

REVISED ISSUE

THE
HOUSING
PROBLEM

A STATEMENT OF THE
PRESENT POSITION

Price—One Shilling

WOMEN'S SERVICE ·
FILE · COPY
NOT · TO · BE · TAKEN · AWAY

JULY, 1924

PAMPHLET

Prepared by the
HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE
OF

THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS,
92 Victoria Street, S.W.1

363.50941

390011181

~~350.865~~

7778 ✓

363.50941

LONDON BIRBECK UNIVERSITY
FAWCETT LIBRARY

REFERENCE
ONLY

THE
HOUSING
PROBLEM

A STATEMENT OF THE
PRESENT POSITION

JULY, 1924

Prepared by the
HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE
OF
THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS,
92 Victoria Street, S.W.1

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Prefatory Note.

PART I.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

	PAGE
Section A.—Provision of Houses in the past	9
1. Cast-off Houses of the Middle Classes	10
2. Building by Private Enterprise	11
3. Building by Public Utility Societies	11
4. Building by Housing Trusts	12
5. Building by Building Guilds	13
6. Municipal Housing	14
7. Building with help of Building Societies	14
Section B.—Present position of the Housing Problem	15
1. Economic Aspect	15
Comparative Cost of Building	17
Rents and Wages	18
The Building Trade	21
2. Social Aspect	23
Public Health	23
Education	25
Social Conduct	25
Housing and Industry	26
3. Legal Aspect: the Laws affecting Housing	26
Summary of various Acts	26
The Rent Restriction Acts	28
Section C.—Special Problems	31
1. Slum Clearance	31
2. Rural Housing	33
3. London	36

Summary of Part I.

PART II.

MEASURES FOR REDUCING THE SHORTAGE AND IMPROVING HOUSING CONDITIONS.

	PAGE
Introduction	39
Section 1.—Closing Unfit Houses, Clearing Unhealthy Areas and Repair of Houses	39
Section 2.—Public Right of Complaint	42
Section 3.—Duty of Local Authorities as to Housing Schemes	43
Section 4.—Powers and Duties of Local Authorities as to Construction of Houses	43
Section 5.—Provision of Houses under 1923 Act	45
Section 6.—Provision of Houses under Small Dwellings Ac- quisition Act	47
Section 7.—Construction of Houses by Public Utility So- cieties and similar Organisations	48
Section 8.—The New Housing Policy	50

APPENDICES.

I.—Increase in number of Houses in England and Wales 1901-1914, and total number of marriages 1901-1921	57
II.—Relation of Housing Accommodation to Population ...	58
III.—Rents of Houses built under the Addison Scheme ...	59
IV.—Comparative Expenditure on Food, Rent, Clothing, etc.	60
V.—Rates of Wages for Mining, Printing and Railway Workers	60
VI.—Variations in Value of £1 in Food	61
VII.—Wage Rates in the Building Trade	61
VIII.—Cost of the Social Services	62

Subjects for Discussion	63
Books Recommended	64

Prefatory Note.

AT a meeting in December, 1922, of the Consultative Committee of Women's Organisations, a co-ordinating body representing 65 different Societies, it was agreed that much ignorance prevailed on the many complicated problems involved in the Housing question. It was therefore decided to prepare a Pamphlet showing how houses had been provided in the past, the difficulties of the present position, and the alternative methods of remedial action.

The Housing Sub-Committee appointed to draft the Pamphlet in consultation with experts, are aware that several points have not been touched upon at all, and that others have been dealt with too briefly; but it was not intended to draw up more than an outline, which might be of educative value in the present crisis, and might form the basis for discussion and further study by branches of women's organisations and other societies.

The purpose of the Pamphlet is informative only, and the Sub-Committee do not hold themselves responsible for any suggestions made. Part I. contains a reasoned Statement of the present Housing Shortage, its causes and effects; and Part II. examines briefly and impartially measures for meeting the shortage and improving Housing conditions.

The first edition of the Pamphlet was published in April, 1923, and the second in July, 1923. The Housing Sub-Committee now present a revised edition which brings the question up to date.

July, 1924

THE
HOUSING PROBLEM
A STATEMENT of the PRESENT POSITION

PART I.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

(A) Provision of Houses in the Past.

It has been thought by many people that the Housing problem did not exist before the war, others admitted that housing accommodation left room for improvement, but only a few realised that the needs of the population were by no means met, and that the standard was often very low. The following extracts from the Land Enquiry Committee of 1913 shed some light on the situation in that year:—

URBAN DISTRICTS.

“We find that the majority of the urban population have to live in houses which are overcrowded to the acre, which are usually built in long, dull rows without sufficient open space, and which, in addition, are often defective in various ways; that a considerable proportion have still to live in houses which are so injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation, and that one-tenth of the population have to live under conditions of gross overcrowding.”

RURAL DISTRICTS.

“Taking into account both the existing scarcity, and also the scarcity that would be created if the Housing Acts were properly enforced, as far as can be estimated, at least 120,000 new cottages are required for the present time in England and Wales.

“This large demand for cottages is at present being met neither by private enterprise nor by Local Authorities.”

Houses have been provided under the various systems described below, and, while the growing tendency is to look to the State or Municipal Authorities for the supply of smaller houses, it is true to say that, in the past, the majority of houses were provided by other means. Even including the houses built under the National Housing Scheme of 1919 and the 1923 Act, not more than 5 per cent. of the homes of the country have been built by public bodies.

1.—Cast-off Houses of the Middle Classes.

The weekly wage-earner in many urban districts has, to a large extent, in the past, been housed in the house built for people better off than himself. In most English towns, especially in London, it is quite usual to find that when a district ceases to be inhabited by the rich or moderately well-to-do, its homes are divided up among several working-class families. Houses divided in this way have generally not been adapted for the use of several families, and in consequence they constitute almost the worst possible living conditions. Attempts have been made to meet the evil by legislation insisting on the provision of water supply, etc., on each floor, but short of actual structural alteration, no remedy can be really effective.

It has to be borne in mind that these "made-down" houses are not always very large (frequently from six to ten rooms), nor are they always very old. They are often houses which were in the first case built for skilled artisans, and have now become multi-family houses for the casual and unskilled labourer. There are areas covered with five to six-roomed houses, which were built towards the end of last century, where there is now a high average number of families per house; and other areas of four-roomed houses where the deterioration of the district was recognised 20 or 30 years ago when kitcheners were put in upstairs, on the assumption that no cottage would be let as a whole to one family.

Where the house was originally of the better class, decay in the character of the district has not necessarily meant a loss either to the ground landlord or to the leaseholder. In many cases the rent exacted from the several families is more than the original rental of the house, and ground which was meant for gardens has been profitably let for industrial or commercial use. Some landlords have tried to control the impoverishment of a district by dividing the houses into flats, and, where this has been done to any extent, the change in the character of the tenants has not, generally speaking, resulted in the creation of really bad housing conditions. Attention may be drawn here to the provision in the Housing Act of 1919, which gave permission to over-ride clauses prohibiting the conversion of houses into

flats, where a change in the character of a district can be proved to the satisfaction of a county court.

2.—Building by Private Enterprise.

The incentive to private building in the past has been very largely the profit to be derived from developing land on the outskirts of towns. The private builder has frequently been a man in a small way of business; sometimes he relied on the landowner for the provision of part of his capital, or he may have borrowed it from a banker. He was able to build economically because he employed a small staff and was himself constantly on the job. Houses, when built, have generally been sold to an investor, the builder taking the profit, and, with the proceeds of the sale and the backing of another land developer, he has erected other houses. The frequency of builders' bankruptcies has, however, reacted unfavourably on the conditions of employment in the building trade, on the quality of the houses built, and on the builders' merchants.

An important element in the reduction of supply by the private builder has been the throwing open to the ordinary investor of investments other than building, and, in the United States, one method of meeting the housing shortage has been to urge insurance companies to invest in building. The private builder himself has always been willing to take the chances of a gamble, but everybody else involved—mortgagees, land developers, and investors—have desired security, and it is to the restoration of confidence among these accessories to private building that private enterprise must look, if it is again to take the greater share in the provision of houses.

3.—Building by Public Utility Societies.

Public Utility Societies were brought into operation by the Housing Act of 1909. Their essential feature is that they are societies which attract groups of people anxious to build on something like a co-operative basis, or employers or others who desire to see houses provided for members of the working classes. They are registered under the Industrial and Provident Acts, 1893, and are prohibited from paying interest at a rate of more than 6 per cent. (before the war 5 per cent.). The 1909 Act assisted them by making it possible for them to borrow two-thirds of the approved value from the Public Works Loan Board. The 1919 Act extended this assistance by increasing the loan obtainable to three-quarters of the approved cost, and giving a subsidy towards the repayment of the loan and charges, 30 per cent. throughout the period of the loan, and an additional 20 per cent. up to the year 1927.

The 1923 Act assisted those Public Utility Societies which had built houses since the war, and which were necessarily involved in the difficulties created by the high price of building in that period, by making the subsidy 40 per cent. throughout the period of the loan. It put new Public Utility Societies in the same position as any person or body of persons undertaking to build houses, i.e., it made it possible for Local Authorities to give them a lump sum grant or an annual subsidy.

About 100 Public Utility Societies were formed before the war and built 8,000 houses; since the war another 80 societies have been formed and 4,400 more houses have been built. The rules of a Public Utility Society provide for a certain measure of collective control, and the psychological basis of the societies is such, that the estates are generally better laid out and better built than under the Local Authorities or the speculative builder. The portion of capital which has to be raised privately is derived partly from the tenants themselves, who, according to rule, must invest a certain minimum, and partly from private individuals and commercial or industrial undertakings.

In the view of some housing experts, it is a matter of regret that the Public Utility Society movement was not more developed in this country before building was rendered so difficult by war and post-war conditions; and that organised bodies of workers, trade unions, friendly societies, temperance lodges, and co-operative societies have in so few instances formed societies for the provision of dwellings for themselves and their families.

Any further measures which the Government could take to stimulate the formation of societies of this kind is considered by many a sound method of giving State help, because, in these circumstances, the building of houses would require little supervision. In addition, the problem of management is solved, since the tenants themselves are responsible. The idea combines the advantages of private ownership with living in a house to which one is not tied. Owners who wish to move may do so and may withdraw their investment, the societies taking the responsibility of finding another occupant and investor.

