mixed housing stock in attracting new residents, Rachel focused on the benefits of social rather than economic capital in changing perceptions of the new Hulme. This not only shows her recognition of the extent to which Hulme's council tenants had become tied to discourses of deprivation, but her acceptance of greater levels of privatisation as a necessary means to rectify it. As Loretta Lees has argued, ideas of 'moral order' and respectability underscored the promotion of 'mixed communities', drawing on the existing stigmatisation of so-called 'sink estates' in the media to justify their demolition and increasing privatisation.[49] Although Lees focused on the practices of urban renewal introduced by New Labour in the late 1990s, Hulme's redevelopment at the start of the decade – and Rachel's interpretation of its subsequent social benefits – subscribed to the same approach. Paul's account of Park Hill's redevelopment indicates in more explicit terms the ongoing influence of respectability politics in shaping attitudes towards social housing tenants today. As Paul stated,

> These days, people who are in rented accommodation or who are in council accommodation – and that's no disrespect to a lot of people – don't look after it. Now, if they don't look after it and they let it go, and then you've got private houses at the side of it, door-to-door, then that's going to have an effect. And that's going to bring down the prices or hold the prices of the private houses. So, I'm not sure how [Park Hill's mixed development] is going to work. I mean, but in the old days when we were on there, everything was pristine.[50]

While Paul referenced a concern for the economic impact of mixed tenure developments, this primarily stemmed from his judgement of social tenants as unwilling to take care of their homes. Despite having been a council tenant himself, and having attempted to use parts of his interview to correct similar stereotypical and historic representations of Park Hill, Paul also reproduced such discourses about 'other' social housing tenants today.

This demonstrates the importance of recognising the historical contingencies of attitudes towards council tenants, with their shifting representation influencing in turn tenants' attempts to

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[48] Rachel Hardy interview. Prior to this extract and as discussed earlier in the chapter, Rachel had made it clear that Hulme's reputation during the 1980s and early 1990s was poor, which reinforces the sense that the changes in the estate's reputation constituted an improvement.

[49] Loretta Lees, 'The Urban Injustices of New Labour's "New Urban Renewal": The Case of the Aylesbury Estate in London', *Antipode,* 46/4 (2014), p. 926.

[50] Paul Brown interview.

chronologise housing failure. Patricia's account offers an example of this in relation to Park Hill's decline in the mid-1980s.

> I don't think there was a big change I think there was an evolution – a gradual evolution – and I didn't really encounter the problems my parents encountered once Park Hill became used for social housing and that's the reason my parents moved in the end [in 1985], because the type of people who were living there changed. It was no longer, you know, community families, so that's why they moved eventually.[51]

Although often used interchangeably, Patricia's account rendered 'social housing' separate from 'council housing', considering residents of the former indicative of – and largely responsible for – the onset of deprivation at Park Hill. The estate remained under local authority control until its transfer to private developers in the mid-2000s, but irrespective of any changes to its management, Patricia's understanding of Park Hill's increasing deprivation through the lens of 'social housing' shows how far wider political and cultural redefinitions of council housing over time had a part to play in past tenants' adaptation of stigmatisation in constructing narratives of the lived experience of multi-storey flats.

Alternating narrative perspectives of the individual and collective tenant voice

With attitudes towards their former homes still entwined with polarised and stigmatising discourses of post-war multi-storey council housing, interviewees like Lisa nevertheless sought to use their narratives of everyday life to correct wider representations of Park Hill and Hulme.

> I do think it's important [to talk about Park Hill] because I don't think people realise how brilliant it was because the people that didn't live on there, like people that lived in – people that had got more money so they could afford to live in better places – they thought of Park Hill as being low-life people and things like that, and they genuinely wasn't. It were – they were – really, really nice people. People used to – in fact, I'll explain what I mean, when I first started work and people asked where I lived, I used to say, 'near City Road'. I didn't like to say I lived on Park Hill…it had got a reputation and it needn't have.[52]

The oral history interview presented Lisa with an opportunity to reinforce her identification with Park Hill once more. It allowed her to reconcile her past reluctance to acknowledge her

[51] Patricia Johnson interview.
[52] Lisa Crossley interview.

connections to Park Hill with her present desire to celebrate its residents, as she used her perspective as a former tenant to counter external attitudes towards the estate. Through her individual experience, Lisa was able to reclaim her membership of a wider community.

A similar sense of community underscored Karen's account, but her presentation of the Sheffield estate was less self-assured.

> I think it should be told, the story [of Park Hill], because it got such a bad name, and may have a bad name now but I don't talk to people about it, so I don't know. I just think it were a great place to grow up, especially when I were young. I don't know about, I mean you probably, kids of my daughter's generation, would probably tell you different things. Like they probably – I never had any problems from them saying they didn't like it on there or anything, but especially for my generation and all it were just a brilliant place. There were lots to do, you could play out, everybody watched everybody else…I just think it was a good place and if it's got a bad reputation now I think it should be told that's not how it started off and whether it's the council's fault. I mean, it's a bit judgemental really to say it's the people they put on because I don't know those people's stories, or why they've ended up how they are, or whether we'd call them bad'uns. I don't know. I don't know whose fault. It got neglected, I think, is what it was. And same thing with a lot of council [estates] it just lost that community spirit. So that's why I think it should be done.[53]

Perhaps in recognition of the stigmatisation she had once encountered, Karen refused to confer judgement upon later residents without hearing 'those people's stories' first, to avoid making generalisations. This suggests the importance she attached to residents' individual perspectives of Park Hill – and council housing across late twentieth-century England more broadly – in the narration of lived experience. Yet this approach seemed at odds with Karen's depiction of her time on the Sheffield estate as representative of a wider group of tenants. While she presented her individual experience to make remarks like, 'I think [Park Hill's story] should be told' and 'I just think it were a great place to grow up', her perspective also encompassed those of the residents with whom Karen lived during her time at Park Hill, as she asserted that 'especially for my generation and all it were just a brilliant place'.[54]

These participants navigated a delicate balance during their interviews, attempting to, on the one hand, articulate their lived experience as an individual, and, on the other, to speak on

[53] Karen Hill, interview with author (15 February 2019).
[54] *Ibid.*

behalf of the wider tenant population. Both perspectives were important to former residents of Park Hill and Hulme. While the estates' stigmatisation cultivated an image of specific groups of people as archetypal multi-storey council tenants, especially large, often single-parent families and young adults, the spatial roots of such depictions saw most residents tarred with the same brush. Responding to this, several interviewees attempted to speak for other residents by highlighting the apparent representativeness of their accounts, challenging dominant discourses through a change of perspective. However, the presentation of their lived experience was not always so clear cut. If prevalent discourses of Park Hill and Hulme sometimes led interviewees to exaggerate their narratives on behalf of a collective, they equally prompted former residents to emphasise their own sense of self by constructing narratives that enhanced their perspective and experiences as an individual. As the following testimonies show, residents' efforts to balance both perspectives often caused tensions in their accounts.

Jenny's desire to correct aspects of Hulme's representation formed the basis of her interview, with the ardour of her self-identification with the estate only increasing in line with her acknowledgement of its detrimental reputation. To negotiate this dynamic, Jenny positioned her testimony alternately as one of individual and collective experience, which led to some inconsistencies in her narrative. Considering the Crescents in the 1980s, she remarked that 'people didn't feel safe', but countered this with, 'I did work actually in the bullrings [the Crescents]', seeming to suggest her difference of opinion with the wider tenant population. Later, Jenny recounted, 'people say, 'I would never dare go out the door', but I would go out, play out, I still went to work. No, I felt safe'.[55] Here again, Jenny's account suggested that her personal experience was at odds with the commonly-held view of the Crescents. Her narrative shifted from speaking on behalf of her childhood friends and neighbours through the first-person plural – 'we felt safe' – to using 'people' to indicate those who felt unsafe in Hulme. By alternating her perspective in this way, Jenny not only distanced her experiences from perceptions of Hulme as dangerous, but also evoked a separate group of tenants – those 'people' who 'didn't feel safe' – as a more ambiguous 'other' with little claim to authority over Hulme's lived experience. Nevertheless, by asserting finally, 'I felt safe', Jenny ultimately relied upon personal experience to quash broader notions of the estate's insecurity.[56]

Despite professing to speak from only personal experience, Jenny was keen for other respondents' stories to mirror hers, remarking at the end of her interview, 'I hope through your

[55] Jenny Young interview.
[56] *Ibid.*

research now and through the people you're going to meet up with that you get similar sort of vibes', before suggesting a group of childhood friends who she thought suitable to participate in the project. This was not uncommon among other interviewees, who also named friends and family members who they hoped would offer a corresponding version of events. In so doing, former residents stressed the importance of finding other participants who could validate their testimonies. Their recommendations seemed to indicate that the perspectives of these old friends and relatives would help to shore up their accounts of Park Hill and Hulme in relation to external attitudes, suggesting that existing interviewees saw their testimonies in opposition to the estates' dominant representations. Moreover, by only naming certain people, interviewees limited their identification with all residents, indicating the existence of some disparities among residents' attitudes towards each estate. Selectivity therefore also marred interviewees' attempts to speak from a collective perspective, with former residents privileging an account that most closely adhered to the story they wanted to tell.

Like Jenny, during his interview, Paul repeatedly stated that 'everyone felt safe' at Park Hill during his time in the flats, even when confronted with a difference of opinion. Although she did not participate directly, Paul's wife was within earshot of the interview and made comments about his account from time to time. She had not lived at the estate herself, but her relationship with Paul began while he was still a resident, so she was a regular visitor during the early 1970s. While her voice is inaudible to the recording, Paul's responses to her remarks suggest that her view of Park Hill occasionally diverged from his depiction. As Paul described the extent of Park Hill's safety, pronouncing that he had no problem with walking around the estate at night, he broke off momentarily to listen to an interruption from his wife. Without responding to her directly, he continued with the interview, stating, 'she's umming and ahing, but everyone felt safe on Park Hill'.[57] Paul may well have discounted his wife's opinion as a non-resident, but his adamant portrayal of the estate's safety – made on behalf of its wider population – indicates in turn the prevalence of representations of Park Hill as a dangerous place, which Paul addressed throughout the interview.

Jenny and Paul sought to incorporate ideas of a collective tenant voice in their narratives, albeit with mixed success, to emphasise a sense of community at Hulme and Park Hill. Their efforts mirrored those of other interviewees across both estates, including Lisa and Karen, as well as Martin, Jason, Lee-Ann and Stephanie, who all used the idea of community to some extent to frame their accounts. The tensions apparent between Jenny and Paul's efforts to present their

[57] Paul Brown interview. Paul participated in a remote interview over the phone.

experiences as those of an individual and part of a collective assume a particular significance in relation to the socioeconomic context in which their stories took place. For some sociologists of the late twentieth century, the rise of neoliberalism has eroded whatever semblance of 'working-class community' survived post-war slum clearance and the 'affluent society'.[58] By attempting to speak on behalf of a wider group, some former residents used their interviews to reclaim membership of a form of community that they now perceived as lost. As Stephanie stated, 'there is no – there *was* no community like it [in Hulme]'.[59] Often inflected with romanticism and nostalgia, residents' narratives of the estates in the past conjured traditional notions of post-war working-class community reminiscent of the work of Richard Hoggart, Norman Dennis, Peter Willmott and Michael Young; a community of which historians and sociologists alike have since questioned both the loss and existence respectively.[60]

However, present-day society still has the capacity to shape interviewees' accounts. Analysing the rising phenomenon of storytelling in the twenty-first century, defined as 'public talk about oneself', Alexander Freund has argued that, 'interviewing, confessing and publicity are deeply intertwined with a neoliberal individualism' in Western societies today.[61] Considering this is the context in which interviewees narrated their lived experiences, it is unsurprising that their individual perspectives occasionally came into conflict with their accounts of a more collective experience rooted in traditional ideas of community. For some interviewees, like Richard, the context of the present day was integral to understanding Park Hill's community in the past, as if only by identifying its loss could he articulate its initial existence. 'It was like a kind of, I can see now but I wouldn't have been able to put it into words at that time', Richard explained, 'it was its own community'.[62] Just as former residents modelled their accounts against – or in alignment with – representations of Park Hill and Hulme, so too do current political and cultural discourses have the capacity to continually shape interviewees' narratives. In alternating the perspective from which they spoke, interviewees deployed narrative strategies to negotiate increasingly blurred distinctions

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[58] Tony Bennett, Mike Savage, Elizabeth Silva, Alan Warde, Modesto Gayo-Cal and David Wright, *Culture, Class, Distinction* (Abingdon, 2009), p. 195.