4.—Building by Housing Trusts.

Generally speaking, Housing Trusts in urban districts date from the wave of enthusiasm for improved housing conditions, which resulted in the Royal Commission of 1880. At that time, largely under the influence of Miss Octavia Hill, the urgent thing was felt to be the housing of the working classes near their work. The municipalities were prepared, in order to meet their housing obligations, to sell land very cheaply to bodies which undertook the erection of working-class flats, and considerable evidence will be found, in the proceedings of the 1880 Commis-

sion, of feeling on the part of commercial bodies that semi-philanthropic bodies were in this respect unduly favoured by the municipalities.

The Peabody Trust was founded in 1862, and is believed to be the first body which set out to meet the need for working-class houses on a philanthropic basis. Other Trusts now working in London are the Lewis, the Guinness, and the Sutton Trust. The Peabody Trust, which may be taken as representative of all similar Trusts, had by the end of 1914 expended on land and buildings £1,859,796, and had built 25 blocks in various parts of London, as well as cottage schemes at Herne Hill and Tottenham. Before the war the Trust would not take as tenants in most of their blocks any man earning more than £2 per week, though there were cases where the income limit was £2 10s. Since the war the income limit has been doubled, and is now £4 and £5. The general financial aim is a net annual income of 3 per cent., which is not always realised.

The standard of houses provided by Trusts is usually quite good, but in many of the Peabody Blocks several flats share water tap, W.C., etc., and even the modern block at Westminster has not yet reached the point of providing a separate bath for each family, though in other respects their flats are now self-contained.

Besides these philanthropic Trusts, there exist companies with a limited dividend, such as the Artisan and General Labourers, or the Improved Industrial Dwellings Company.

5.—Building by Building Guilds.

The Building Guild movement came into being after the war, to improve conditions in the trade and to remove the causes of existing friction between employers and operatives. The Guilds aimed at paying a continuous wage during times of unemployment and employment; at giving a measure of control and management by the workers; and at the elimination of the middleman's profit. Guilds worked successfully in Manchester, London and Scotland, though there were always difficulties with regard to finance and materials. The Scottish Guild is still in existence; the London Guild has been wound up but has left as its successor, Guild Housing Ltd., a body constructed on Guild principles, which undertakes contracting work and a certain amount of speculative building. Its Board of Directors includes representatives of the trade unions, the technical and administrative sides of the building industry, and representatives of the organised consumer. The achievement of the Guild movement lies mainly in giving a concrete example of a new basis of organisation, which aims at combining discipline and efficiency with collective responsibility. If the difficulty of

finance could be removed, Guilds might be effective in raising the standard of workmanship, and might contribute materially to the fulfilment of housing programmes.

6.—Municipal Housing.

The actual cause which led public authorities to take up house-building was the proved fact that there were families whose needs were not being met by private enterprise, nor by the cast-off houses of better-to-do people, nor by the provision of employers or charitable trusts.

Though Municipal Authorities have been largely concerned with slum replacement, in certain districts even before the war, they built new houses to meet the increasing demand.

The advantage possessed by municipalities over private builders has been that they were able to obtain loans from the Government at a low rate of interest, and that they expected no profit. This enabled them to re-house people displaced by slum clearances in or near the site to be cleared, where the value of the land was such as to put ordinary economic building out of the question. Before the Housing Act of 1919, municipalities had to pay the full commercial value for the land thus acquired; but the 1919 Act allowed them to acquire the land at its housing value. It is perhaps worth noting that the London County Council have endeavoured to mitigate the uneconomic character of slum clearance building by catering deliberately for people able to pay a higher rent than those who were displaced, whereas Liverpool has succeeded in re-housing in the new buildings some 90 per cent. of the persons displaced. It is doubtful if the saving effected in this way in London has in any sense offset the harm done by dispersing former tenants, thus causing overcrowding in districts where it did not exist before.

Of the total number of houses, estimated at 219,774, built under the 1919 and 1923 Acts, 170,257 houses were built by Local Authorities.

7.—Building with the help of Building Societies.

The operations of building societies have been more extensive in the Midlands and the North than in London. It is reported that in Leeds there has been, of recent years, an increasing tendency for the professional and middle classes to avail themselves of facilities given both for saving and borrowing of securities on real estate. A building society does not help those who wish to rent houses, and can only operate where there is a considerable desire to own houses. Societies have been accustomed to lend up to 80 per cent. of the value of a house on valuation, and at the present time it is being asked on behalf of societies, that the Government should guarantee the margin between the amount loaned and the cost of the house.

(B) Present Position of the Housing Problem.

1.—Economic Aspect.

It is impossible accurately to estimate the number of houses built before the war or to classify them. The Census Reports give certain figures of the number of houses in the country, and in each area. But the definition of "houses" used in all Census Reports before that of 1921 was highly technical, and successfully obscured the facts. For practical purposes it is necessary to rely on the returns made by the Board of Inland Revenue, which give for each year the number of houses charged for Inhabited House Duty, i.e., houses of over £20 annual value, and that of houses exempt from the Duty, i.e., those of under £20 annual value. The majority of the exempted houses are working-class dwellings, but certain small residential shops, hotels, public houses, lodging houses, etc., are also included. The Board of Inland Revenue figures may be taken as a fairly accurate statement of the total number of separate dwelling-houses in the country in each area, and indeed, in the absence of exact figures, have to be so taken. As a general indication of the position before the war, it may be said, on the basis of these figures, that in the period 1904-1913 there was a net increase in England and Wales of 864,679 houses; that is, an annual average increase of 86,500. The gross annual production was higher, as the figures show excess of production over demolition. Of these 86,500, approximately 63,000 were houses of under £20 rateable value.¹

Nearly a million men lost their lives in the war, and it has been estimated that about 25 per cent of these deaths involved the breaking up of a home. Comparison of figures of population and of houses available throughout the last century indicate that the demand for houses has been increasing faster than the increase in population.² Furthermore, the housing need was accentuated by the suspension of emigration during the war. It was met to some slight extent by the absorption of empty houses, the number of which at the outbreak of war was considerable; but taking all factors into calculation, it is safe to say that the actual shortage created by the suspension of building between 1914-1918 was not less than 350,000.

The population of the country has been growing since the war, and there has in consequence been an increasing annual need. In the six years 1918-1924 the need for not less than 500,000 houses has been created, and in that time not more than 300,000 houses have been built by Local Authorities, Public

¹ See Appendix I.

² See Appendix II.

Utility Societies, private builders and other agencies. It is apparent, therefore, that the shortage which existed at the end of the war has not been diminished, and that it is in fact actually greater now than at the time of the Armistice.

In considering the extent of the shortage, it is important to bear in mind that the unit of housing need is not the individual but the family. In recent years, owing to a diminution in the size of the average family, the number of separate families in the country has increased out of proportion to the total of the population. Marriages in 1919, 1920 and 1921 reached the unprecedented number of over a million.¹ A study of statistics tends to show that 100 marriages create a need for about 33 new homes, the remaining 66 being counterbalanced by the break-up of families owing to deaths.

It is maintained by some that 25 per cent. of the total number of houses in the country are slum dwellings. The total number of homes is now about eight million, and this calculation makes it appear that two million new houses are required to make possible the demolition of houses unfit for habitation. A more modest estimate is based on the Report of the Land Enquiry Committee in 1913 to the effect that 10 per cent. of the population were then living in slum conditions. Owing to the conditions that have since obtained, it is certain that this percentage has risen, and it is probably safe to assess the present number of houses which ought to be demolished at approximately one million. If a long term programme is entered on for the abolition of slums it must be based on the facts (1) that the slum problem cannot be tackled until the general shortage of houses is made good, and (2) that the number of worn-out houses increases year by year.

In order to keep pace with normal requirements, to make good the war shortage, and to re-house the slum dweller, it will therefore be necessary to adhere to the present official programme of 2½ million houses in 15 years.

The indictment of present housing accommodation is heard on all sides, and the demand for new houses grows more and more insistent, but it is only by reference to economic conditions that the acute shortage can be explained, or the many obstacles to building be realised. The fundamental questions at the root of the housing problem are the relation of wages to rents, the supply of capital for building purposes, the organisation of building labour, and the control of materials. The salient features of the present economic situation are the discrepancy between an economic rent and the paying capacity of the ordinary wage-earner, and the shortage of skilled men.

¹ See Appendix I.

COMPARATIVE COST OF BUILDING.

The lack of men, materials, and transport were the chief reasons for the high cost of building immediately after the armistice. Before the war a cottage could be built for £150 to £300, while in 1920 the price ranged from £500 to £1,150.

The loss on each house built under the Addison régime is estimated at 25s. a week, or £60 per annum at the rate of interest chargeable in 1919. In justification of a policy which produced houses at such an enormous loss, it must be remembered that the cost of production after the war in all fields of activity was abnormal, and furthermore that the building power absorbed by factory-owners, in industrial repairs and re-construction, greatly enhanced the cost of building generally.

Turning to the present, the cost of building cottages varies considerably in different parts of the country: it is comparatively low in the neighbourhood of the large brickfields, and it is particularly high in the London area. Local conditions of many kinds affect local prices. The average price throughout the country for a cottage with three bedrooms, parlour, living room, bathroom and scullery is now (June, 1924) about £450. The average price of non-parlour houses is now between £400 and £425. These prices have risen since the beginning of the year—partly because of advantage being taken of the increased building programme, and partly because the prices which ruled in 1923 were sometimes actually unprofitable to contractors. To the price of the house itself must be added that of land, roads, sewerage, fencing, etc., an addition amounting to £50 to £100 per house. The average all-in cost at the present time is, therefore, from £500 to 550 for a parlour house and from £475 to £525 for a non-parlour house.

The fall in costs since 1921 may be attributed generally to the decrease in cost of living, and in particular to three main causes, namely, increased output in the building trade, the fall in the price of building materials, and the reduction of wages in the building trade. It is sometimes said that the high wages of building operatives are the main factor in keeping up the cost of building; but it may be pointed out, first, that though the building trade has been able to maintain a higher standard than some other industries, there has been a real drop in the standard rates of payment; and, secondly, that rates of pay ought to be higher in an occupation which is seasonal and precarious than in an industry where work is stable and more evenly spread. In any case, wages are only one item in the cost of actual construction; they vary considerably, but they are usually estimated at approximately 45 per cent. of the total cost.