[59] Stephanie Palmer, interview with author (4 March 2020).

[60] J. H. Goldthorpe and G. Marshall, 'The promising future of class analysis: a response to recent critiques', *Sociology,* 26/3 (1992), pp. 381-400. For recent reassessments, see Jon Lawrence, *Me, Me, Me?: The Search for Community in Post-war England* (Oxford, 2019); Stefan Ramsden, *Working-Class Community in the Age of Affluence* (Abingdon, 2017); Mike Savage, Gaynor Bagnall and Brian Longhurst, 'Local Habitus and Working-Class Culture', in Fiona Devine, Mike Savage, John Scott and Rosemary Crompton (eds), *Rethinking Class: Culture, Identities and Lifestyles* (Basingstoke, 2005), pp. 95-122.

[61] Alexander Freund, 'Under storytelling's spell? Oral history in a neoliberal age', *The Oral History Review,* 42/1 (2014), p. 132.

[62] Richard Taylor, interview with author (6 February 2019).

between personal and collective experiences of each estate and discourses of late twentieth-century society more broadly.

However, understandings of community were not static across participants. Rachel felt that Hulme's community spirit had declined over time due to its redevelopment, a perspective based on her understanding of community as intrinsically linked to activism. Rachel had acted as a committee member for her tenants' association in the late 1980s, before becoming a tenant representative for Hulme City Challenge in the early 1990s, so these roles had underpinned her interactions with local people throughout her tenancy. She struggled to reconcile her view of community with the context of post-redevelopment Hulme. As she explained,

> I think it was the shared adversity of living in a high crime area, with a poor repairs service and a council that had basically lost interest in managing the block, I think it was that shared adversity that pulled together the community before the redevelopment. Now, since you know they had all the shared adversity, I think there was not as much community spirit in the new housing as there had been in the old.[63]

Rachel felt that the absence of a campaign for better housing conditions and the decision of some tenants to accept housing elsewhere once redevelopment work began, engendered natural divisions in the local population. Interestingly, she characterised this as a return to 'traditional community', with minimal interaction between neighbours the norm for her prior to moving to Hulme, demonstrating the importance of understanding the early and formative housing experiences described by tenants in the previous chapter. The perspective from which Rachel told her story also shifted as she moved from discussing the campaigns she was involved with, to life on the redeveloped estate. From making comments such as 'we used to put pressure on our ward councillors and local housing officers [for repairs]' and 'we were quite possibly never off their doorstep when it came to hassling for repairs', Rachel began to emphasise her role as an individual in the redevelopment process, stating that 'I had regular meetings with the builders' and 'I was working alongside North British [Housing Association]…to keep in touch with prospective tenants', rather than communicating through the tenants' association itself.[64] This mirrors changes in Rachel's participation in tenant activism, the beginnings of which pre-dated the City Challenge. After having acted as a committee member for her tenants' association since first moving to Hulme, the rest of the committee asked her to stand down when she started to work for Manchester City Council in the late 1980s. Although Rachel continued to get involved with

[63] Rachel Hardy interview.
[64] *Ibid.*

campaign work, she no longer held a leadership position in the tenants' association. When the City Challenge launched in 1991, Rachel successfully put herself forward as a candidate to represent her area of Hulme. The role involved working with tenants, the council, and the building and architectural firms appointed to undertake the redevelopment work, but despite maintaining links to the tenants' association, as a City Challenge tenant representative, Rachel was also distinct from it, her relatively unique position as one of only a handful of representatives leading her to emphasise the individual scope of her participation in Hulme's redevelopment.

Aside from negotiating an individual and collective tenant voice, interviewees also had to reconcile tensions between their past and present-day perspectives of each estate. For some participants, the oral history interview itself was the first time they had reflected in-depth upon aspects of their former homes, with interviewees recalling and re-evaluating the significance of details they had not considered before. For others, looking back to their time at Park Hill and Hulme represented a longer-term process, one conducted across the decades since they moved elsewhere. Conor incorporated parts of both ways of remembering in his account of Hulme during the 1970s. Discussing the presence of Irish families on the estate – Conor's parents had moved to Manchester from Dublin and the town of Tipperary respectively in 1960 and much of his wider family still lived in Ireland – Conor remarked,

> There was loads [of Irish families in Hulme]. God, it's amazing now I think about it. Yeah, there was lots of Irish. I'd say a lot of ethnic minorities you know, Asians and Caribbeans and that, but I'd say the biggest sort of ethnic minority probably would've been the Irish.[65]

From his tone of voice and exclamation 'God, it's amazing now I think about it', it was apparent that Conor had not given much prior thought to this characteristic of Hulme's tenant population. The subject arose from a question about whether any of the families Conor had lived with in tenement housing before moving to Hulme had also found housing on the estate, but, after his recognition of the extent of Hulme's Irish population, developed into a discussion about his own family's experience of migrating from Ireland to Manchester. Similar moments of realisation occurred later in his interview.

> CM: I wouldn't want to go back now, I don't think, once I got a bit older…looking back now, now that I think about it, it probably was for the best that [the Crescents] were pulled down.

[65] Conor McShane interview.

IC: *Do you find you only think that when you look back, or did you have a sense of it at the time?*

CM: No, not at the time, never at the time. It's only now, to be honest I don't think I've ever given it such an in-depth thought as talking to you now to be honest. A lot of things now are only just occurring to me that I'd never really thought about before.[66]

Conor conceded that the interview itself had led him to remember much of what he recounted, but his testimony also indicated the extent of his ongoing reflections about his time in Hulme. His statement 'once I got a bit older', suggested that he began to think of Hulme differently as he matured and his life experiences changed after leaving the estate – Conor was twenty when he moved to nearby Longsight in 1981 – and other contextual signs that repeated throughout his interview indicated something similar. He often evaluated his stories by comparing his perspective of Hulme as an adult in the present, with his past impressions as a child or teenager, most apparent in his use of the phrase 'looking back'. His perspective as a parent in particular, seemed to influence much of his reassessment of childhood, as the following extract demonstrates.

As a kid, it was a great place to live, but, see, looking back now, it would have been one of the last places I'd want to raise my kids. There was a lot of drugs, there was a lot of brothels and prostitutes. There was a lot of rapes and a lot of muggings and that sort of thing. They had quite a lot of serious crime and as a child you obviously don't take any notice, but it's only as you're older and you're looking back, you're thinking, I wouldn't have raised my kids in there, now.[67]

Conor's words speak to an important aspect of the interviewees' composition of their lived experiences. Thirteen of the eighteen participants in this project were children when they first encountered either Park Hill or Hulme. The structure of their narratives therefore followed wider understandings of the rise and fall of multi-storey council housing to a degree, but it also followed their life cycle. While interviewees recounted mostly positive memories of childhood, adulthood sparked a change of perspective. As Jenny had remarked in her interview, '[Hulme] was a lot of concrete, it was, when you think. But when you're a kid you don't think of it like that'.[68] Similarly, Carol's memories of Park Hill altered when she considered its community as an adult. 'Obviously as kids we made friends with people, other kids that we went to school with', Carol recounted, 'and Dad was [at work], but I think Mum found herself quite isolated as a young mum moving onto the

[66] *Ibid.*
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] Jenny Young interview.

flats'.[69] Although Carol herself found it easy to make connections with other local children, she recognised that the flats did not provide the same opportunities for her mother, who stayed at home alone throughout the day.

Unlike Carol, Alison's impression of the strength of Hulme's community had not waned over time. As a current resident at the time of her interview, Alison compared the past Hulme with its present to assert that, 'everybody knew each other [in Hulme] and everybody looked out for each other, really. When I let my kids go out now, I'm a bit worried, but years ago everybody knew each other'.[70] Yet Alison did not have a sense of how her parents had felt when they let her play out around the estate; whether they also had safety concerns from which Alison was shielded. Although Alison's mother had lived in Hulme before its post-war redevelopment and therefore knew several other residents, Alison played further afield than just the boundaries of the estate. Her view of Hulme's security was undoubtedly laced with nostalgia exacerbated by her memories of childhood, as her stories of violent crime on the estate indicated the limits of its safety as she grew older. It was a similar acknowledgement of Park Hill's increasing insecurity according to Lisa, as well as her perspective as a new mother, that ultimately led to her decision to relocate from the Sheffield flats permanently in the late 1980s, as she concluded, 'I can't bring my child up around all of this'.[71]

Mary's narrative represented a significant contrast to those interviewees who remembered Park Hill and Hulme from a child's perspective. Unlike the interviewees who moved to the flats as children, Mary did not offer a romantic account of her early years at Park Hill in the late 1960s. The flats exacerbated the constraints she felt as a wife and mother, 'closed in' by the built environment and the endurance of traditional expectations of women's role in the home.[72] Mary held her husband Tom responsible for the misery and isolation she experienced at Park Hill, so a conversation ostensibly rooted in her time on the estate also acted as a window into her marriage.[73] 'He preferred flats but he were at work all day, I was stuck in t' house while kids at school', Mary explained. 'He were at work all day. Afternoons he wouldn't get up until an hour before he were due to go. Home at 10 o' clock gone, then when he were on mornings up early, out at work, back home at gone two, back into bed he went. And I thought, no, he is alright in his own bloody way'.[74]

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[69] Carol Williams interview.
[70] Alison Reid, interview with author (11 March 2020).
[71] Lisa Crossley interview.
[72] Mary Thomas, interview with author (11 February 2019).
[73] *Ibid.* Mary's husbands' name has been altered.
[74] *Ibid.*

It was Mary's relationship with her husband that largely informed her narrative of Park Hill, not the estate's wider representation.

The family had moved to Park Hill after a series of storms – which Mary referred to as the 'Sheffield Gales' – damaged their house in Attercliffe. Tom had requested a transfer to the estate without consulting his wife first. According to Mary, the justification for his decision was threefold; he liked the look of the flats, his parents lived at Park Hill already, and it was closer to his work at the railway station. Moving to the estate separated Mary from the family and friends she knew in Attercliffe, none of whom followed them to the multi-storey flats, but she felt that she had little choice in the matter. As Mary explained,

> Only one who was on there [Park Hill] was Tom's parents, but they weren't from 'Cliffe, no. My next door neighbour [from Attercliffe] on her way from work one day – Tom had met her and brought her up – and as she was going out she said to me, 'Mary, what on earth made you come and live in a flat?' And I thought, 'you're right, Mrs Bradshaw'…I were gonna say: 'Him! He made me!' No, I wasn't happy there, you shut that door and that was it, you didn't see a soul.[75]

Mary lived at Park Hill for thirteen years before moving in 1975 to the house in Darnall where she still lives today, alone since Tom's death in 1977, only two years after relocating. Her account of leaving the flats functioned as what Abrams has termed an 'epiphanic moment' in Mary's narrative, defined as 'an event or incident in the life story which presages a real life change', enabling the narrator to '[compose] a life story that pivots around a particular incident or life choice'.[76] Leaving the flats heralded the start of a new period of Mary's life, involving new friends and neighbours and marking the end of the isolation she felt as a young mother, but her account of her instigation of the relocation process itself also acted as a narrative precursor to the beginnings of Mary's independence from Tom.

> MT: After a while, I decided I were moving and got this house.
>
> IC: *How did you go about getting this house?*
>
> MT: It were advertised that they were building a new estate in Darnall and I knew then that you could put your name down on a list. So, I put my – well, Tom's name, I put his name down – and my sister-in-law put my brother's name down. Well, you had to fill a form in,

[75] *Ibid.* Mary's neighbour's name has been altered.