Two other factors have helped in the past to keep up building costs: first, the policy of restriction of output pursued by the building operatives; and, secondly, the un-economic system

whereby both contractors and architects are paid a percentage of the costs. Further, it is estimated that nearly 90 per cent. of the essentials in house construction are in the hands of combines, which means that prices in this country are kept up, and that attempts to buy more cheaply abroad are circumvented.

The stabilisation of prices is obviously desirable, but control is very difficult to apply, and any interference with the interaction of supply and demand often has unforeseen injurious results. The effect of control might be to produce a scarcity of materials. The Conservative Government in 1923 appointed a Committee to watch the prices of building materials, but this Committee can do no more than report when prices rise. Prices of bricks, in particular, have risen since the beginning of 1924, but this is apparently due not so much to any deliberate attempt to profit by the increased demand, but by a "scramble" for bricks in anticipation of a shortage. The method adopted by the Labour Government of bringing the manufacturers and merchants of building materials into conference with representatives of the building industry, and thus obtaining a promise that in certain conditions there would be no profiteering, is probably helpful. It has to be pointed out, however, that the present Government has requested Parliament to give it large powers for exacting penalties if profiteering in building materials is discovered, but no measures, whether friendly or penal, will prevent the prices of materials rising if the demand exceeds the supply. If, therefore, a much enlarged housing programme is to be carried out, it is essential that the output of building materials should expand in proportion.

RENTS AND WAGES.

A comparison of pre-war and post-war rents and wages shows that the present deadlock in house-building is mainly due to the fact that a rent which will bring in an adequate return to the builder for his outlay is beyond the income of that grade of workers who most urgently require increased accommodation, and for whom the new houses are intended.¹

Predominant weekly rents, including rates, in London for 1912:—²

	Inner Zone		Middle Zone		Outer Zone	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
2 rooms ...	5	0 to 8	4	0 to 7	—	—
3 rooms ...	6	6 to 10	5	6 to 9	5	0 to 8
4 rooms ...	—	—	7	0 to 10	6	0 to 9
5 rooms ...	—	—	8	6 to 13	7	6 to 11
6 rooms ...	—	—	10	0 to 15	8	6 to 12

¹ For comparative expenditure on Food, Rent, Clothing, etc., see Appendix IV.

² Cost of Living Enquiry, 1912. Cd. 6955.

Average weekly rents, including rates, in England and Wales:—¹

	s.	d.
2 rooms, covering 16 towns	3	7
3 rooms, covering 38 towns	4	2
4 rooms, covering 67 towns	5	1
5 rooms, covering 69 towns	6	2
6 rooms, covering 29 towns	7	7

In Scotland:—

2 rooms, covering 10 towns	4	0
3 rooms, covering 10 towns	5	8

Under the operation of the Rent Restriction Acts, the average increase in the above inclusive rents from July, 1914, to June, 1924, has been about 50 per cent.

The houses built under the Addison Act were let at un-economic rents, which varied enormously in accordance with the size of houses, with the district in which they were built, and the character of the district, i.e., borough, urban or rural.² Three Rural Districts are letting non-parlour Addison houses at rents lower than 4/- per week, exclusive of rates, etc.; while one Borough is obtaining a rent of 22/-. The majority both of parlour and non-parlour houses fall within rental limits of between 7/- and 11/-.

In some housing schemes care has been taken to secure as tenants manual workers, and in particular, ex-service men. In others, larger rents have been obtained by letting to tenants in a better position and able consequently to pay a higher rent. There is no general correspondence between the cost of the Addison houses and the rents obtained: the economic rents would have been anything from 25/- to 40/- per week. The basis of rent calculations was the rent of pre-war houses of similar accommodation in the district, plus the 40 per cent. allowed under the Rent Restriction Acts, and plus an allowance for the extra conveniences and amenities of the new houses. In numerous cases the rents charged are beyond the means of working-class tenants. The result of this is either that the working-class need is met indirectly by the housing of others than the working-classes, or that the tenants sub-let to lodgers or other families. Most Local Authorities take trouble to find good and satisfactory tenants. The London County Council, for example, scrutinise applications with great care, and refuse applicants whose income is thought insufficient to enable the rent to be paid without pinching the family in other respects.

The houses built by Local Authorities under the 1923 Act (under 5,000 were completed by May 1st, 1924) have the ad-

¹ Cd. 6955.

² See Appendix III.

vantage of the lower costs prevailing in 1923 and 1924. Rents on these houses are designed to give an economic return on the cost of building less the subsidy given. In judging what is the economic return, the fact that some Local Authorities are able to borrow money more cheaply than others has to be taken into account. An economic rent has to provide for the payment of interest and capital charges on the all-in cost of the house, and for a further annual sum, generally put at 25 per cent. of the annual charges, for repairs, maintenance, etc. Assuming that a Local Authority has to obtain a net return of 7 per cent., the economic rent on a £500 house is 13/6.

The housing policy now adopted by the Labour Government rests on an entirely different basis. The intention of the new Act is to provide houses to let at rents equal to the pre-war rents for working-class houses in the district, plus 40 per cent. This point is dealt with more fully in Part II. of this pamphlet.

The following table of agricultural wages¹ will indicate the curve of wages in general between the years 1914 and 1922, and it will be seen that in some districts the agriculturist labourer was earning as much as 52s. 6d. a week in December, 1920, whereas to-day he may only be earning 25s. a week.²

	Dec. 1914		Dec. 1918		Dec. 1920 Peak rate		Nov. 1922 Lowest rate	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Cheshire.....	18	0	36	0 ³ / ₄	52	6	32	0
Essex	14	8	33	0	46	6	6 ¹ / ₂ d. an hour	
Leicester	17	2	31	0	46	0	28/0—31/6	
Norfolk	14	0	30	0	46	0	25	0
Northumberland ...	21	0	36	0	50	6	32	0
Somerset	15	4	30	0	46	0	30	0
Suffolk	13	7	20	0	46	0	6d. an hour	
Yorks.....	18	6	35	0	49	0	30	0
Glamorgan.....	20	2	35	6	50	0	33	0

It may be pointed out that the rise and fall of wages correspond roughly to the cost of living,³ though there is a marked tendency for wages to fall below the cost of living level in those trades which are most open to foreign competition, and to keep above that level in sheltered trades. The cost of living index figure is based on the supposition that the average family pays between one-fifth and one-sixth of its weekly income in rent; and since the wages of a large proportion of wage earners are regulated by the cost of living figure, their rent-paying ability is, in consequence, to some extent regulated also. Enquiries made before the war indicate that, generally speaking, the worst paid

¹ Labour Research Department.

² For wages of miners, printing and railway workers, see Appendix V.

³ For Table illustrating Variations in Value of £1 in Food, see Appendix VI.

workers pay the highest proportion of their income in rent. Inasmuch as the high cost of building is to-day proportionately higher than the general high cost of living, economic rents would only be made generally possible by an all-round increase in wages. The conclusion, therefore, is reached that housing can be put on an economic basis, only by wage increase or by some form of subsidy for housing from the public purse.

THE BUILDING TRADE.¹

It is sometimes asked why a marriage cannot be effected between unemployment and the housing shortage, which would result in homes for the homeless and work for the workless. On the face of things it seems incredible that the idle men should not be put on to work which so urgently needs doing, and that their unemployment benefit should not be converted into a well-earned wage, when such a plan would obviously constitute an immeasurable benefit to the whole community.

There are, of course, many causes at work which prevent this desirable arrangement being put into practice; and while it is undoubtedly true that the opposition of the building trade to dilution is an important factor, the main reason why the unemployed do not build houses is that they are totally untrained and unfit to do so. It may be argued that building involves much unskilled work which these men are perfectly capable of doing, but no advance will be made unless the number of skilled men, and in particular of "key men," is increased in the same proportion. With some justice it may be said that if this had been realised earlier, skilled masons, etc., would by this time have been trained. But there is considerable reluctance on the part of boys to enter the building trade, owing to the long season of unemployment and to the loss of time in bad weather. It cannot be denied, however, that the building trade is mainly responsible for the shortage of skilled men, but it must be borne in mind that every group, whether trade or otherwise, has to fight for its own interests; furthermore, the unprecedented demand for houses is temporary, and, when in the course of time it diminishes, there will be a slump in building, resulting in unemployment, not only for the new operatives, but also for the original men in the building trade.

A number of enquiries have recently been made into the number of men in the building industry now as compared with the number before the war. In broad outline the position is that the number of skilled and unskilled building operatives reached the highest level in 1901, had declined considerably by 1911 and, since that date, has further declined to a level which

¹ For wage rates in Building Trade, see Appendix VII.

makes it impossible to secure the number of men required to carry out a building programme as large even as that which was being carried out before the war. The Ministry of Labour figures showing the number of insured persons in the trade reveal the following facts:—

	Dec. 1913	Oct. 1921	Jan. 1924
Carpenters	126,780	132,260	125,010
Bricklayers	68,920	62,170	57,170
Masons	38,870	23,880	22,270
Slaters	6,650	5,370	5,210
Plasterers	20,180	17,080	16,070
Painters	130,860	115,900	106,860
Plumbers	36,860	35,840	34,440
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	429,120	392,500	367,030

The present position, therefore, is most serious, since a larger number of houses per annum are now required than have ever been built in this country, and the number of operatives available is smaller than it has ever previously been. In considering these figures, it is important to remember that a very high percentage of workmen in any of the building trades are employed on work other than housing. Carpenters and joiners, for example, are employed in cabinet making, carriage building and ship building, painters to a large extent in repair work, and bricklayers in commercial building of many kinds. The Report of the National House Building Committee issued in April, 1924, estimates that to produce 125,000 houses a year 85,000 craftsmen are required. These men cannot be withdrawn from other work and transferred to housing, and it is therefore a prime condition of any enlarged housing programme that the number of operatives should be considerably increased.

Unemployment at the present time is practically non-existent among bricklayers and plasterers. There is, however, a considerable amount of unemployment among building labourers of all classes. In house building, the trades have to follow each other in succession; the excavator being followed by the bricklayer, the bricklayer by the slater and tiler, the slater and tiler by the plasterer and painter, etc. The organisation of the building industry, therefore, for the production of houses has to take into account, not only the total number of operatives, but the proportion of men in each craft. An ideal housing programme would be one which would provide for the increase of labour on house building at times when other building was slack, and thus,

so far as the building industry is concerned, prevent the waste of public money on unemployment payments which might be profitably expended on the construction of houses.

With regard to wages in the building trade, the following figures represent the position of building craftsmen and building labourers in London in June, 1924:—

	Hourly rate	% increase on 1914	Weekly rate	% increase on 1914
For craftsmen	1/8	200	73/4	78
Labourers	1/3	230	55/-	205

Note.—The cost of living figure for June 1st, 1924, was 69 per cent. increase on 1914.

The London rate is higher than in any other part of the country, except Birkenhead, where craftsmen get 1/9 and labourers 1/4 per hour. The lowest rate is at Folkestone, where it is only 1/4 for craftsmen and 1/- for labourers. Other parts of the country range between these two extremes. It should be added that the painters' rate is in many places a penny per hour less than that of other craftsmen.

Recent attempts have been made to raise the rate of wages by another 2d. per hour, and for the time being a compromise has been effected on the basis of an increase of 1/2d. per hour. The most difficult outstanding question is payment for "wet" and "broken" time. Without going into the merits of the dispute, it may be asserted that there is little likelihood of peace in the building trade, until the wage earners in the industry are put beyond the reach of suffering which is the result of causes so entirely beyond their control as the English climate.

2.—Social Aspect of the Present Position.

It is agreed by all social reformers that better housing conditions lie at the root of progress, and that a large proportion of the money now spent on the social services has actually to be expended in repairing the mental, moral, physical, and industrial evils caused by bad housing.

PUBLIC HEALTH.

Tuberculosis is the cause of 9 per cent. of the deaths of the population. It is a long illness, and chiefly attacks people between the ages of 25 and 40, when they are most likely to have children depending upon them, so that the charge upon Poor Relief is considerable. Sunshine is the best disinfectant, and overcrowding of the population, with its inevitable lack of sunshine and fresh air, always results in a high incidence of tuberculosis. In Wigan, for instance, the Medical Officer of Health reports in 1922 that the incidence of tuberculosis was highest in the Ward where the population was densest, i.e., 5.4 occupants per house and 105 persons per acre. In Liverpool the re-housing

of the original inhabitants of a slum area reduced the tuberculosis rate by half. The Registrar-General has estimated, after enquiry, that the total annual direct costs of this disease to the taxpayers of England and Wales is 14 millions. With good housing conditions this might be reduced by half.

Infant Mortality.—"The death-rate of infants is the most sensitive index we possess of physical welfare and the effect of sanitary government."¹ It has been found that infant mortality rates vary in direct proportion to insanitary conditions and overcrowding. For example, in Birmingham, of two districts containing about the same number of working people living, except for housing, in the same circumstances, where housing conditions were comparatively good, the infant death-rate in 1912-1916 was 89, while in the overcrowded area where houses were almost twice as close together, the death-rate was 171 for the same period.¹ In Welwyn Garden City, of all the infants born since the first houses were occupied 3½ years ago, actually none have died, nor have any children under five years died in the same period.

General Death-rate.—It has been pointed out by Dr. Russell, late Medical Officer of Health for Glasgow, that in the eight largest towns in Scotland the general death-rate varies in direct proportion to the number of one-roomed homes found in each.² In Finsbury the death-rate in 1906 was 6.4 in homes of four or more rooms, while in one-roomed tenements it was 39.

Rickets.—It is a significant fact that the areas in which both rickets and tuberculosis are most prevalent, correspond to the industrial and coal-mining districts, in which are found the highest wages and the greatest density of population. Where houses are so close together that people are living more than 100 to the acre, lack of open spaces and sunshine is inevitable. A previous history of rickets, however slight, is invariably associated with those who are numbered among the C.3 population, as has been proved by the examination of recruits; and the C.3 people are a heavy burden on the able-bodied members of the community.

New houses will not be a panacea for all ills, but, in terms of human happiness, the effect of decent housing conditions is incalculable; in terms of money it should be possible to arrive at the approximate amount which could be saved, though there will be grounds for objection to any estimate, whether large or small.³

¹ Cmd. 363.

² "Housing and Health," Vivian.

³ For table showing cost of social services, see Appendix VIII.

The Convener of the Dundee Housing Committee has estimated that of about £62,000 spent annually in that town upon Public Health, at least 20,000, or nearly one-third, is spent in combating the evils resulting from bad housing conditions.¹ The total expenditure on health in Great Britain in 1919-1920 was £62 millions, and Dr. Addison's estimate that £20 millions of this was spent in repairing the evils of deficient housing confirms the above.² These two estimates do not take into account the expenditure on Education, Poor Relief, and Crime.

EDUCATION.

The Budget estimates for the year 1924-1925 are £41,900,000 for England and Wales, and £5,773,495 for Scotland, exclusive of University Education, Museums, Research work, and of the large expenditure on the part of Local Authorities. One child in every six is said to be unable to gain the full benefit from its lessons because of the state of its health, while one in ten is mentally backward for the same reason. In 1920-1921, of the 7 million children attending Elementary Schools in England and Wales, an average of 8 per cent. were always absent through illnesses; of 2,521,500 examined, 40 per cent. were suffering from physical and mental defects, and 35 per cent. of children under five years of age required medical treatment before they could benefit by attending school. In addition to this, a large proportion of the children have little chance of home study in their overcrowded dwellings, and many of them suffer from lack of sleep owing to noise and lights kept burning. Apart from health, the degrading conditions in the homes of some of the children have a marked effect on their powers of effort and concentration, and this reacts on the teaching staff by imposing an added strain on their patience and ability.

SOCIAL CONDUCT.

With regard to crime, intemperance, and immorality, it is difficult to relate them directly to deficient housing accommodation, but it is clear that the lack of privacy inevitable in overcrowded houses must hinder moral development. Individual behaviour is not so noticeable in a crowd, hence the fear of public opinion is lessened and moral standards generally are weakened. A statement made by the Head Constable of Liverpool is worth quoting:—

"I have no hesitation in saying that the work carried out by the Housing Committee in the demolition of insanitary slum property, and the rehousing of the tenants in the present bright, attractive, and sanitary model dwellings, has had a most beneficial effect as regards the sobriety, good conduct and generally improved demeanour of the residents in the districts affected. . ."³

¹ "Glasgow Herald," 29/12/1922.

² "Betrayal of the Slums," Addison.

³ Memorandum on the Housing of the Dispossessed in Liverpool, by Alderman J. A. Harford, J.P., 1917.

Speaking of crime in particular, Alderman Harford, of Liverpool, states:—

“From a police point of view the policy of rehousing the dispossessed in up-to-date sanitary houses has resulted in a striking improvement. . . . For instance, in one area the offences of persons residing in the neighbourhood which in 1894, prior to demolition, amounted to 202 per annum, fell in 1904, ten years after re-building, to 84, and in 1912, to 4.”¹

With regard to morale, man is a gregarious animal, but he is not gregarious all the time, and periods of solitude are necessary for his mental and spiritual restoration. Constant noise and interruption lead to an unreflective mental state, characterised by credulity, fickleness, and inability to reason and concentrate. Thus the mental effect of living in a crowd is to produce the mob mind, which is more often swayed by lower than by higher motives, and to encourage the herd instinct which deadens initiative. Decent housing is the basis of right conduct, and good citizenship is dependent on proper home conditions.

HOUSING AND INDUSTRY.

It may be worth while noting, in connection with the cost to the community of bad housing, that there is a considerable annual loss to industry from deficient housing. Men living under unsatisfactory conditions do not get the rest they need, particularly if working on night shifts, and they often suffer from minor ailments, which mean a low state of vitality and hence less output. It is estimated that 14 million working weeks are lost annually through sickness.

It has also been pointed out that the housing shortage has hampered industrial enterprise, because the workers were unable to get accommodation near the factory. It was found by Lord D'Abernon and Dr. A. K. Chalmers, in 1918, when they made an enquiry into the causes of “broken time” in the shipbuilding yards, that the men who lived near the works were as a rule steady in their attendance, but those who came from a distance were irregular. As regards labour unrest, it was found that in each of the eight divisions which came under the survey, a shortage of houses was given as one of the causes.²

3.—Legal Aspect: the Laws affecting Housing.

For nearly a century Parliament has been passing Acts dealing with the housing question; the names of Shaftesbury, Torrens, Cross are associated with the earlier Acts. Recent legislation, however, is mainly contained in the following Acts:

¹ Memorandum on the Housing of the Dispossessed in Liverpool, by Alderman J. A. Harford, J.P., 1917.

² Cd. 8663.

the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890; the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909; the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act of 1919; the Housing, etc. (No. 2) Act, 1923; the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899; the Public Health Acts and the Rent Restriction Acts.

The 1890 Act, which consolidated previous Acts and is the basis of all succeeding ones, was divided into three Sections:—

- (i.) Provision for preparing and carrying into effect of slum clearance on a large scale.
- (ii.) Provision for the closing of houses unfit for human habitation, and the treatment of others not absolutely condemned.
- (iii.) Provision for the building of new houses, including both cottages and tenements, to be let by Local Authorities.

The 1909 Act comprised many important amendments to the Act of 1890. It added to the duties of Local Authorities in regard to inspection, and gave them more drastic powers to close or improve houses. The Local Government Board was empowered, on complaint, to hold an enquiry, and to call upon a Local Authority to prepare and carry into effect a housing scheme. The most important constructive feature of the Act related, however, to Town Planning, a subject which only partly comes within the scope of this pamphlet.

It may be well to make clear that it is the considered opinion of many with great experience in Local Government, that the increased powers given to Local Authorities should have been accompanied by an endeavour to secure increased efficiency in administration. If more careful attention had been given to the question of administration, criticisms would have been fewer, and the relation between the Local Authority and owners of property improved.