[76] Lynn Abrams, 'Liberating the female self: epiphanies, conflict and coherence in the life stories of post-war British women', *Social History*, 39/1 (2014), p. 22.

> and he were a clever bugger that husband, and he'd wrote on it: 'I like the flats, but it appears my wife doesn't so we're going to move aren't we', and I thought you clever sod, them at Town Hall reading that they'll think 'oh she's a right ner making him move'. If he hadn't have wanted to come here that bad, he wouldn't have come! But he came and then he had a stroke a couple of years after, so, and I thought it'd have been alright on the flats having a stroke – upstairs to your living room! No. But we were contented with house, and that were that.[77]

This time, Mary made the decision to relocate – 'I decided I were moving', she said – and she worked with her sister-in-law (who did not live at Park Hill) to ensure that members of her family could live nearby too. The council accepted their transfer requests, offering them houses in Darnall. Both families moved to the same street, only four doors down from each other. Again, this time, it was Mary's relatives who were close at hand, while Tom's stayed at Park Hill. Although Mary conceded that, had Tom decided against the move, they too would have remained at Park Hill, her account of their move to Darnall represented the moment at which Mary became an autonomous actor in her own narrative. Her determination bookended the story quoted above, 'I decided I were moving', she began, before ending with 'and that were that'.[78] Park Hill functioned as a turning point in her life story, with Mary's move to and from the flats symbolic of her initial submission to, and the later beginnings of her extrication from, her husband's control. The estate therefore acted as a backdrop to a more personal account of the development of Mary's sense of self up to the present day. Without expressing any attachment to the estate, Mary made no attempts to either reinforce or dispel its stigmatisation. While interviewees more concerned with the estate's dominant historical construction described a Park Hill saturated with nostalgia for a sense of community, belonging, and childhood now gone, Mary's experience as an adult resident distanced her narrative from this perspective.

In comparison to Mary, Shaima actively cultivated distinctions between her account of Hulme and the estate's typical representation. As noted in the previous chapter, Shaima's time in Hulme deviated from most other interviewees because she had lived in a traditional, low-rise house, rather than one of the estate's multi-storey flats. While this difference in perspective enabled Shaima to outline socio-spatial boundaries between parts of Hulme, she also used it to differentiate between who could, and to some extent *should*, speak for its lived experience. At first, however, it seemed as if Shaima doubted the relevance of her contribution to this project. At the very start of

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[77] Mary Thomas interview.
[78] *Ibid.*

her interview, she revealed that she had not lived in multi-storey council housing and asked if the recording would still take place.[79] Shaima had answered a call for participants on social media that did not explicitly state that respondents should have experience of multi-storey living, stipulating only that they had lived in Hulme at some point between the 1960s and the 1990s. While the preponderance of deck-access flats and tower blocks on the estate meant that most respondents would likely have experience of some form of multi-storey council housing without the call for participants needing to state this directly, there remained ample scope for the inclusion of other perspectives.

However, Shaima knew that the project focused predominantly on experiences of multi-storey living because she had researched it online before the interview took place. If she had truly questioned the relevance of her account of Hulme, it is unlikely that she would have waited until the recording had already begun to voice her hesitation. Instead, Shaima sought to use the interview as an opportunity to shift the project's focus away from Hulme's multi-storey flats, to a history of the estate in its entirety, as well as its connections to other parts of Manchester. For Shaima, wider perceptions of Hulme too often focused upon areas like the Crescents, obscuring the experiences of those tenants who had little interaction with these spaces. Yet, initially, her opinion on this matter lay silent. Shaima talked about her family, friends and school years, her connections to people and spaces of the city transcending the boundaries of Hulme so that her lived experience intermingled also with areas like Rusholme and Longsight.[80] Moreover, Shaima's presentation of Hulme focused less upon the built environment than those of the interviewees who had lived in multi-storey flats. By offering a broader depiction of Hulme, Shaima used her narrative to subtly redefine the parameters of its study, looking back at the decades she spent on the estate in relation to her experience of the wider city, rather than solely through the lens of certain spaces like the Crescents.

The intentions behind this narrative structure became apparent during a conversation about the objectives of this research project. Alongside her interest in the subject matter, Shaima stated that she wanted to participate because she believed that she could make a valuable contribution to the research based on her memories of having 'lived there all those years'.[81] However, she also wanted to know more about the project's approach to studying Hulme. 'The only question I have', she stated, 'is what made you think of Hulme and the housing there really,

[79] Shaima Walsh, interview with author (26 February 2020).
[80] *Ibid.*
[81] *Ibid.*

what's your take?'[82] When I explained that, before even beginning the PhD, I had come across the estate through accounts of the Crescents, and had initially failed to realise that those blocks of flats constituted only one part of a much larger estate, this seemed to strike a nerve with Shaima. She responded,

> I think most people are [surprised to discover that Hulme is more than just the Crescents], because when you say, 'I lived in Hulme', they say, 'oh, in the Crescents?' [I say] 'No, in the houses near the brewery'. [They say] 'Oh, I didn't know there was any houses near the brewery, are they still there?' [I say] 'Yeah they are actually'. [They say] 'Oh, when were they built?' [I say] 'Sort of '67/'68, I think Dad said they were being built in '68, because I was born in '68 and then we moved in '69 from Ardwick.[83]

During her account of this conversation – partly hypothetical and partly rooted in reality – Shaima's tone grew more defensive, revealing her frustration with limited perspectives of Hulme. Using reported speech, she emphasised the extent of her expertise concerning the estate, positioning herself as an authoritative voice on its lived experience relative to non-residents, whose questions only revealed their comparative lack of knowledge. Shaima's everyday encounters with those who had not lived in Hulme show that she had already formed an opinion about how people remembered the estate of the late twentieth century, which she evidently found wanting.

That histories of the post-war Hulme typically divide its chronology into pre- and post-redevelopment, despite the survival of areas of low-rise housing built in the 1960s up to the present day, also represented a point of contention for Shaima. This became apparent in her increasingly clipped responses to questions about the end of her time in Hulme, posed towards the end of the interview. For the most part, the conversation had flowed well, with Shaima settling into the rhythm of the interview and offering long anecdotes in response to relatively short – even sometimes closed – questions. In the context of the broader interview, her answers to the following questions therefore marked a significant shift in narrative style.

IC: *When did you live in Hulme until?*

SW: 1999.

IC: *Did you stay in the same house the entire time?*

SW: [nods head].

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[82] *Ibid.*
[83] *Ibid.*

IC: *Yeah? So, your house wasn't actually demolished with the redevelopment?*

SW: No. And it still stands. It's still in the family and my brother owns it and he rents it out.

Abrams has suggested that participants switch between narrative styles – responding with short or detailed answers to questions asked at separate points in the interview – due to their judgement of the historical importance of different parts of their narrative. Following this, if an interviewee does not consider a particular detail significant, they could simply choose not to elaborate upon it.[84] Shaima may well have viewed this information as banal, perhaps even self-evident after her earlier comments about how the 'houses near the brewery' are still standing.

However, viewed once more in the context of Shaima's interview as a whole, her narrative shift takes on an added degree of significance. Shaima had already established that she saw the typical presentation of Hulme's history as inadequate, so it was important for her to emphasise the distinctiveness of her lived experience in comparison to both other residents and its dominant representation. It therefore seems more likely that the shortness of her responses again indicated her frustration with understandings of the wider estate. According to Shaima, the limitations of the lived experience most associated with Hulme by non-residents and culturally produced discourses had only enhanced the marginalisation of residents' voices like hers, people without any social or spatial connections to the areas at the heart of the estate's stigmatisation. Her narrative represented an opportunity to correct this apparent imbalance. Former residents evidently possessed ideas as to who should speak for these multi-storey estates. After voicing claims to the contrary and attempting to stress the representativeness of their individual accounts, interviewees still deployed a selective approach to narrating their lived experience.

Who speaks for Hulme and Park Hill? Narratives of authenticity and belonging

In attempting to balance different perspectives of Park Hill and Hulme, interviewees shaped their narratives according to judgements over who is entitled to speak for each estate. The criteria that underpinned such decisions fluctuated between participants, dependent to differing degrees upon the timing and duration of residents' tenancies, and even their location within the estates. What united the narratives of each interviewee was the desire to present their version of lived experience as authentic, however defined. This sense of authenticity, entwined with understandings of class,

[84] Abrams, *Oral History Theory,* p. 125.

allowed former residents to stress the validity of their accounts relative to others.[85] It rendered tenants the keepers of estate histories rather than the media who represented them, the authorities that managed them, and the researchers who study them. By asserting the authenticity of their own narratives, and concurrently dismissing contradictory depictions of everyday life, interviewees strengthened their ties to Park Hill and Hulme, claiming a sense of belonging to the estates predicated upon the selective inclusion and marginalisation of other perspectives.

This too influenced the process of the oral history interview. Despite the long-held concerns of some residents, who scorned what they referred to as 'the goldfish bowl approach' adopted by academics seeking to study these estates, interviewees openly ascribed notions of authenticity to my research into Park Hill and Hulme to justify their participation.[86] For Louise, it was important to talk about her time in Manchester with someone who was 'genuinely interested', while, for Jenny, it was my 'genuine' call for participants that prompted her to respond.[87] Some former residents, like Martin, could not understand how tenants' perspectives of a place like Park Hill could form the basis of a research project, but nevertheless tried to promote my work amongst his contacts from the estate.[88] Interviewees' reactions to the rationale for the project – advertised as an attempt to collect residents' experiences of Park Hill and Hulme – as well as myself as the interviewer, indicate the presence of insider/outsider dynamics at work before, during and after the interview itself, to which respondents' understandings of authenticity were key.[89]

Lee-Ann's testimony functions as a useful example of the ways in which interviewees used claims to authenticity to underscore their belonging to an estate. As a local Labour councillor at the time of writing, much of Lee-Ann's professional role involved working with local people to promote social cohesion in Hulme, an ambition to which she saw stories of its past as integral. Yet, as Lee-Ann described, this did not stop her from making distinctions between those residents she saw as being 'from' Hulme and those she regarded as recent additions to the area. Lee-Ann explained,

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[85] On the links between class and ideas of authenticity, see Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference in England, 1968-2000* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 204-206.

[86] For Hulme tenants' concerns over their study by experts see Alan Dunn, 'Tear down our flats – say residents', *The Guardian,* 28 October 1977; Manchester Archives (hereafter MA): GB127.M781, Hulme Views Project, *Hulme Views, Self Portraits: Writing and Photographs by Hulme People* (Manchester, 1990).

[87] Louise Miller, interview with author (25 February 2020); Jenny Young interview.

[88] Martin Wood, interview with author (23 November 2018).

[89] On intersubjectivity and the idea of a 'shared authority' between the interviewee and interviewer, see Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York, 1990).

LI: We do know when you're not one of us. You've lived here twenty years and we'll go 'well you're not from Hulme'. [They'll say] 'Yeah we've lived here twenty years!' [We'll say] 'So? You're not [from Hulme]'. We are very ownership.

IC: *How do you mean?*

LI: So, we'll go 'yeah, you've lived here twenty years, but you're not from *Hulme* Hulme'. So, we'll go, 'well, you're not born here, you're not from here. You've moved here, that's different'. [They'll say] 'So, we're not a Hulme person?' [We'll say] 'No, you're like an extension of us'. [They'll say] 'Yeah but I'm from Hulme'. [We'll say] 'No, you live in Hulme, there's a difference'.[90]

Lee-Ann was born in Hulme in 1970 and has lived in the area for her entire life. Her account of Hulme evoked two distinct places: the mass, multi-storey estate in which she grew up in the 1970s, 1980s and early 1990s, and the more traditional, low-rise development of the past three decades. Her affiliation with Hulme in its earlier form engendered what she experienced as feelings of 'ownership', prompting Lee-Ann to declare 'you're not one of us' to later inhabitants, an assertion that she later identified in more detail as connected to a specific sense of 'working-class ownership' to the area.[91] The classed connotations of Lee-Ann's conception of belonging to Hulme saw her adapt another aspect of the estate's typical representation, adding to the division of 'before and after redevelopment' another dichotomy of 'us' and 'them'. By referring to class in this way, Lee-Ann's narrative evoked what Doreen Massey has termed a 'timeless authenticity', in which a particular place is perceived as an inherently working-class area regardless of any subsequent changes to its population and socioeconomic base.[92] As Massey's work showed, this often led to the exclusion of those groups deemed unable to claim 'exclusive ownership or right to live in that place'.[93]

Laughing, Lee-Ann acknowledged this process during her interview when she conceded, 'we have to stop doing this', but she went on to explain why she felt it was important to distinguish between groups of residents based on their time in Hulme.