Before 1919, although they had powers to build new houses, the Public Authorities were mainly concerned with the demolition of old houses, or the alterations necessary to make them fit for habitation. They might buy houses and convert them into working-class dwellings themselves, or they might assist a private owner to reconstruct or enlarge the buildings by making a loan. The 1919 Act greatly increased and extended the former powers, and further made it the duty of every Local Authority, wherever a need for new houses was made manifest, to prepare schemes for the construction of new houses to be erected directly by itself, or in conjunction with a Public Utility Society or a private builder. The Local Authority was only required to pay such a sum as could be raised by a penny rate, the rest was to be provided by Parliament. Apart from giving this important

incentive to municipal building, the 1919 Act made a step forward with regard to Town Planning. The machinery, by which Town Planning Schemes are prepared and sanctioned, was simplified and unnecessary delay avoided.

The general principle embodied in the 1923 Act was assistance to private enterprise given *through* Local Authorities. The Government paid to Local Authorities a subsidy of not more than £6 per annum for a period of 20 years for each house of a specified size, the construction of which was assisted by the Local Authority. The Local Authority was not compelled to add anything from its own resources to this subsidy, but might do so if it desired. The two other important points were: first, power was given to the Minister of Health to enact bye-laws, which, at his discretion, might be brought into force in any area, to override existing bye-laws which impeded the erection of houses; and second, the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act of 1899 was amended so as to raise the limit on the market value of houses to be built by any person under the Act, from £800 to £1,200, and to enable the advance to be made by instalments as the building of the houses progressed.

It is impossible in a small pamphlet to explain in detail the powers of the housing authority under the various Acts, or to deal with the elaborate provisions: some reference to the 1923 Act and to the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act will be made in Part II., and only the Rent Restriction Acts, which have lately assumed so much importance, will be considered at any length here.

THE RENT RESTRICTION ACTS.

The position of the Rent Restriction Acts in the present housing question is that of a component in a vicious circle. So long as rents are restricted and freedom of possession denied to the landlord, there is of necessity some reluctance to invest money in building houses. On the other hand, so long as the supply of houses fails to come up to the demand, there is bound to be pressure exerted by tenants to retain the protection which the Restriction Acts give them.

The great difficulty which besets the removal of Rent Restriction laws, once they have been imposed, is made evident by the experience of other countries besides Great Britain. The questions raised are complex, and the best general exposition of the whole problem is contained in the Majority and Minority Reports of the Inter-departmental Committee on the Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Act, 1920, issued in 1922. The Majority Report took the view that the primary investor (i.e., the property owner) was discouraged by any interference of the State in the relationship of landlord and tenant, and that both he and the secondary investor (i.e., the mortgagee)

desired security which could be realised at short notice. Rent Restriction laws in being hinder the activity of investors, and uncertainty whether Rent Restriction laws will be continued has an even stronger effect. Not only the economic factor therefore, but the psychological, has to be taken into account.

The Minority Report, on the other hand, declared that the existence of Rent Restriction Acts had not prolonged the shortage of accommodation. It maintained that rent restriction had no definite economic effect in the circumstances which have existed since the war, but it did not meet the arguments advanced by the Majority with reference to the psychological effect.

The plain fact which neither the Majority nor the Minority was able to avoid or controvert was that there was still a gap between the commercial rent of a new house and the rent which may legally be charged for a house erected before 1918. So long as this is the case the abolition of rent restriction will enable the supply to meet the demand, only if the level of rents throughout the country is raised. If rents are raised generally the cost of living figure would be affected. If the cost of living was affected, wages would automatically rise in a number of industries, and the cost of national production therefore increase. The economic argument for rent restriction is largely that at a time when houses built at pre-war cost out-number those built at post-war cost, it is cheaper for the country to subsidise new houses than to increase all wages. The advisability or inadvisability of a housing subsidy has to be considered in the light of this argument.

If the Acts were withdrawn before the housing shortage was met, there can be no doubt that a number of landlords would endeavour to improve the value of their property by letting the houses to better class tenants than those at present occupying them. Many families which have in the past lived in houses of six to ten rooms are, because of domestic and financial difficulties, now willing to live in five-roomed houses, and, as always happens in practice, the effects of the housing shortage would, without rent restriction, bear more hardly than ever on the poorest and roughest sections of the community. While the poorest wage-earners are often paying a rent which is quite out of proportion to their income, numbers of the middle-class, in order to have more money to spend on other things, are occupying houses of low rentals which should be reserved for people of lesser incomes.

If the Acts are maintained, private enterprise can produce a supply equal to the demand, only if the cost of building falls to a figure which would bring the economic rent of new houses to the same level as the restricted rent of pre-war houses. There has been a good deal of misunderstanding of the actual effect of what are commonly called the Rent Restriction Acts, and the

following extracts from the Final Report of the Departmental Committee which considered the effect of the Rent Restriction Acts is worth reproducing:—

“The Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (Restrictions) Act came into force on the 2nd July, 1920, and remains in force, in the case of England and Wales, until the 24th June, 1923, and in the case of Scotland until the 28th May, 1923. It repealed the previous Acts on the same subject. Its general effect is to fix a ‘standard rent’ for certain classes of houses, namely, those in which the pre-war rent or rateable value was not more than £105 in London, £90 in Scotland, and £78 elsewhere.” To this it may be added, for the sake of clearness, that the first Rent Restriction Act dealt with houses of which the standard rents were £35 in London, £30 in Scotland, and £26 elsewhere, and the second Act, houses of which the standard rent was £70 in London, £60 in Scotland, and £52 elsewhere. The standard rent means the rent at which the house was let on August 3rd, 1914, or in cases where it was not let at that date, the rent at which it was last let previous to that date, or where it was first let after August 3rd, 1914, the rent at which it was first let after that date. If the rent at any such date was less than the rateable value, the rateable value at that date is the standard rent.

In the course of the controversy which has taken place in the press since the question of rent decontrol was raised, many rash statements have been made as to the class of houses which are in fact affected by the proposed decontrol, and it may be worth while to take the highest class of controlled houses in London as an example. £105 standard rent covers houses which are at present let at a rent, exclusive of rates, of approximately £146, i.e., the standard rent plus the 40 per cent. increase permitted under the Act. It will be seen, therefore, that rent restriction has been extended to cover houses which are altogether beyond the reach of weekly wage earners, and that in so far as the Rent Restriction Acts discourage building, they discourage building of houses for people who, according to pre-war standards, require houses of considerable size.

Building by private enterprise since the war has provided a fairly considerable number of houses of the first and second grade. The intention of the Rent Restriction Act passed in 1923 by the Conservative Government was definitely to set an early limit to restriction, in the hope that within a reasonable period, general building by private enterprise would be resumed; at the same time it left a loophole for the extension of rent restriction for a long period for houses of the third grade. It made also certain concessions to landlords, notably that any house becoming vacant was automatically decontrolled, and that on the making of a new lease extending beyond June 4th, 1925, the house leased is decontrolled from the date of making that

lease. It also extended the grounds on which landlords could gain possession. The intention of the Labour Government is to extend rent restriction for a longer period, and to give protection to tenants, particularly from eviction on the ground of non-payment of rent during unemployment. The difficulty is that both control and decontrol undoubtedly result in hardships for different sections of the community, and opinions as to which hardships are the more intolerable differ widely.

(C) Special Problems.

Though the problem of housing must be dealt with as a whole, it may be useful to consider separately some of the special features of Slum Clearance, of Rural Housing, and of the London Problem.

1.—Slum Clearance.

The problem of slums is not confined to London, by any means, but is found in all large towns, and notably in Glasgow: nor does it concern only the lowest grade of the population, as a large proportion of average wage-earners have now to live in slums. Though it has a special significance and peculiar difficulties, it cannot be separated from the main housing problem, of which it is a part, and no slum clearance should be undertaken until other accommodation has been found for the inhabitants. And here arises the chief difficulty, since, not only is it impossible to find other accommodation except by building new houses, but the inhabitants themselves refuse to be moved. It may be argued that the move is only temporary, and that the original inhabitants can return when new buildings have been constructed on the old sites, but, unless huge block dwellings are erected, the same number of people cannot be housed in the old congested area. Apart from the serious objections to block dwellings, the people themselves dislike them, and the coster families of Whitechapel, for instance, who for generations have led their donkeys through the front door to the back garden, are at a loss to know what to do with them when they find themselves expected to live in a top flat.

To patch up the existing dilapidated houses would not be difficult, but is usually quite unsatisfactory, as, without demolition and reconstruction, few would have sufficient air and space. To limit houses to 12 per acre means a population of 60 or 70 per acre, and even if new houses are to be built at the rate of 20 per acre—a course to which there is grave objection on social and hygienic grounds—each acre of land cannot provide for more than 100 persons. This limitation of population per acre has to be compared with the fact that there are districts in London and other great cities where the density of population

reaches a figure of over 1,000 per acre in certain areas of limited size. Overcrowding of this nature can be dealt with only by tackling the causes of overcrowding, i.e., the concentration of industry in the centres of great towns, since people cannot be expected to move unless there are good economic and social reasons for their doing so. With the coming of motor transport and the improvement in means of communication, a tendency has been apparent in recent years for industry to move from the centre of towns to their outskirts. But it is possible, by the proper use of the Town Planning provisions of existing legislation, so to regulate this centrifugal tendency as to avoid the creation of new congested areas in the districts to which the factories are moving, and at the same time to encourage the decentralisation so as to reduce the pressure for accommodation in central areas. In many cases, moreover, great industrial and social advantages would accrue from a policy which aims at persuading industries, which contemplate moving, to go right away from existing towns to satellite towns, which can provide the maximum of industrial efficiency and social welfare. The Report of the Unhealthy Areas Committee, published in 1919, states that, were all the districts in Greater London with a density of more than 200 persons per acre to be cleared, and houses built to accommodate 100 persons per 20 houses on each acre, approximately one million persons would have to move elsewhere.

Liverpool is able to disprove the contention that people, who have lived in insanitary houses and under conditions of overcrowding, will not respond to a higher standard of living encouraged by the new houses, but will speedily reduce their new homes to the disgraceful state of the old. The dispossessed tenants in Liverpool were re-housed on the same site in Corporation dwellings, with a resulting moral and physical improvement and a general raising of the standard. In one district, where the same people were re-housed after clearance, both the general and tuberculosis death-rate were reduced by half, and the prosecutions for drunkenness and assault decreased. It is estimated that the reduction in the number of slum courts from 1,510 to 323 has saved the municipality £3,000 per annum in cleaning and sanitary administration alone.