I love where I live, and I think that's because we've been through so much. I'm proud of it. And people say, 'what are you proud of it for?' And then I go, 'this'. And I go, 'this is why I'm proud of it, and we came through it. We came through the worst times, we didn't even

[90] Lee-Ann Igbon, interview with author (24 November 2019).
[91] *Ibid.*
[92] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 121-122.
[93] *Ibid.,* p. 122.

> know they were the worst times. We've come out of it, we're here, look at us'. You know lots of us have strived, and I have to say to people 'no, they live in Hulme', but as I say that's just us, our working-class ownership of Hulme – 'no, you're not us' – so you have to say that.[94]

Lee-Ann's affiliation with Hulme in its earlier, seemingly more authentic form, was evidently tied to its deprivation. She repeatedly referred to Hulme as the 'worst' during her interview, twice stating that it had once been considered 'the worst ward in Europe' – a similar claim to that repeated by the press – and avowing that the estate in the 1980s was 'the worst it could ever be'.[95] By amplifying the struggles of her time in Hulme and connecting them to her sense of belonging to the area, Lee-Ann staked a claim to lived experience that overshadowed any others; one that echoed its external representation to an extent, but conferred a degree of expertise upon its past – even 'original' – residents as the rightful narrators of the estate's history.[96] Even concentrating upon aspects of her life that did not necessarily generate 'positive' memories, Lee-Ann's account of Hulme's past and present deployed a form of nostalgia that allowed her to create 'contemporary social boundaries' between older and later groups of residents.[97] Hardship underscored experiences that only longer-term Hulme tenants could share. This in turn, led to the minimisation of inequalities still experienced by local people. A 'Neighbourhood Profile' undertaken by Manchester City Council in 2016 indicated that residents of Hulme continue to struggle with low rates of unemployment, educational achievement, and a greater proportion of health problems relative to the rest of England.[98] Many of the signs of deprivation cited by the local authority in the late twentieth century have yet to recede from the area entirely, despite changes to the built environment.

Despite this selective marginalisation of some tenant perspectives, Lee-Ann also portrayed Hulme as an area of racial tolerance. She recounted how, in the 1980s, a Sri Lankan student and Hulme resident named Viraj Mendis found himself at the centre of a heated local debate when he outstayed the length of his visa. To avoid deportation to Sri Lanka, where Mendis feared he would

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[94] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

[95] *Ibid.* For examples of press coverage on Hulme as the 'worst' housing estate in Europe, see, Alfred Gibbon, 'Close-Up: The Concrete Jungle', *Daily Mirror*, 28 October 1977; Carl Palmer, 'Heseltine 'hijack' bid by shuttle pair', *Manchester Evening News*, 18 June 1991; Deborah McCaughley, 'No place like Hulme: Housing dream that became a nightmare', *Manchester Metro News*, 24 April 1992; 'Street party time to 'warm' estate', *Manchester Metro News*, 17 June 1994; Janine Watson, 'Hulme, sweet Hulme, as bids flow in', *Manchester Evening News*, 1 November 1994.

[96] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

[97] Mike Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method* (Oxford, 2010), p. 24.

[98] Manchester Health and Care Commissioning, *Neighbourhood Profile: Hulme, Moss Side and Rusholme* (2016), https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/6530/neighbourhood_profile_-_hulme_moss_side_and_rusholme [accessed 15 February 2021].

face swift retribution for his political views, he sought refuge in Hulme's Church of the Ascension between December 1986 and January 1989 by claiming the right of sanctuary.[99] Prior to this, local people had already rallied to his defence, organising campaigns, marches, and draping banners from multi-storey flats to raise awareness of his right to remain, including Lee-Ann herself.[100] Although eventually removed from the church by police and deported, the support Mendis received from Hulme tenants and other local people during his sanctuary, has since become part of the estate's folklore, which Lee-Ann was keen to highlight in her interview. 'That brought a lot of the community [together]', Lee-Ann recalled, 'it's like everybody started gelling', even at a time when the estate's student population was increasing, as Lee-Ann went on to explain.[101] Lee-Ann used Mendis's story in her interview to emphasise the resilience and inclusivity of the estate's community against adversity during the late twentieth century.[102]

Of the Hulme participants, only Alison and Lee-Ann cannot be described as 'former' residents. In Lee-Ann's case, the length of her tenure has also considerably influenced her presentation of the estate. Yet, as the accounts of other interviewees showed, geographical distance from Hulme over the course of their lifetimes has not lessened the extent to which some former residents still consider themselves as 'belonging to' Hulme. During her interview, Jenny repeatedly emphasised her ongoing connections to the area in which she grew up, ties that bridged both her distance from Hulme and the length of time she has spent living elsewhere. In fact, it seemed that the aspects of her life today that separate her from the estate only led Jenny to further amplify her identification with Hulme, as she sought to stress the authenticity of her account by articulating her feelings of belonging. As Jenny described,

> I moved eight miles away to a little town, it's called Failsworth. It's not far away. They [her family] called me the snob of the family, just because I moved out, I got married. The day I got married, I moved into my new house, and they said I did everything 'properly', in brackets. So yeah, white wedding, Dad gave me away at the church, we had a posh do, I got my house. But I still went back, still go back [to Hulme].[103]

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[99] Mendis supported the Tamil People and was a member of the Revolutionary Communist Group. For more information, see Janet Batsleer, 'The Viraj Mendis Defence Campaign: struggles and experiences of sanctuary', *Critical Social Policy,* 8/22 (1988), pp. 72–79.

[100] MA/Q942.733913HU169, *Octopus: The Hulme Magazine,* No. 9, November 1984; *Octopus: The Hulme Magazine,* No. 27, June 1987; Batsleer, 'Viraj Mendis', p. 78.

[101] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

[102] *Ibid.*

[103] Jenny Young interview.

Although not spoken of directly, ideas of class permeated Jenny's words. As her family said – and Jenny seemed to agree – she 'did everything properly', with her relocation, 'white wedding', and home ownership functioning as key markers to differentiate her narrative from those of other Hulme residents. That these events also set Jenny apart is evident in her recollection that she became known as 'the snob of the family', a label that Jenny considered undeserved 'just because' she moved away from the area in which her father and sister still live today. Moreover, that Jenny's family associated her upward social mobility with 'snobbishness' – a claim Jenny was quick to contest with references to Hulme as evidence of her 'roots' – indicates the ways in which ideas of authenticity had begun to underpin working-class identities by the end of the twentieth century. As Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite argued, this shift saw people like Jenny associate their classed identity with 'heritage', rather than politics.[104]

As such, accusations of snobbery, however playfully made, saw Jenny emphasise her ties to the estate in response. She insisted, 'I still went back, still go back', using her prolonged contact with Hulme to counter the reality of her distance.[105] Through this communication of her enduring identification with the estate, Jenny conjured what Mike Savage has referred to as an 'enchanted landscape', through which individuals are able to situate their 'claims of class identity' in relation to a particular place *because of* their movement elsewhere.[106] Despite evidence of her geographic and social mobility, Jenny sought to counter aspects of her separation from Hulme with the avowal of being 'from' the area, asserting a classed and place-based sense of authenticity in her narrative of lived experience that recurred throughout her interview. She explored this dynamic in more detail in relation to her ongoing feelings of pride in the local area.

> JY: I was always proud of Hulme, always proud. If I [was] ever sitting on the bus, going to school and someone said, 'where do you live?' I'd say, 'Hulme'. They're like, 'ooh' [affecting a surprised tone of voice]. I've always been proud of where I'm from.
>
> IC: *Why do you think that is?*
>
> JY: Because I knew nothing different. I was born, bred, brought up in Hulme. Even my dad, my dad's from Hulme originally, way back when. He was brought up in Hulme. And even like, I had a white wedding, not many people did that. I left home, got married, bought my own house. I went to university. I was the first batch out of my family to go to university.

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[104] Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference*, p. 205.

[105] Living eight miles away from Hulme, the extent of Jenny's distance constituted a twenty-five minute journey by car, but this seemed further according to the members of her family who cannot drive, with public transport adding another half an hour to the trip.

[106] Savage, *Identities and Social Change,* p. 242.

> So, they were proud that I've been able to do that. So yeah, I just think it's just, I didn't know anything different. And even now, I go to Hulme every single Sunday. I go to see my dad every single Sunday. And just driving over the Mancunian Way, coming off the slip road, coming to my dad's, it's home. I'm going to my dad's but it's still home. Even though I've not grown up in that house it's still home, it's my roots.[107]

Jenny evidently saw her relocation from Hulme as having facilitated aspects of her social mobility, but this did not circumscribe her feelings of belonging to the area and its influence over her identity. Rather, she attempted to consolidate her claims to the estate by highlighting their longevity, evoking her father's longstanding connection to Hulme as well as the fact that she was 'born, bred, brought up' on the estate. That she spent the first six months of her life living in a different area of Manchester mattered little to Jenny's self-representation; Hulme was the first place that she recognised as home and thus she discounted any of her previous affiliations in her narrative. In fact, as she stated repeatedly, Hulme is 'still home', her attachment predicated upon the area of the estate itself and the memories associated with it, not just the flat in which she lived during her childhood.

Paul's presentation of his identification with Park Hill followed a similar approach. Paul's arrival at Park Hill in 1961, aged ten, was atypical in comparison with the other interviewees who were children when they moved to the estate. Describing himself as a 'sickly child', Paul struggled with various illnesses exacerbated by the back-to-back housing 'infested with damp' where he was born in Pitsmoor in 1951. His health problems led his parents to send him away from Sheffield aged seven, to an 'open air school' near to Epping Forest in Essex, where he remained for three years. When Paul returned to Sheffield, his family had relocated to a new, multi-storey flat at Park Hill. Paul used several narrative strategies during his interview to emphasise the authenticity of his account and his expertise regarding the estate's history. For example, he demonstrated an expansive knowledge of the flats' layout and architectural design throughout his account, founded not only upon his experience as a resident but also his research into the estate and post-war housing more broadly since.[108] He frequently used this to emphasise the extent of his historical understanding relative to mine as the researcher. Despite having explained at the start of the interview that this project was the product of earlier research focusing exclusively on Park Hill, Paul's initial approach to the interview functioned akin to a lesson, as he sought to teach me about the estate's history. Only as the interview progressed, and he began to veer from this 'stock

[107] Jenny Young interview.
[108] Paul Brown interview.

narrative', did he begin to recount a more personal version of events. Nevertheless, his tendency to expand upon historical developments remained, as he offered explanations of aspects of housing in the post-war period like slum clearance and the Right to Buy, negating any of my prior research into Park Hill.[109]

Another way in which Paul sought to strengthen his claim to authenticity was through his voice, or, more specifically, his accent. This was a conscious process for Paul, as he referred overtly to his accent and turns of phrase particular to Sheffield or Yorkshire, from the start of the interview. Having left Sheffield in 1980 and lived in Lincolnshire – or 'down south' as he called it – ever since, like Jenny, Paul used his identification with Park Hill to minimise his distance from the area of his childhood and teenage years. As a child, his accent had caused other children on the estate to view Paul as an outsider, an accusation that Paul was keen to show he had disputed.