As a rule, however, slum clearances do not succeed in rehousing the original population, which is dispersed during demolition, and the new dwellings are usually tenanted by a somewhat superior class. The main obstacle, therefore, to slum clearance on a large scale is seen to be the problem of shifting the population, in which are involved three other questions, namely, probable loss of employment for the dispossessed, increase in the already heavy passenger traffic, and, lastly, lack of other accommodation for the inhabitants of the slum area.

2.—Rural Housing.

It may be said that the provision of houses in rural districts has been the most striking example in social history of the operation of chance. Generally speaking, it has not been possible to meet the need of the worst-paid sections of the workers by making use of cast-off houses, as has been done in urban districts. There are many villages where, until recently, no new cottages had been built for half-a-century or more. The houses which existed had been built when the cost of building was exceedingly low (in many cases not more than £60 or £80 per cottage), and, during the agricultural depression, neither could the farmers afford to build cottages for their workpeople, nor could labourers afford a rent which would recoup a speculative builder. To a large extent, in consequence, agricultural labourers have lived in houses tied to a particular farm and let at a nominal rent, or the rent has been treated as part of wages. Large landowners frequently, and small landowners sometimes, built cottages either out of philanthropy or in order to enhance the value of their estates. In any case, the rent actually paid had to conform to wages, usually between 12s. and £1, paid on the supposition that rents would be practically negligible.

In country districts near large centres of population the cottage shortage has been aggravated by the invasion of town dwellers who wish either to live in the country or spend weekends there. The general standard of rural housing has been deplorably low, and the adoption under the 1919 Act of an urban standard of house for all sites, rural or urban, has been the beginning of a revolution, the consequences of which it is at present impossible to foresee.

In towns the needs of workers in many different industries have to be considered, but the countryman is dependent for his livelihood on one main industry, agriculture. As is well-known, agriculture at the present time is passing through a serious depression, and although wages have fallen throughout the country, the industry declares that it is unable to bear even these reduced rates. There seems to be no prospect whatever of agricultural labourers being able to pay rents anything like equal to those paid by employees in other industries.

The supply of older cottages let at almost nominal rents, 1/- to 3/- a week, is very limited, and many of them are in an advanced state of decay. Landowners and farmers struggling against agricultural depression and heavy taxation, and hampered by uncertainty of the future, are not in a position to build cottages. Private enterprise has built a certain number of cottages in rural districts, but it would be absurd to expect speculative builders to build at present costs for tenants who cannot pay rents of more than 4/- or 5/- a week, and are in fact accustomed to pay less.

A considerable number of cottages were built under the Addison Act in rural districts, but only in rare cases are they let to agricultural labourers. They relieved the rural housing position to some slight extent by housing postmen, policemen, railway employees, and others, and thus leaving older and cheaper cottages for agricultural labourers. In some rural districts the Councils insisted that it was their duty to house agricultural labourers, and accordingly obtained from the Ministry of Health and the Rent Tribunal permission to charge very low rents. Exact figures are not available, but it is probably true to say that of the 212,000 houses built under the Addison Act, under 500 are occupied by agricultural employees.

The present position as regards both the quality and supply of houses for agricultural workers is most unsatisfactory. It is indeed one of the factors which tend to discourage workers from attempting to earn their living in the country. Most of the old cottages fall far short of modern standards—even the modest standards of the rural districts. Defects of every kind are common: the surrounding soil is not properly drained, there is no provision for carrying off slop water, wells and pumps are in need of repair; there are no damp-proof courses to the walls, windows are not made to open, the rooms are low and dark, sanitary arrangements are primitive or defective, and bedroom accommodation is insufficient. Many cottages in the middle of the villages are huddled too close together and have little or no garden. Back-to-back houses and houses with no through ventilation, are by no means uncommon in the villages.

Is there any remedy for these conditions? It would be impossible in many instances to make these old cottages satisfactory, owing to faulty structure; they ought to be pulled down, but they cannot be condemned, because there are no new cottages into which the inhabitants can go. In a large number of cases, however, improvement would be possible if sufficient money were expended. Many owners of cottage property would be willing to face this expenditure if they could see a prospect of even a modest return on their money. But at present they see no such prospect. For while standards have risen and the cost of repairs has increased by leaps and bounds, rents can only be raised by a very small amount.

Before the war the net rent was so small a sum that an increase of even the full 40 per cent. would not, it is obvious, meet the heavy cost of remedying the kinds of defects mentioned above. In addition, the owner has no means of knowing what will be considered a "reasonable state of repair" by the Local Health Authority. He therefore, decides to refrain from raising the rent, and to carry out only those structural repairs which are necessary to prevent the destruction of the property. In some instances he does not even do this, and many cottages are

in consequence gradually falling to pieces, while their owners are subjected to inconvenience and discomfort. The suggestion has been made, and it is perhaps worthy of consideration, that where the pre-war rent was below a certain figure, and the owner is now willing to bring the cottages up to a recognised standard, he should either be released from the control of the Rent Restrictions Acts or allowed to raise the rent sufficiently to secure some return on his outlay.

Numbers of houses have been or are being built by private enterprise in rural districts with the help of the subsidy given under the Housing Act of 1923. But nearly all these houses are to be found in districts which, though still classed as rural for local government purposes, are in reality of a semi-urban character, and generally within easy reach of a large town. They are all, or nearly all, erected either for a prospective owner-occupier, or for sale, and the price is beyond the reach of the most thrifty agricultural worker. These houses are, in fact, meeting the needs of town workers who wish to live in rural surroundings, and their provision tends to ease the difficulties of the town population and not those of the country worker.

Since the recent adoption of a National Housing Policy, it has often been represented that special provision should be made to meet the peculiar needs of rural districts, but no definite move in this direction was made until Mr. Wheatley, in the Housing Bill now before Parliament, decided to offer a higher subsidy from the Exchequer (£13 10s. instead of £9 for 40 years) to houses built in agricultural parishes. The rightness of this special provision will not be questioned by those who know the facts, and the definition of agricultural parishes is an exceedingly interesting way of solving a baffling problem. The difficulty of distinguishing in legislation between districts which are rural in name but not in character, and those which are really rural has always been recognised. The new Housing Act defines an agricultural parish as one in which (a) the annual value of the agricultural land in the parish exceeds one-third of the total annual value of the parish, and (b) the population of the parish is less than 35 persons per 100 acres. This should prevent the special subsidy being used to provide cheaper houses for those who can afford to do without such help, but it may become necessary to provide also that only agricultural workers, or at least those workers who earn their living in an agricultural parish, shall be eligible for tenancy of a subsidised house. Another proposal is that the subsidised houses should be reserved for families having more than a certain number of children below a certain age, but this limitation would obviously have to apply to urban as well as rural districts.

There appears to be considerable difficulty in administration of Health and Housing laws, which hampers both the execution

of necessary sanitary improvements and the construction of new cottages. The suggestion is therefore put forward that the administration of these laws should be transferred to an authority having jurisdiction over a wider area, such as the County Councils.

One danger to be guarded against is that, in the face of the impossibility of paying anything approaching economic rents on new houses without a substantial rise in agricultural wages, the Local Authorities may be induced to relax their rules against taking lodgers, so that the evil of sub-division of houses may become more common in rural districts. This opens up a big question, and, in this short pamphlet, it is only possible to point out that a lodger often enables a family to maintain a higher standard of living than would otherwise be possible, and that it is therefore unwise at the moment either to introduce new rules against lodgers, or to insist on too strict an interpretation of existing ones.

3.—London.

Because of its size and complexities, London is faced with greater difficulties than any other part of the country, particularly with regard to administration.

The London County Council administers the County of London, which had in 1921 a population of 4,483,249. The population in this area has been declining since 1901, owing to the displacement of dwelling houses by factories, warehouses and other non-residential buildings. London, however, in fact exists far beyond the County borders, and the population of Greater London, which in 1801 was just over 1,100,000, in 1921 had increased to 7,476,168 persons. The population of Greater London has therefore constantly increased, but it is important to note that it has done so at a diminishing rate since 1881. The population, in fact, is tending to reside further and further from the centre, with the result that a constantly heavier strain is put on transport facilities, and although the population of the centre as a whole is decreasing, the actual density of population to the inhabited acre is becoming greater.

The congestion in London proper is so great that not another house can or ought to be built. The only ways to ease the shortage, therefore, are, either to demolish the existing small houses and build huge block dwellings capable of holding far more people, but usually condemned by housing reformers; or to construct houses in districts outside the Administrative County of London, as is being done by the L.C.C. at Becontree and Bellingham. The advantages of this latter plan are obvious, but they are somewhat counteracted by the wear and tear of travel. Not only does the exhaustion from journeying in a crowded carriage to and from business impose a severe strain

on the inhabitants of the suburbs, but the ever-increasing volume of travellers is an aggravation of the already serious traffic problem. Though there is something to be said for the proposition of making central London exclusively commercial and industrial, yet the conveyance of the entire working population every morning from their suburban dormitories would involve the re-organisation of the means of transport.

In London (i.e., the Administrative County) the powers and duties in housing matters are divided between the London County Council and the Metropolitan Borough Councils. If new houses are to be provided outside the Administrative County, the L.C.C. is the Local Authority charged with the duty, as, for instance, the development of the Becontree Estate. Each Metropolitan Borough is the Local Authority within its own boundaries, but with two important provisos: first, the L.C.C. may submit and carry out a scheme for the use of land in any Metropolitan Borough to meet the housing need of districts outside the Borough; and, secondly, the Ministry may order that any of the powers and duties of a Metropolitan Borough Council, in regard to the provision of houses, shall be transferred to the L.C.C. It will be seen at once that confusion and conflict are bound to arise from this unsatisfactory system of administration, and that, with different authorities impinging on each other, it is impossible to have a comprehensive scheme of Housing or Town Planning for the whole area. It would seem that a new system of Local Government in London is essential, and much consideration has already been given to the matter; but without complete upheaval, it is difficult to see how the vast conglomeration of houses and streets called London, with its innumerable authorities, could be governed on a satisfactory basis, so that each district would have local autonomy and yet all would combine for the good of the whole.

It is suggested that satellite towns would solve London's special problems. If the size of London itself were curtailed, and other industrial centres were established in the Home Counties, each with its share of business and residential accommodation, the traffic problem would disappear, since much of the traffic would be diverted from London and no worker would have to journey far; further, the piecemeal administration of to-day would be exchanged for one central authority to deal with matters of common interest to all, with properly organised local authorities empowered to administer for local needs.

The general lines of such reorganisation have lately been discussed by the Royal Commission on the Government of Greater London, but no satisfactory solution of the problem was found. It has to be remembered that the Committee on Unhealthy Areas, the only body which has, since the war, definitely considered the problems created by the existence of slums, came

to the conclusion that slum conditions could not be cured without dealing radically with the present concentration of industry in the centre of existing towns and the consequent overcrowding.

Summary of Part 1.

In view of the foregoing information, it is possible to summarise the position as follows:—

- (1) The Housing shortage existed before the war.
- (2) It has been accentuated by economic and social forces consequent upon the war, and is now more serious than it has ever been before.
- (3) Deficient Housing inflicts unwarrantable injury upon the community and involves enormous waste of public monies.
- (4) Ignorance in regard to the future legal position of landlords and tenants has led to inevitable hardship and friction.
- (5) Uncertainty in regard to a future Housing policy has helped in a large measure to destroy the confidence of prospective builders and operatives.
- (6) The inability of the lowest wage earner to pay an economic rent has discouraged investment in house property, and this lack of private capital is largely responsible for the present deadlock.
- (7) The lack of skilled operatives and the wages problem, together with the difficulty of the cost and supply of materials in the building industry, make it unlikely that a rapid increase or improvement in housing accommodation will follow immediately upon legislation.
- (8) Neglect of town planning and the irregular development of urban districts has helped to produce unhealthy areas and has increased the traffic problem.

NOTE.—Attention is drawn to the distinction between the middle-class house and the house for the small wage-earner. It may reasonably be hoped that the normal channels of supply and the efforts of the private builder will automatically meet the needs of the former. In the last few years much has been done to ease the shortage of this type of house. The real problem is therefore to provide houses for the weekly wage-earners.

PART II.

MEASURES FOR REDUCING THE SHORTAGE AND IMPROVING HOUSING CONDITIONS.

INTRODUCTION.

In Part I. of this pamphlet an endeavour has been made to state the scope and character of the present housing problem.

Part II. is divided into 8 Sections, the first 4 of which deal with the Powers for the Closing and Repair of Unfit Houses, the Rights of Complaint against Local Authorities possessed by the public, and the general Powers and Duties of Local Authorities with regard to housing. Sections 5, 6, and 7 show the provision of houses under the 1923 Act, under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act and by Public Utility Societies. In Section 8 will be found an outline of the present Government's new proposals.

SECTION 1.

The Closing of Unfit Houses, the Clearance of Unhealthy Areas, and the Repair of Houses which can be made reasonably fit for human habitation.

In 1919 the Ministry of Health published a Manual on Unfit Houses and Unhealthy Areas, and the following paragraphs are here reproduced:—

CLOSING ORDERS.

If on the representation of the Medical Officer of Health, or of any other officer, or other information given, any dwelling house appears to the Local Authority to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation, the Authority are required to make a closing order.

Any owner aggrieved by the order may appeal to the Minister of Health within 14 days after the service of the notice of the order.

If no appeal is made, or if an appeal is made and is dismissed or abandoned, the closing order becomes operative.

Nothing in the Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (War Restrictions) Act, 1915, and the enactments amending that Act is to affect the right of a Local Authority to make and enforce a closing order.

Where a closing order has become operative, the Local Authority are required to serve notice of it on the occupier of the dwelling house ordering him to quit it within a specified period, not being less than 14 days.

Unless the dwelling house has been made unfit by the wilful act or default of a tenant, the Local Authority may pay him a reasonable allowance on account of his expense of removing, and the allowance is recoverable from the owner.

If any owner of a house in respect of which a closing order is in force or any other person lets or attempts to let, or occupies or permits to be occupied, that house or any part of it as a dwelling house, he is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £20.

If a house is rendered fit for habitation after a closing order has been made, the Local Authority are required to determine the order, and it then ceases to be in force. If they refuse to do so, the owner may appeal to the Minister against their refusal.

In closing the individual house unfit for human occupation, the officers of Local Authorities are called upon to exercise judgement on what is relatively a simple issue. But directly it is a question of the treatment of groups of houses, the task becomes one of great difficulty. This difficulty arises from the fact that in many cases the houses which are unfit for human habitation, are mixed up with other houses which are either, not so bad as to be condemned as unfit for human habitation, or are quite reasonably fit for occupation. In some cases valuable business premises are situated in such slum areas, and the problem becomes as a result even more complicated.

CLEARANCE OF UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Local Authorities may issue separate closing orders on all those houses included in an unhealthy area, which are unfit for human habitation, and in this way the value of the property may be reduced to a more reasonable level. But in most cases it is essential that the whole area should be cleared, and slum clearance schemes under the Act of 1890 become necessary.

Under this Act,¹ schemes usually provide for:—

- (a) the purchase, compulsorily or by agreement, of the whole area;
- (b) the demolition of buildings on the area which are themselves insanitary or which would interfere with the re-development of the area on satisfactory lines;
- (c) the proper laying out of the area with convenient streets and any necessary open spaces;
- (d) the erection on the area, or elsewhere, of sufficient dwelling accommodation in respect of persons of the working classes displaced by the scheme;
- (e) the disposal of any surplus lands.

Financial assistance from the State will be available for these schemes.

¹ Manual of Unfit Houses and Unhealthy Areas. Vol. II.

REPAIR OF HOUSES.

Amongst the many valuable Sections of the Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909 (The Burns Act) Section 15, providing for the repair of houses which can be made reasonably fit for human habitation, deserves special commendation. It is true to say that when Local Authorities are fully alive to the administrative value of this section and take vigorous steps to administer it on sound lines, a great improvement will be wrought in hundreds of the working-class homes of this country.

This Section is clearly explained in the Manual referred to above, on "Unfit Houses and Unhealthy Areas," (Vol. I.) and the following useful extracts are therefore given here:—

Under Section 15 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909, the Local Authority may serve a notice on the landlord of a house which is not in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation, requiring him to execute any necessary works.

This section applies only to houses let since 3rd December, 1909, and of which the rental does not exceed certain limits. There is an appeal to the Minister of Health against certain notices served under it and the landlord may, instead of repairing the house, declare it to be closed.

If the landlord does not do the works and does not declare the house to be closed, the Local Authority may do the works and may, subject to an appeal to the Minister of Health, recover the expenses from him.

Fuller powers for securing that an unfit dwelling shall be rendered in all respects reasonably fit, whether the defects are dangerous or injurious to health or not, are now given by Section 28 of the Act of 1919.

This section provides that, if the owner of any house suitable for occupation by persons of the working classes, fails to make and keep it in all respects fit for human habitation, the Local Authority may serve notice on the owner requiring him within a reasonable time, not being less than 21 days, to execute such works as may be necessary. If the house is not capable, without reconstruction, of being rendered fit for human habitation, the owner may within 21 days after receipt of the notice, by written notice to the Local Authority, declare his intention of closing the house for human habitation.

Full particulars of the works are to be submitted to the Local Authority, and they must satisfy themselves that the works have been efficiently carried out before they make any loan.

The Local Authority may borrow for the purpose of such loans in the same manner as for the purposes of Part III. of the Act of 1890.

The value of the powers in use can best be demonstrated by reference to the figures for the pre-war year ending March 31st, 1913. In this period of twelve months the number of notices served under Section 15 in towns and urban districts alone was 30,781. In 1,143 cases the landlords chose to close the houses rather than comply with the notices. But in 24,448 cases the notices were satisfactorily complied with and the houses were rendered fit by the landlord. The Local Authorities executed the repairs themselves in regard to 67 houses and charged the land-

lords with the cost. In a large number of cases repairs were executed as a result of an intimation being given to the owners that the Closing Order Section (17) of the Act of 1909 would be administered. Under pressure of the anticipation that, in default of action, the houses would be closed, 9,457 dwellings were made fit for human habitation by the owners without closing orders being actually issued. In 2,284 other cases, moreover, the closing orders were determined (or cancelled) on the ground that the houses had been rendered fit. In other words, the number of houses made fit under Section 15 and Section 17 (the closing order section) was no less than 36,526 in this period of twelve months. Since the war, however, the shortage of alternative accommodation has paralysed action on these lines.

SECTION 2.

The Public Right of Complaint.

One of the most important provisions of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1909 (as amended by the Act of 1923) relates to the power of complaint possessed by any four Local Government electors of a district. If they believe that their Local Authority is neglecting its duties with regard, either to closing unfit houses or building new houses, they have the right to complain to the Ministry of Health, who may hold a public enquiry and order the Local Authority to carry out its duties.

In the great majority of cases Local Authorities are keenly in earnest in their desire to administer with vigour and good will their housing responsibilities, but there are to be found cases in which, for various reasons, Local Authorities are unwilling to take action. Provided that those making use of the power of complaint avoid unfair criticism of the Local Authority and make sure, before they launch their complaints, that there are good grounds for pressing them, it is clearly of great public importance that this right should be fully exercised in those cases in which housing duties are not fulfilled by Local Authorities. It may be added that the expense of holding the enquiry will not fall upon the four Local Government electors responsible for making the complaint.

That the power of complaint is of real value can be seen from the fact that in the case of the Chertsey Rural District Council, the late Sir Edward Holden, a former Chairman of the London, City and Midland Bank, acting with a group of householders, made a formal complaint under the Act to Mr. Burns, as President of the Local Government Board, with the result that following the holding of an enquiry, an order was made under Part III. of the Act, calling upon the Council to build twelve houses. The order was duly obeyed.

SECTION 3.

The Duty of Local Authorities to prepare and administer Housing Schemes.

Under the series of Acts of Parliament placed on the Statute Book from 1890 onwards to 1919, the definite duty of building houses has been placed upon local Authorities.

In Sections 1 and 2 of the Housing, Town Planning, etc., Act, 1919, it is stated:—

(1) It shall be the duty of every Local Authority within the meaning of Part III. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890 (hereinafter referred to as the principal Act), to consider the needs of their area with respect to the provision of houses for the working classes, and within three months after notice has been given to them by the Local Government Board, to prepare and submit to the Local Government Board a scheme for the exercise of their powers under the said Part III.