> Well, the first thing that happened at Park Hill was that I came back with a Cockney accent, because I'd been in Essex two years, eight months, best part of three years, I had a Cockney accent. And as a child, I was approached on numerous occasions by other kids my age or a little older, saying they wanted to fight me because I talked funny…As I said, you learned to look after yourself [at Park Hill], and eventually the Cockney accent disappeared. But you see, I was different, I didn't speak like everybody else and young kids don't like different and they can be quite, you know, like aggressive. Or they could in those days.[110]

Despite attempting to overcome his separation from Park Hill through his knowledge of the flats and the markers of his identity that connected him to Sheffield, Paul did not position his narrative entirely in relation to the estate. Again, like Jenny, Paul used examples of his spatial and social mobility to emphasise his distinction from other past residents of Park Hill. Sometimes this was something that he demonstrated overtly in his visits to friends after leaving Sheffield. Paul described how he would often return to Park Hill in the 1980s to 'show off' his new cars, because he felt like he had 'made it' by that point in his life; a point at which he saw the estate itself as having 'gone downhill'.[111] Nevertheless, Paul also wanted to show through his return visits that he was 'still one of the lads', revealing his reluctance to differentiate himself from Park Hill completely.

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[109] In response, I often kept quiet, avoiding any reassertion of the extent of my studies in case this led Paul to modify his account. In so doing I followed the approach discussed in Rebecca Roach, '"Three words you must never say": Hermione Lee on interviewing', *Biography,* 41/2 (2018), p. 283. The three forbidden words being 'yes, I know'.

[110] Paul Brown interview.

[111] *Ibid.*

Even when interviewees were not so overt in their attempts to emphasise their connections to the multi-storey estates, aspects of their testimonies relating to non-residents revealed the depths of their attachment to Park Hill and Hulme. During his interview, Martin told a story about an old colleague who claimed to have lived on the Sheffield estate. The way in which Martin narrated the story, including his reactions to his colleague's assertions, indicates the extent to which long-held ideas of Park Hill's community and deprivation had the power to shape interviewees' understandings of authenticity and who should speak for the lived experience of the estate.

> There were some rough characters on Park Hill who grew up to be quite rough people, and well-known hard men of our time. But I think this character wanted to be – this guy at [Martin's workplace] – wanted to be part of that. I can't really understand it. And he said he grew up on Park Hill and yet nobody knew him, but everybody knew everybody else, so we knew he didn't grow up on Park Hill…I think it had some sort of aura for certain people, because they wanted it to be known they'd come off there, but they didn't. And he weren't the only one, there were several other people.[112]

Steadfast in his refutation of his colleague's claims to residency at Park Hill, Martin relied upon his memories of the estate's community to underpin his dismissal, remaining adamant that, because 'everybody knew everybody else', this man could not have lived at the Sheffield estate. His claims of familiarity were not uncommon among interviewees, with some former residents using them to stress the strength of Park Hill's community to undercut wider representations of its decline. Yet, with nearly 1,000 flats able to house over 3,000 residents, and notwithstanding the movement of people to and from the estate, it is unlikely that interviewees knew every person who lived at Park Hill during their tenancy.[113] Martin's account, however, paid attention to a certain timeframe, disputing the fact that his colleague 'grew up' at Park Hill and seeming to ignore the possibility that he may have moved to the flats after Martin himself left in 1986. His narrative suggested that only those people who lived on the estate as children and young adults could claim to have belonged to Park Hill, ascribing a personal set of criteria to narratives of lived experience rooted in his perceptions of their validity and authenticity.

Understandings of deprivation also played an integral role in the formation of these perceptions. Martin began his story by recounting how 'there were some rough characters at Park

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[112] Martin Wood interview.

[113] Sheffield Local Studies Library (hereafter SLSL): 331.833 SQ, Corporation of Sheffield Housing Development Committee, *Ten Years of Housing in Sheffield, 1953-1963* (Sheffield, 1962), p. 41.

Hill, who grew up to be quite rough people', men who eventually became 'well-known hard men' as a result.[114] Here, Martin evoked a gendered account lived experience, one that sought to explain why men in particular tried to attach themselves to Park Hill following its later association with crime and disorder. His narrative echoed aspects of Paul's, who described Park Hill in similar terms, referring to the estate as the 'wild west' and 'a hard place – full of working-class people'.[115] Both interviewees used statements like this to position themselves as authentic voices of experience, their assurance in the expertise of their narratives grounded in notions of place, class and gender. In highlighting his colleague's separation from Park Hill and thereby silencing his claim to the estate's lived experience, Martin emphasised the comparative validity of his narrative and belonging to the estate. Moreover, despite claiming that he 'can't really understand' why some men wanted to associate themselves with Park Hill, Martin also used the estate's reputation for 'rough' and 'hard' people to underscore aspects of his self-identification. Again, Paul adopted a similar approach, explaining that, 'you had to find your station, where you were, and you had to be able to look after yourself and if you could, you were respected. And with our family, we were a respected family on Park Hill'.[116]

These interviews demonstrate how statements of authenticity and belonging were often predicated upon exclusion. For some former residents, however, their identification with the estates was not quite so durable. While those interviewees established at Park Hill and Hulme for a considerable length of time used claims of authenticity to assert their belonging to the multi-storey estates, shorter-term tenants did not necessarily share their approach. Anthony and Louise, students who lived in Hulme for two and five years respectively, had only a short-lived association with the estate. Despite his fond memories, Anthony recalled little more than a peripheral sense of belonging to Hulme, his narrative clearly delineating himself and his fellow students from its longer-term residents. His account framed Hulme in relation to the other places in which he had lived, such as the suburban village of Greater Manchester where he grew up, and the area to which he moved after leaving Hulme. Unlike those residents who claimed to be 'born, bred and brought up' on the estate, Anthony's sense of belonging fluctuated in line with his spatial and social mobility, as he acknowledged that he felt 'pretty good' about moving away from the flats to buy a house, something he had anticipated once his student days were over.[117]

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[114] Martin Wood interview.
[115] Paul Brown interview.
[116] *Ibid.*
[117] Anthony Clark, interview with author (3 December 2019).

While Louise's feelings of belonging to Hulme seemed grounded in a similar sense of peripherality, this did not stop her from feeling 'involved' in the estate's goings-on. As she explained,

> There was a kind of community vibe. There were lots of things going on, not that I was necessarily involved other than as a by-stander, I suppose, in some of them. But there were community projects, it was a time of grassroots action, if that doesn't sound too right-on, there were lots of things that still go on like Reclaim the Night and those kinds of things. You felt really involved in them and supportive of them, you kind of felt enmeshed in those sorts of things, which I don't tend really to see anymore.[118]

Here, Louise acknowledged her separation from the 'community' to an extent, but felt some identification with its values. Her tenure in Hulme, from 1980 to 1985, encompassed years that saw the growth of the estate's student population, as well as the transient young tenants who, in part, earned Hulme its later reputation as home to a 'population of alternatives'.[119]

Louise's remark as to the waning of 'grassroots action' is indicative of the final approach adopted by former residents to proclaim the authenticity of their accounts of lived experience. Discussions of community, rooted in ideas of class, saw interviewees use their narratives to immortalise aspects of the estates in their late twentieth-century incarnations. Due to the long shadow cast by the mythologisation of Hulme, Park Hill and traditional forms of 'community', several interviewees depicted the estates now, and present-day society more broadly, through the lens of a sense of loss. With his younger brother still living locally, Jason often makes the trip back to see Hulme, but his view of the area has altered significantly. As he explained, 'it's really, really sad, the way it's changed. Really sad…There's no respect at all. Everybody's out for themselves'.[120] For Karen, leaving Park Hill meant leaving behind a community network that she has not been part of since. 'I still don't [know the neighbours]', she said. 'Someone will say to me 'yeah, so and so' and I'll go 'who's that then?' And I've lived round here 31 years'.[121]

Describing Hulme then and now, Stephanie said, 'it was very much that sort of community, so in that way people looked out for each other, just naturally…[The community was] very different to how it is now, very, very different'.[122] Mary, on the other hand, took a longer-term

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[118] Louise Miller interview.
[119] Owen Hatherley, *A Guide to the New Ruins of Great Britain* (London, 2010), p. 126.
[120] Jason Shaw interview.
[121] Karen Hill interview.
[122] Stephanie Palmer interview.

view of community decline since the twentieth century more broadly, looking back to her childhood in Attercliffe before her time at Park Hill. 'It weren't like nowadays, [when] everyone wants to be better than next', Mary stated. 'All of us had no money so nobody were better than your next door neighbour, you were struggling and that was it. But you live anyhow, you got through it'.[123] Conor implicitly linked the loss of community to his perception of the role of gentrification in Hulme's redevelopment, remarking, 'it looks like they've done a good job on it. I just hope they've kept local people on it and not put a load of yuppies on it'.[124] By referencing the individualism, seclusion, and competitiveness seemingly characteristic of neighbourhoods today, these interviewees only enhanced historic, and thereby seemingly more authentic, forms of community often deemed lost in the present.

For Hulme tenants, the estate's ethnic diversity also functioned as a key marker of its past community. Interviewees recounted stories that proclaimed the impartiality and accepting nature of Hulme's local population relative to other parts of Manchester and even post-war Britain more broadly, adapting understandings of the estate's association with demographic characteristics ascribed to areas of the 'inner city' to claim their membership of a racially tolerant community.[125] Lee-Ann explained her view of Hulme's community between the 1970s and the 1990s,

> When my gran married my grandad she got disowned because she married a black man but where we lived, every other house was a black family, so we all just got on and it wasn't obvious and I never remember people saying 'n-word', 'black bastard' where we lived but you heard it in other areas. It wasn't [like] that, everybody was friends, you were friends with other people, and I think that's because everybody was in the same boat'.[126]

Lee-Ann saw the shared experience of deprivation as having eclipsed differences between residents based on ethnicity, her account suggesting a sense of almost colour blindness amidst members of Hulme's population.[127] Her account 'othered' racism as something that took place elsewhere, whereas in Hulme, 'everybody was friends'.[128]

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[123] Mary Thomas interview.

[124] Conor McShane interview.

[125] Stephanie and Alison both emphasised the racial tolerance of Hulme relative to that experienced on a visit to Rhyl in Wales, while Conor drew comparisons between Hulme and his later experience of Belfast. Stephanie Palmer interview; Alison Reid interview; Conor McShane interview.

[126] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

[127] On narratives of 'colour-blindness' see Chris Weedon, *Identity and culture: narratives of difference and belonging* (Maidenhead, 2004), 63.

[128] Lee-Ann Igbon interview.

These understandings of Hulme's community shaped interviewees' conception of belonging to the estate, particularly when they experienced housing in other areas. As Conor described,

> We moved up to Gorton and honest to God I couldn't believe it, looking back, at the time it felt really strange, really, really strange. It felt like I'd moved to a completely different city, and at the time I just didn't understand what it was. It was only when I moved to Belfast that I realised I was moving into an all-white area. And it just felt really strange because you know I was so used to black and Asians and you know, Irish people and all the rest. It was such a big mix [in Hulme].[129]

In citing the ethnic diversity of Hulme's population, these interviewees imbued their approach to authenticity with ideas of both class and ethnicity, drawing upon wider discourses relating to multi-storey estates in the inner city to rework aspects of Hulme's discursive construction in their narratives of lived experience. Some tenants, like Jason, specifically referred to Hulme's association with the inner city as a marker of belonging, but this did not obscure his complex relationship to the term. As Jason stated, 'I'm just, well, inner city, but not, like. I hate the city'. Despite this, Jason acknowledged that Hulme's labelling as an inner-city area had helped him to achieve a degree of social and spatial mobility, with his first job with the Hulme Sports Programme deriving from inner-city funding and leading to work opportunities that ultimately facilitated his relocation away from the estate to begin his adult life elsewhere.[130] Conversely, Hulme represented a chance for a more liberated way of life for tenants like Louise, who already possessed the financial resources to leave the estate when she pleased. For Louise, moving to the Hulme in the 1980s was 'exciting' because it represented an opportunity for her to live 'somewhere proper inner city'. As she elaborated, this was a place that was 'a little bit scary' and at odds with her 'straitlaced' upbringing in rural Worcestershire.[131] In differentiating between Hulme and the area where she had lived before moving to the estate, Louise used the term 'inner city' to ascribe a sense of authenticity to Hulme, but rendered this separate from ideas of belonging.

Shaima's account speaks to tensions in participants' negotiation of belonging and experiences overtly framed by discussions of race and ethnicity. Although Shaima narrated largely positive memories of Hulme, parts of her testimony shed light on a number of difficult experiences. Shaima was from a Pakistani family, and recalled how there were 'a few issues, you know, racism,

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[129] Conor McShane interview.
[130] Jason Shaw interview.
[131] Louise Miller interview.

things like that', that she encountered growing up on the estate. 'I'd get picked on, on the way home from school, or stopped. But I'd have my siblings who would help me out'.[132] Shaima consistently sought to downplay the role of racism in her narrative, even when more details arose as the interview continued, as the following extract indicates.

> There was one boy on the estate, he had lots of brothers, I think he had one sister…he was a bit of a – he wasn't that nice, he used to call me names…[she recalls a confrontation between him and her older sister], [her sister] was like 'well, where are your ancestors from?!' She went absolutely mad because she was very high on politics and stuff like that…he never did [anything like that again]. Then there was one girl, she was nasty, she weren't racist, she just stopped me, she just picked on me for something…The majority of kids in the class were West Indian or white. In my class there was only me and one boy who were Asian. There weren't that many because there weren't that many on the estate where we were.[133]

Here, Shaima only referred to racism implicitly in her account of the confrontation between her sister and a boy from school and dismissed its centrality to the story somewhat by attributing her sister's reaction to her being 'high on politics'. Moreover, although she could not identify why another girl 'picked on' her, she refused to associate this intimidation with racism, affirming instead that 'she was nasty, she weren't racist'.[134] Shaima emphasised instead Hulme's overall 'community feel' to negate the influence of these conflicts in her presentation of lived experience. In so doing, Shaima's account mirrored those of other participants of black and minority ethnic backgrounds, who described Hulme as a place of racial tolerance.[135] Yet other parts of Shaima's narrative suggested the insularity of Asian communities in Hulme, as she described how her family primarily sought social connections with other tenants based on their shared heritage. Shaima recounted one instance when her mother befriended a woman after having seen her dressed in 'traditional clothes' while walking around Hulme, a sight that Shaima remarked was 'unusual' at the time, around the mid-1970s. This led to Shaima's introduction to other Asian families, many of whom remain her close friends today. Finding friends from a similar cultural background was important to Shaima, as her parents largely restricted her socialising with other children after school to ensure that she dedicated time instead to cultivating 'traditional values'. As Shaima explained,

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[132] Shaima Walsh interview.
[133] *Ibid.*
[134] *Ibid.*
[135] See Chapter Three, pp. 172-183, for examples of this through socio-spatial 'boundary-making'.

> My parents were still very, even though they were integrated, they could speak English, they made an effort with the neighbours, they were still very traditional, and they wanted to keep those traditional values… So, I had to do – not learn to cook – but help with the housework and that sort of thing. People would say 'I'm just going to be out and about on the estate', but my mum wouldn't allow me to be hanging out on the streets, it wasn't right…you'd come home from school, you'd have to change, it's like, if I come home from work I'd change my clothes anyway, but I'd have to wear traditional clothes. Then, you know, just help with housework, cooking, "learning future skills", as Dad would say. It was different.[136]

Shaima's conception of 'community' in Hulme was predicated on exclusion, as she developed social networks that fit with the cultural and gendered expectations of her family. Her account demonstrates the importance of intersections of race, class and gender to revealing more complex perspectives of understandings of authenticity and belonging.

Conclusion

Interviewees' accounts of Park Hill and Hulme reveal the myriad ways in which former residents constructed their narratives of each estate. As this chapter has shown, most interviewees incorporated aspects of wider discourses of multi-storey council housing in post-war England to tell their stories. For some, this involved challenging stigmatisation, with interviewees using their accounts to reframe Park Hill and Hulme from spaces of inherent deprivation and criminality, to estates characterised by community and the resilience of local people. For others, the interview presented an opportunity to reinforce such depictions. However, tensions apparent both between and within individual accounts undermined each approach, as interviewees formed narratives punctuated with contradictions. For example, even those interviewees who sought to correct aspects of the estates' dominant representations reproduced elements of their stigmatisation, offering an alternative account of the chronology or content of deprivation to distance themselves from Park Hill and Hulme's poor reputations.

These inconsistencies also played out in the narrative strategies residents deployed to recount their lived experience. As the second section argued, some interviewees incorporated elements of a collective tenant voice into their narratives in a bid to illustrate their representativeness. In using the oral history interview to speak on behalf of other residents, these interviewees attempted to address an estate's stigmatisation, emphasising its community and shared

[136] Shaima Walsh interview.

values to assert instead a view of multi-storey living that could be extrapolated onto a wider group of people. Yet interviewees sometimes struggled to reconcile the collective and individualistic elements of their narration, particularly when attempting to undermine generalisations of multi-storey council tenants and therefore offer a more personalised account of lived experience. Discrepancies between interviewees' perspectives of each estate over time also created tensions within residents' narratives, with many reflecting upon their residency as adults after having formed impressions of Park Hill and Hulme as children.

Finally, primarily class and place-based notions of authenticity shaped residents' accounts of each estate. Interviewees used these to claim a sense of belonging to Park Hill and Hulme, one founded in part upon the marginalisation of other perspectives – often those of more recent residents – to emphasise the validity of their version of events. For some, like Jenny and Paul, the oral history interview allowed them to reassert their attachment, overwriting any suggestion that this has diminished over time due to spatial or social mobility. Gender and ethnicity also had some part to play in underscoring interviewees' perceptions of an authentic lived experience, with former residents characterising Park Hill's deprivation in relation to masculinity, and Hulme through the lens of its ethnic diversity. By emphasising the authenticity of their accounts of each estate, the interviewees asserted the enduring relevance and importance of residents' perspectives of multi-storey living, offering testimonies that proclaimed their expertise relative to that of the academics, policymakers and the press responsible for Park Hill and Hulme's discursive construction.

Conclusion

In spring 2019, a new musical hosted by Sheffield's Crucible Theatre saw the story of Park Hill hit the stage in *Standing at the Sky's Edge*. The product of a partnership between local musician Richard Hawley and playwright Chris Bush, as well as 'ex-residents, residents and people who have a long-standing and close connection with Park Hill', the musical sought to tell Park Hill's history from the 1960s to the present.[1] It followed the timelines of three fictional families to chart distinct phases in the popular lifespan of the estate, from its heyday as a community hub in the 1960s, deprivation and disrepair alongside wider industrial unrest in the 1980s, and private redevelopment in the 2000s. Tickets sold quickly and the show attracted widespread local and national praise, including from those who used to call Park Hill home.[2] These former residents lamented the estate's poor reputation prior to its redevelopment and saw the musical as a way of remembering the good times at Park Hill, declaring, "'I would move back there tonight if I could'" and "'Richard Hawley gets it.'"[3] The musical represented just one element of Park Hill's growing popularity in recent years. Over the past decade, interest in the multi-storey estate and its brutalist design, has spawned a series of cultural and commercial outputs that have sought to place Park Hill at the heart of Sheffield's civic identity.

In the local Weston Park Museum, visitors can explore a replica Park Hill kitchen while listening to the words of the estate's former caretaker Grenville Squires, who entreats listeners to 'Replace the concrete, repair that crack. Then put the community spirit back'.[4] In October 2019, Park Hill lent its name to a city centre shop, which showcases local artwork and poetry inspired by the estate, while doubling as a marketing suite for the latest phase of redevelopment: the 'Béton House' blocks intended for student accommodation. Selling merchandise relating also to local groups and institutions like The Leadmill, the shop attempts to consolidate Park Hill's place in the city's cultural heritage.[5] In the redeveloped portion of the estate, a converted garage now acts as the site for events hosted by the local non-profit S1 Artspace. In 2018, the organisation's inaugural

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[1] 'Sheffield comes together for *Standing at the Sky's Edge', Sheffield Theatres*, 16 February 2019. https://www.sheffieldtheatres.co.uk/news/sheffield-comes-together-for-standing-at-the-skys-edge [accessed 15 February 2021].

[2] Julia Armstrong, 'Sheffield Crucible's musical *Standing at the Sky's Edge* with Richard Hawley songs deserves standing ovation', *The Star*, 21 March 2019; Nick Ahad, 'A musical with a difference – Richard Hawley's songs and Sheffield's iconic Park Hill estate', *The Yorkshire Post*, 15 March 2019; Dominic Maxwell, 'Review: *Standing at the Sky's Edge* at the Crucible, Sheffield' *The Times*, 21 March 2019.

[3] Ammar Kalia, "Richard Hawley gets it!' Park Hill residents praise Sheffield musical', *The Guardian*, 15 March 2019.

[4] *Our Favourite Places*, https://www.ourfaveplaces.co.uk/where-to-go/weston-park-museum/ [accessed 15 February 2021].

[5] Mark Latham, 'The Park Hill Shop is Now Open!', *Urban Splash,* 9 October 2019. https://www.urbansplash.co.uk/blog/the-park-hill-shop-is-now-open [accessed 15 February 2021].

event reworked a 1988 photographic exhibition of Park Hill and Hyde Park tenants, showing the images alongside archival documents outlining the architectural vision for Park Hill in the 1950s. As its name suggested, the exhibition hoped to cultivate 'love among the ruins' once more, taking inspiration from Evelyn Waugh's dystopian novella of a failed welfare state.[6]

The preface to popular discussions of Park Hill often states that people either love it or hate it. The exhibition hosted by S1 Artspace is unlikely to have changed a dichotomy so widespread in accounts of the estate's history. In fact, despite its intentions to shed light on a different perspective of Park Hill, it instead highlighted how little the estate's story has changed since the late 1980s. Irrespective of redevelopment work over the past sixteen years, the S1 Artspace exhibition showed that, in the cultural imaginary, Park Hill is still perceived as a 'ruin'; a building let down by poor maintenance and a waning community spirit, yet still representative of the once-pioneering ambitions of a city determined to embrace modernist approaches to housing. The role of tenants within this mythologisation of architectural design, community, and eventual decline remains paradoxical. While the community spirit associated with the estate's early years has been celebrated and commodified, widespread privatisation since the mid-2000s has ensured that those tenants for whom the estate was built no longer have access to the flats themselves. Nowhere is this contrast more apparent than in the story behind the 'Clare Middleton, I love you, will u marry me' graffiti sprayed by a tenant onto a walkway connecting the multi-storey blocks in 2001. While the second portion of the tenant's words have since been outlined in neon lights, and printed on beer bottles, mugs and cushions to denote a declaration of love to Park Hill itself, they hide a story of a tumultuous relationship, as well as the illness and premature death experienced by a woman whose name still features on the walkway, but without illumination.[7]

This recent upsurge in popularity has not risen alongside progress in redevelopment work, with the refurbishment of most of Park Hill still ongoing. As of early 2021, the estate comprised 260 finished flats, with a further 195 in progress. This represents under half of its original capacity, despite its transference from Sheffield City Council to Urban Splash having taken place in 2004.[8]

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[6] Isabelle Carter, 'Love Among the Ruins?' Telling the social history of Sheffield's best-known housing estates', *History Matters* (2018), http://www.historymatters.group.shef.ac.uk/love-ruins-telling-social-history-sheffields-best-known-housing-estates/ [accessed 15 February 2021].

[7] 'Truth of Sheffield's 'I Love You Will U Marry Me' graffiti', *BBC News*, 8 August 2011, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-14444608 [accessed 15 February 2021]; Frances Byrnes, 'The tragic story of Sheffield's Park Hill bridge', *The Guardian,* 21 August 2016; 'Tragic story behind Sheffield's famous Park Hill "I love you" graffiti bridge revealed', *The Star,* 1 September 2016.

[8] 'Park Hill, Sheffield', *Urban Splash,* https://www.urbansplash.co.uk/regeneration/projects/park-hill [accessed 19 March 2021]; 'Urban Splash and Places for People launch phase 2 of Park Hill', *Urban Splash,* 29 January 2020 https://www.urbansplash.co.uk/resources/urban-splash-and-places-for-people-launch-phase-2-of-park-hill [accessed 15 February 2021].

As Lynsey Hanley asserted, cultural interest in the flats epitomised by productions like *Standing at the Sky's Edge* has served to mask enduring problems with Sheffield's social housing stock; a picture replicated in cities across Britain.[9] That popular depictions of Park Hill's past contain little mention of the present-day context of social housing shortages owes much to its selective historical representation. Urban Splash continues to associate the estate with local identity, describing the flats as 'Rooted in 50's utopia, grounded by Sheffield steel' and using dated language to frame the redevelopment process as enabling Park Hill to "'[put] on her new frock'".[10] Amidst some residents of the refurbished flats exists a concerted effort to reaffirm the community spirit attributed to the 1950s and 1960s, through communal classes, events, and competitions.[11] As Julie Clark and Valerie Wright argued in the context of the recent redevelopment of the Gorbals area of Glasgow, regeneration is not a 'neutral' process, but one that 'tends to valorise particular views of what community ought to be and how it can be achieved'.[12] Considering Park Hill, this reframing, combined with the estate's cultural commodification, reinforces the trajectory of its swift rise and near inevitable fall, using a fractured history to justify present-day approaches to redevelopment.

Hulme's history has also undergone adaptations. Popular exhibitions have situated the legacy of the multi-storey estate alongside that of Manchester's late twentieth-century cultural spaces like the Haçienda and Affleck's Palace. Visual representations of the Crescents especially have come to be emblematic of the alternative, local cultural scene of the 1980s and 1990s.[13] While aspects of this historical reworking foreground the ways of living of Hulme tenants, they still offer a narrow frame of representation, depicting tenants as activists intent on housing improvements, or anarchists seeking to distance themselves from the status quo. However, tenants themselves have played a part in shaping this dichotomy, juxtaposing one group of residents over another. For example, a former tenant who worked on the 2017 Heritage Lottery funded film *The Spirit of Hulme*, saw it as an opportunity for people to 'revisit' the estate from another perspective.[14] "Finally, we get our say!" Tracie Daly told *One Manchester,* the Housing Association working in

[9] Lynsey Hanley, 'Britain needs decent new council houses – not just musicals about them', *The Guardian,* 3 April 2019.

[10] 'Park Hill, Sheffield', *Urban Splash*; Annalie Riches, "Putting on her new frock" – our plans for Park Hill Phase 2, *Urban Splash,* https://www.urbansplash.co.uk/blog/putting-on-her-new-frock-our-plans-for-park-hill-phase-2 [accessed 15 February 2021].

[11] Park Hill Residents' Association, *Twitter,* https://twitter.com/ParkHillRA [accessed 15 February 2021].

[12] Julie Clark and Valerie Wright, 'Urban Regeneration in Glasgow: Looking to the Past to Build the Future? The Case of the 'New Gorbals', in Julie Clark and Nicholas Wise (eds), *Urban Renewal, Community and Participation: Theory, Policy and Practice* (Cham, 2018), p. 48.

[13] *British Cultural Archive*, https://britishculturearchive.co.uk/about/ [accessed 15 February 2021].

[14] *The Spirit of Hulme* [film], directed by Terry Egan (Heritage Lottery Fund, One Manchester, Reel MCR, 2017).

conjunction with the project, when publicising the film.[15] In the film, former Hulme tenants discussed their memories of the estate, emphasising a sense of community and belonging reminiscent of retellings of Park Hill. For some participants, these aspects of life in Hulme had a longer history than the multi-storey incarnation for which the area is arguably best-known, as the recollections of people who had lived in Hulme prior to its slum clearance attested. The inclusion of these residents, who shed light on a longer-term view of Hulme, was integral to the project's approach to communicating its history.

This was because, for Daly, the story of the estate has been co-opted by proponents of Manchester's musical legacy at the expense of the experiences of those residents who do not fit this version of events. Speaking to the *Manchester Evening News,* Daly asserted,

> Hulme was not about punk picnics and squats, that came much later. Hulme was home to many thousands of families excited and full of hope for the future in their brand new shiny flats. This project will provide the platform for the families who lived through this period to finally have their say, share their stories and tell it how it really was.[16]

Here, the keepers of an authentic history of Hulme are viewed as its earliest wave of tenants, those who moved to the flats immediately following its multi-storey redevelopment in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Screenings of *The Spirit of Hulme* were shown in venues around the city, from art galleries to independent cinemas, in 2017 and 2018, while the archival images and videos used in the project attracted audiences at the People's History Museum and the Z-Arts Community Centre in Hulme.[17]

Although significantly altered, the physical landscape of the new Hulme still bears the legacy of its multi-storey incarnation. Hulme Park now stands in the area that once held the Crescents, but there remain echoes of the multi-storey flats in a set of carved paving slabs at the park's entrance. Here, text and images immortalise aspects of Hulme's past in concrete. In the image carved into one slab, tenants are shown participating in a protest march, holding placards reading, 'Hope not Dope' and 'We care about our area. We care about our community'. The demolition of the Crescents is the subject of two others, which depict respectively the process of bulldozing the blocks and the party held in honour of their demolition, during which a car was

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[15] 'Hulme Sweet Hulme', *One Manchester,* 23 November 2017 https://www.onemanchester.co.uk/whats-going-on/news/hulme-sweet-hulme [accessed 15 February 2021].

[16] Beth Abbit, 'Hulme Sweet Hulme: Appeal to residents for archive pictures help with film telling rich history of community', *Manchester Evening News,* 10 December 2015.

[17] Neal Keeling, 'We moved to Hulme and we were in heaven: A Manchester story of happy childhoods and broken dreams', *Manchester Evening News,* 24 September 2017.

dropped from the highest Crescent block and a skeleton hung over its façade. Hulme's subsequent 'rebirth' is characterised in an aerial map of the new estate on another slab, dated 1999, over which presides a phoenix rising from flames. While other engravings hark back to an older Hulme than that of the post-war period, this aspect of the area's history remains integral to its projection of a sense of place and identity in the present day. The slabs not only serve to remind the latest generation of Hulme residents of the legacy of those who had come before, but attempt to promote this as the basis for future 'community'. While the images of Hulme's past tenants do not obscure the difficulties they faced, with the slabs referencing elements of social and material deprivation, their presentation of Hulme nevertheless operates within the confines of a selective historical retelling.

There is a common theme in the present-day reworking of the history of post-war Hulme, one that is apparent across the media of its retellings, from the engraved paving slabs and testimonies of former residents shared in films like *The Spirit of Hulme*, to the exhibitions that celebrate its cultural legacy. In promoting the memory of the people who lived within the multi-storey blocks, contemporary interpretations have begun to shift the focus of Hulme's history away from its architectural design to its social composition. It is important to recognise this aspect of the area's heritage, which can begin to pave the way to more complex understandings of its lived experience. However, in drawing a line between the apparent strength of community in Hulme and the material condition of its housing, this historical representation threatens to obscure the role played by chronic underfunding and poor management in rendering regeneration so imperative in the first place. While the recently popularised story of the Manchester estate depicts residents as the key instigators of its eventual regeneration, this means that – in part – it continues to confer a degree of accountability for the upkeep of the built environment onto the people who lived in Hulme, rather than the institutional bodies responsible for its management. A focus on the latter remains important because, despite the objectives underpinning the widespread demolition of its multi-storey blocks, and the partial privatisation of its newest housing stock made possible by the City Challenge initiative, Hulme still shows signs of deprivation today. Using census data collected in 2011, a 'Neighbourhood Profile' authored by Manchester City Council in conjunction with the NHS in 2016 showed that Hulme continues to struggle with low rates of employment, poor health, and overcrowded housing conditions.[18] The 'rebirth' seemingly symbolised by changes to the built environment was therefore short-lived, if it ever transpired at

[18] Manchester Health and Care Commissioning, *Neighbourhood Profile: Hulme, Moss Side and Rusholme* (2016), https://www.manchester.gov.uk/downloads/download/6530/neighbourhood_profile_-_hulme_moss_side_and_rusholme [accessed 15 February 2021].

all, yet this framing of Hulme's redevelopment and its subsequent influence over the estate today is still central to visions of its past.

Evidently, time has not diminished the popular memory of these estates, with ongoing representations revisiting historic tropes to characterise multi-storey blocks today. Recent accounts of Park Hill have described aspects of its redevelopment as 'revolutionary', reframing the language of community and ambition in a present-day context of a mixed tenure development.[19] These continuities are apparent in press coverage of multi-storey blocks elsewhere in England, with new, luxury residential developments associated with modern technologies and ways of living.[20] Loretta Lees has argued that gentrification is founded upon 'utopian' ideas.[21] Applied to the context of Park Hill, this suggests the cyclical nature of the estate's representation, connecting the discourses that surrounded its original construction to those that now underpin its redevelopment. The crucial distinction to note here is that these more favourable accounts of multi-storey housing are applied primarily to blocks occupied by a mix of homeowners and private and social tenants.[22] The association of multi-storey social housing estates with decline is still prevalent in the twenty-first century. In a 2016 interview with *The Sunday Times,* then-Prime Minister David Cameron promised to demolish "'brutal high-rise towers'" in a bid to remedy issues of poverty and drug abuse on certain housing estates.[23] Cameron drew a causal link between anti-social behaviour and the built environment, stating, "'the riots of 2011 didn't emerge from within terraced streets or low-rise apartment buildings. The rioters came overwhelmingly from these postwar estates. That's not a coincidence'".[24] His words sparked a slew of coverage in the national press, with newspapers clamouring to celebrate (the approach of most) or condemn his approach. In perhaps the most

[19] Roy Hattersley, 'From a relic of good intentions to a model for the future', *The Times*, 16 September 2011; Marcus Binney, 'Renewing the industrial heritage of the North', *The Times,* 7 April 2012.

[20] Phil Child, 'Tower block boom: how high-rise apartments became the height of luxury', *The Conversation,* 13 July 2016, https://theconversation.com/tower-block-boom-how-high-rise-apartments-became-the-height-of-luxury-56178 [accessed 17 February 2021]; James White, 'High-Rise Residential Development: An International Evidence Review', *UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Studies*, 18 October 2018, https://housingevidence.ac.uk/high-rise-residential-development-an-international-evidence-review [accessed 17 February 2021].

[21] Loretta Lees, 'Urban Renaissance and the Street: Spaces of Control and Contestation', in Nicholas R. Fyfe (ed.), *Images of the Street: Planning, Identity and Control in Public Space* (London, 1998), p. 238.

[22] From an academic perspective, the extent to which this approach promotes social mixing and spatial equalities, rather than generating new forms of socio-spatial marginalisation through gentrification, is the subject of ongoing debate. For an overview, see Paul Watt, 'Social Housing and Urban Renewal: An Introduction', in Paul Watt and Peer Smets (eds), *Social Housing and Urban Renewal: A Cross-National Perspective* (Bingley, 2017), pp. 8-9.

[23] Tim Shipman, 'Cameron: I will bulldoze sink estates', *The Sunday Times,* 10 January 2016.

[24] Caroline Davies, 'David Cameron vows to 'blitz' poverty by demolishing UK's worst sink estates', *The Guardian,* 10 January 2016; Jon Stone, 'Government declares war on Brutalist architecture', *The Independent,* 2 November 2016.

oppositional response, an editorial for *The Guardian* linked Cameron's plan for the eradication of brutalist, multi-storey estates to resident protests at 'social cleansing'.[25]

Cameron's attitude towards multi-storey council housing was nothing new, echoing the deterministic arguments of not only twentieth-century architects and geographers, but the post-war British press too. It is ironic that in the twenty-first century *The Guardian* criticised Cameron for focusing on architecture instead of the structural issues at play, when the newspaper's coverage of multi-storey council housing since the 1970s has helped to shape the present-day cultural attitudes underpinning his plan. The study of popular representations of these estates throughout the post-war period helps to reveal the historic roots of present-day attitudes, indicating both the cultural and political landscape in which tenants constructed their personal testimonies, and the wider context in which this research took place. The future of multi-storey council housing built in the twentieth century remains a contentious issue, but this thesis has offered an important reassessment of its history. Through the lens of Park Hill and Hulme, it has traced the effects of national developments in twentieth-century England in the context of northern, provincial cities, illuminating the intersections between key political, cultural, and spatial discourses and the personal narratives of former tenants.

The thesis began with an analysis of architectural design and housing policy from the late 1950s to the late 1990s, highlighting themes of class and community. The first chapter revised established views of Park Hill and Hulme, arguing for a more complex understanding of the architectural and social underpinnings of their design and construction. Exploring the interplay between shifting attitudes towards multi-storey council housing on a national scale and housing policy in Sheffield and Manchester, the chapter also charted changing approaches to the management of each estate over time, eschewing a deterministic framing of residualisation to highlight instead the importance of local historical context, and assessing how far the tenant voice permeated policy structures for consultation and participation in redevelopment work. Chapter Two concentrated on similar themes to discuss the cultural representation of Park Hill and Hulme in the press. It used articles from local and national newspapers to demonstrate how the framework of the rise and fall of multi-storey council housing mapped onto each development both chronologically and in terms of the sources and voices that underscored press coverage. Through selectively adapting the thematic, linguistic, and visual frames attached by the press to multi-storey

[25] Colin Wiles, 'David Cameron will not be able to redevelop 'sink estates' without a fight', *The Guardian,* 27 January 2016.

council housing, newspapers contributed to and reinforced discursive constructions of the success and failure of Park Hill and Hulme over time.

While Chapter One demonstrated not only the contrasts between architects' ideas for the built environment and its management, Chapter Three used the personal testimonies of former tenants to indicate how far the intended function of spaces differed from their use in practice. It approached space through both a material and representational lens, exploring tenants' use of spaces like the street decks, pubs, playgrounds and their movement around each estate more broadly, as well as the degree to which the political and cultural influences discussed in the first chapters of the thesis shaped these interactions. In highlighting the plurality of tenants' perspectives of certain spaces; the influence of socio-spatial boundary-making practices in imposing limits upon their movements within estates; and the motivations behind their relocation to and from Park Hill and Hulme, the chapter argued for a more complex understanding of tenants' relationship to the material environment than that obtained from a solely top-down perspective. Chapter Four expanded upon this focus to examine how tenants sought to use the oral history interview to create new narratives of Park Hill and Hulme. It shed light on the particular role played by stigmatisation in influencing tenants' narrative approaches, showing how they positioned themselves in different ways to dispel polarised understandings of Park Hill and Hulme. Sometimes this engendered the assertion of a sense of individuality to counter generalisations of multi-storey council tenants, but at other points it led tenants to emphasise the representativeness of their narrated lived experience, as they attempted to speak on behalf of tenants as a collective. Ideas of authenticity and belonging and their roots in understandings of class and deprivation, underpinned the analysis in this final chapter, with oral history participants using these ideas to strengthen the validity of their perspectives, often by marginalising those of other tenants. In exploring the tensions intrinsic to tenants' narrative construction, the chapter illuminated the complexities of locating their lived experience of Park Hill and Hulme.

Throughout, the thesis has highlighted traces of the tenant voice to build a picture of their perspectives of multi-storey living. In Chapter One, this approach took the form of an analysis of tenant consultation and participation in housing design and policy. Chapter Two explored how far the tenant voice permeated press coverage of Park Hill and Hulme through an analysis of articles and letters in the local and national press, as well as the Hulme tenant magazine. The tenant voice is more apparent in the final two chapters of the thesis, although this does not suggest an unmediated perspective of lived experience. While tenants deliberately and explicitly sought to offer their perspectives of Park Hill and Hulme in opposition to aspects of the dominant political and cultural discourses outlined in earlier chapters, the results of their endeavours showed mixed

signs of success. At points, tenants' narratives strengthened the version of events they attempted to challenge. Even while they questioned aspects of the estates' material decay, social breakdown and chronologies of 'decline', tenants repeated many of the same claims against multi-storey council housing advanced by twentieth-century policymakers and the press. This exposed fault lines in their challenge of prevalent understandings of these places, weakening the alternative history seemingly promised by their perspectives. Rather than damaging the validity of interviews as historical sources, however, lapses in participants' attempts to achieve some form of narrative coherence reveal the efforts of former tenants to situate their experiences against and within the discursive construction of Park Hill and Hulme. While this interrelationship indicates the limitations of using the perspectives of individuals to tell an entirely fresh history of post-war council housing, tenants did not fully reinforce wider discourses either. Instead, the point at which their stories met with political and cultural constructions of multi-storey council housing represented a site of adaptation, with tenants selectively reworking prevalent understandings of Park Hill and Hulme to assert themselves as the agents of revised narratives.

A range of sources reinforce the arguments made throughout the thesis. This variety is important because it has a direct bearing upon the thesis's conceptualisation of lived experience as a relational category stemming from the intersection of personal narratives with wider political and cultural discourses. While applied here in the context of multi-storey council housing, this reassessment of lived experience is significant to the study of post-war Britain in a broader sense. It provides a framework for understanding how individuals position themselves in relation to themes key to the study of the late twentieth century like class and community; merging institutional, cultural, and personal perspectives to offer a bridge between purely top-down or grassroots approaches to lived experience. It questions the extent to which institutions like the state and the press acted as autonomous architects of political and cultural meaning, arguing that rather than imposing attitudes onto others, they worked in dialogue with different members and elements of post-war society. Through this dialogic approach, the thesis demonstrates that societal discourses and personal narratives are not static but in flux, capable of communicating shifting and contradictory meanings over time.

At its core, the thesis is an investigation of how to highlight the agency of everyday people. In using these estates to examine the socio-spatial interconnections between policy, culture and identity, the thesis combines elements of post-war urban and social history. Historians like Jim Tomlinson, Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite and Jon Lawrence have referred to the 'decline'

associated with this period, re-examining deindustrialisation, class and community.[26] This thesis builds on these reassessments, but reasserts the importance of housing and representations of the urban environment. State-led accounts of urban England tend to focus on the grand architectural ideas that struggled to translate into reality, scarcely questioning their effects upon everyday life. Yet the competing visions that underscored plans and policies for the post-war city created ambiguous rather than entirely prescriptive spaces, enabling the people who lived and moved through them to alter their function. Similarly, while discourses of certain spaces like multi-storey council housing in the press often reinforced cultural stereotypes, people were not passive recipients of these representations, but contributed to shifting cultural scripts instead, whether directly in communication with the press or through an oral history interview. This research has demonstrated that people do not construct stories about their lives in isolation from local historical, cultural, and political contexts, so the reassessment of representations of experience from different perspectives is essential to realising their complexities. Moreover, although focused on two case studies, the thesis has not solely recounted the history of Park Hill and Hulme. It has argued that, beyond their material environment, these estates came to emblematise political and cultural discourses central to late twentieth-century society. Through their stories, it is possible to trace one of post-war England more broadly, illuminating shifting understandings of space, class and identity that continue to inform the present day. This comparative, case study analysis is essential to unpicking the entangled historic roots of inequalities persistent in the twenty-first century.

[26] Jim Tomlinson, *The Politics of Decline: Understanding Postwar Britain* (Abingdon, 2014); Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, *Class, Politics, and the Decline of Deference in England, 1968-2000* (Oxford, 2018); Jon Lawrence, *Me, Me, Me: The Search for Community in Post-War England* (Oxford, 2019).

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Appendix

The primary method for oral history recruitment was through social media. Facebook groups created by and for past residents of Park Hill and Hulme, and local history groups for residents of Sheffield and Manchester more broadly, acted as useful starting points for locating interviewees. Social media allowed me to communicate with the past tenants of both estates who had not necessarily maintained geographical ties to each city. Aside from social media, word of mouth also proved a successful approach to finding participants, with many having kept in touch with childhood friends and neighbours over time. There were, however, some barriers to recruitment. Calls for participants advertised on websites like the Sheffield and Manchester Forum were largely unsuccessful, and despite contacting *The Star* in Sheffield and the *Manchester Evening News* to advertise the project, I received no response. Interviews were conducted face-to-face where possible, either in the interviewee's home or in a public place, although the distance of some interviewees from Sheffield and Manchester and the guidance introduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic meant that some conversations took place via video call.

Oral history interviews relating to Hulme, Manchester

Name	**Year of birth**	**Duration of Hulme tenancy**	**Housing experience before Hulme**	**Housing experience after Hulme**
Anthony Clark	1956	1976-1979	Privately owned house in Hazel Grove, Manchester.	Privately owned new semi-detached house in Chadderton, Manchester.
Rachel Hardy	1955	1985-1992	Low-rise council flat in Bristol.	Privately rented house in the redeveloped Hulme.
Lee-Ann Igbon	1970	1970-1996	Multi-storey, deck-access housing.	Lee-Ann temporarily moved to a low-rise council house in Trafford but returned to low-rise housing in the newly-developed Hulme in the late 1990s.

Conor McShane	1961	1971-1981	Shared tenement-style council housing in Moss Side, Manchester, scheduled for clearance.	Low-rise council house in Longsight, Manchester.
Louise Miller	1960	1980-1985	Privately owned low-rise housing in Worcester.	Privately rented bedsit flat in Carlisle, Scotland.
Stephanie Palmer	1969	1972-1994	Shared tenement-style council housing in Rusholme, Manchester.	Low-rise council house in Withington that Stephanie bought through the Right to Buy shortly after moving.
Alison Reid	1970	1973-1988	Low-rise council house in Moss Side scheduled for clearance.	Low-rise council house in Moston, Manchester. Alison returned in 2010 to the low-rise house in Hulme where she had lived as a child.
Jason Shaw	1967	1976-1991.	Low-rise council house in Moss Side scheduled for clearance.	Low-rise council house in Beswick, Manchester.
Shaima Walsh	1968	1969-1999	Terraced council house in Ardwick scheduled for demolition under slum clearance.	Privately owned house in Chorlton, Manchester.
Jenny Young	1967	1967-1990	Second-floor council flat in Ancoats, Manchester.	Privately owned house in Failsworth, Manchester.

Oral history interviews relating to Park Hill, Sheffield

Name	Year of birth	Duration of Park Hill tenancy	Housing experience before Park Hill	Housing experience after Park Hill
Paul Brown	1951	1961-1974	Low-rise prefabricated housing in Shirecliffe, Sheffield.	Tower block flat in the Claywood flats development, Sheffield.
Lisa Crossley	1962	1981-1987	Multi-storey council flat in the Stepney Buildings, Park District, Sheffield.	Privately owned house in Handsworth, Sheffield.
Karen Hill	1959	1962-1987	Low-rise council house scheduled for clearance in Neepsend, Sheffield.	Privately owned house in Norton, Sheffield.
Patricia Johnson	1955	1963-1973	Low-rise council house scheduled for clearance in Highfield, Sheffield.	Low-rise privately rented flat in Ilkley, Bradford.
Richard Taylor	1951	1964-1967	Low-rise council house in Parson Cross, Sheffield.	Low-rise council house in Burngreave, Sheffield.
Mary Thomas	1933	1969-1975	Low-rise council house in Attercliffe, Sheffield.	New low-rise council house in Darnall, Sheffield.
Carol Williams	1954	1962-1971	Low-rise council house scheduled for clearance in Attercliffe, Sheffield.	Low-rise council house in Stocksbridge, Sheffield.
Martin Wood	1954	1959-1986	Low-rise council house scheduled for clearance in Shirecliffe, Sheffield.	Low-rise council house in North Sheffield.