(2) A scheme under this section shall specify—

- (a) the approximate number and the nature of the houses to be provided by the Local Authority;
- (b) the approximate quantity of land to be acquired and the localities in which land is to be acquired;
- (c) the average number of houses per acre;
- (d) the time within which the scheme or any part thereof is to be carried into effect;

and the scheme may contain such incidental, consequential and supplemental provisions (including provisions as to the subsequent variation of the scheme) as may appear necessary or proper for the purpose of the scheme.

(3) It shall be the duty of a Local Authority on which obligations are imposed by any such scheme to carry that scheme into effect within such time as may be specified in the scheme or within such further time as may be allowed by the Local Government Board.

From this it will be seen that Local Authorities can no longer escape their responsibility, and that the community has a right to look to them to contribute to the supply of houses for the needs of each district.

SECTION 4.

The Powers and Duties of Local Authorities relating to the Construction of Houses to let.

Under the Housing Act of 1890 Local Authorities were empowered to acquire land and build cottages or tenements for the occupation of the working classes. In 1909, 1919 and 1923 various amendments to the 1890 Act were carried and, leaving aside for the moment the question of financial aid, the powers and duties of Local Authorities under these various Acts may thus be summarised:—

- (1) Local Authorities (including County and City Councils, Town Councils, Urban District Councils and Rural District Councils) are empowered to acquire land, if necessary under compulsion, and build thereon cottages or tenements to be let to working class families.
- (2) Under the Act of 1919 the duty of taking action was made a continuing one (see previous Section).

Coming to the question of financial aid, it may be pointed out that before the war no provision was made for the giving of subsidies by the Government in aid of housing in England and Wales and Scotland: substantial financial aid was, however, given to Ireland under the Irish Labourers' Acts. Under these Irish Acts 50,000 rural cottages were erected and were let at rents ranging from 1/- to 2/- per week by the aid of grants provided by the taxpayer.

In 1919, for the first time in the history of the housing movement in Great Britain, State subsidies were given in aid of the housing of working class families in Great Britain. It took the form of annual grants to meet the deficit on housing schemes over and above a limited payment made by the Local Authority concerned, equal to one penny in the £ on the assessable value of the area of the Local Authority. Upwards of 200,000 houses have been built under the 1919 Act and although there has been much controversy concerning the value of these houses, there is now a general consensus of opinion that they represent, more especially in the limitation of the number of houses per acre, a great and welcome advance on the pre-war standards of housing construction.

The latest estimate of the cost of the houses built in a time of great post-war inflation of prices—an inflation which found expression in big prices throughout all industries—is £7,500,000 a year. At the end of 20 years a substantial part of this loss will disappear with the coming to an end of the loan period for road construction, but the greater part of the loss will continue for the building period of 60 years, subject to the possible reduction of interest charges on re-borrowing. It should be added that under an Act passed in December, 1919, provision was made for the payment of lump sums to those responsible for the building of houses by private action, and 42,000 houses were built under this provision, which was intended to stimulate private enterprise. The stimulus to this type of action has been continued (vide Section 5).

In 1921 the further development of the policy embodied in the Housing Acts of 1919 was for the time being arrested. In 1923, however, a fresh start was made. The financial conditions of the Act submitted to the House of Commons in this year by Mr. Neville Chamberlain reversed the procedure of the earlier Act by

fixing the grant to be given to Local Authorities in respect of houses to be built and let by them at the sum of £6 for 20 years, leaving the Local Authorities concerned to bear whatever margin of loss might be sustained.

At the time of writing—June, 1924—45,647 houses have been built or are to be built by Local Authorities under the terms of the 1923 Act. These houses represent what is in effect a continuation of the Housing policy of 1919. In view of the fact that the scheme submitted by Mr. Wheatley to the House of Commons on behalf of the Government, will substitute grants to Local Authorities on a larger scale than those provided under the Chamberlain act for the purpose of building houses to be let, there is no need to discuss in greater detail here the possibilities of action under the limited terms of the 1923 Act.

SECTION 5.

The Provision of Houses by Private Enterprise under the Housing Act of 1923.

In submitting the housing proposals of the late Government, Mr. Neville Chamberlain clearly explained to the Members of the House of Commons that it was the deliberate intention of the Government, whilst continuing to give financial aid to Local Authorities, to give the greatest possible stimulus to action by private enterprise. The aid thus given took the form of an annual grant of £6 for 20 years paid to the Local Authority and given by the Local Authority, either with or without an addition made out of local rates, to those coming within the terms of Section 2 of the Act (1923).

Under this Section (2) Local Authorities are empowered to give assistance in the following ways:—

- (a) make or undertake to make grants by way of lump sum payments after the completion of the houses;
- (b) undertake to pay to the person by whom the rates on any house are payable such annual sum as may be specified in the proposals for a period not exceeding twenty years;
- (c) undertake to provide, during such period as may be specified in the proposals, any part of the periodical sums payable to a building society incorporated under the Building Societies Acts, 1874 to 1894, or other body or person, by way of interest on, or repayment of, advances made for the purpose of building a house or purchasing a house the construction of which was begun after the twenty-fifth day of April, nineteen hundred and twenty-three.

With regard to the sizes of the houses qualifying for financial assistance, the following provisions are made:—

The houses in respect of which contributions may be given under this section shall be either—

- (a) a two-storied house with a minimum of six hundred and twenty and a maximum of nine hundred and fifty superficial feet; or
- (b) a structurally separate and self-contained flat or a one-storied house with a minimum of five hundred and fifty and a maximum of eight hundred and eighty superficial feet;

such measurements being calculated in accordance with rules made by the Minister:

Provided that, if the local authority in any particular case satisfy the Minister that, having regard to special circumstances existing in their area, there is need for houses of smaller dimensions, the minimum measurement may be reduced, as respects such limited number of houses for that area and subject to such conditions as the Minister may determine, in the case of a two-storied house to five hundred and seventy, and in the case of a flat or a one-storied house to five hundred, superficial feet.

Except where otherwise approved by the Minister on the recommendation of the local authority, every house or flat to which this section applies shall be provided with a fixed bath.

According to figures recently published (June, 1924), 10,519 houses have been built under the Act, and 36,001 are now under construction. The total number of houses entitled to the 1923 subsidy is estimated at 45,647 built or to be built by Local Authorities (as stated in Section 4) and 87,909 built or to be built by private enterprise. The 45,647 houses coming under the schemes of Local Authorities will be let to tenants at rents similar to those charged under the Act of 1919, and this housing effort represents, therefore, a continuation of the policy of that year. Of the houses for which the private enterprise subsidy is to be given, over 5,700 are being built by Public Utility Societies formed by colliery owners and other employers, to house their employees. A certain number are being built by men of small means with the aid of Building Societies or with the help of the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act (see Section 6). But the great majority of houses coming within the provisions of this Act are being sold at prices ranging from £600 to £750—representing a weekly or monthly expenditure far beyond the capacity of the ordinary workman to pay. The rent paying capacity of the average wage-earner may be taken to be from 4/6 per week in rural areas to 7/6 in provincial towns, and 9/- in London—in all cases exclusive of rates. (See Part I. B.1.)

SECTION 6.

The Provision of Houses under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act.

Where a Local Authority exercises their right of supervision over the conditions under which the subsidy is given to owner-occupiers, it has been found possible in practice to secure that builders shall provide houses at prices which accord with those charged to the Local Authority itself, when houses are provided under their own housing scheme.

It may be taken that £500 will be the total cost of a house, coming within the measurements of the Act, built by a private builder on the demand of a potential occupying owner. This £500 includes the cost of roads, sewers, land, building cost and builders' profit. Of this £500, the Local Authority may now, if they so decide, lend almost the total amount. The 1923 Act gives power to Local Authorities to advance up to 90 per cent. of the market value, and without entering into abstruse details, it may be said that the market value is likely to be approximately the building cost less the amount given by way of subsidy assistance, that is, if a reasonable contract price for the house is obtained.

Assuming that the market value of the house is assessed at 75 per cent. of the present cost of building, 90 per cent. of the market value would be about £335. Assuming also that the house to be built is one of the limited size recognised in the 1923 Act and that the Local Authority is willing to supplement the Government grant of approximately £75 by another £25, the proposition to be faced by the person willing to build a house would be this:—

Lent by the Local Authority	... ..	£335
Subsidy assistance from the Local Authority (including State subsidy)	... ..	£100
To be provided by the would-be owner	... ..	£65

The £100 subsidy is payable on completion of the house.

Apart from the initial sum of £65, the occupying owner will be called upon to provide the payments for interest and sinking fund over a period of thirty years on the £335. The rate at which the Local Authority are empowered to lend the first of these sums is fixed from time to time by Treasury Minute. It is important to realise this and to avoid the assumption that the rate at which the money is to be lent can be determined by each Local Authority. It may be desirable for many reasons to secure greater freedom in this respect for Local Authorities, but at the moment the position is that under the present Treasury Minute, the rate of interest prescribed is 5½ per cent.

With a provision for sinking fund adequate to repay principal and interest in 30 years (the period allowed under the Act of 1899)

a rate of a little less than 7 per cent. will be payable, this covering both interest and repayment of capital. As the sum on which the occupying owner will pay this interest and sinking fund charge, is £335 he will have to find an annual sum of about £23 9s. or 9/- per week. He will also have to pay the rates and provide for repairs. It may be urged that 9/- a week is a larger rent than some labouring men can pay, but the amount represents much more than the rent. By the payment of this amount, and thanks to the aid of the subsidy given by the State and the Local Authority, the occupying owner is placed in a position of acquiring in the course of 20 years the house in which he lives.

It may be added that provision is also made for Local Authorities to lend money under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act for houses of larger measurements than those set forth in the preceding section. But in such cases the provision as to subsidies does not apply, and as the houses thus provided hardly come within the definition of houses for the wage earners, no description is given in this pamphlet of the procedure in this regard.

Though it seems clear that the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act cannot hope to mitigate the shortage of houses for the poorer wage-earner, where unfortunately the need is greatest, it can be a benefit to people with moderate incomes, who can find a small capital sum, who are not dependent on mobility for their employment, and who can afford to set aside a repair fund.

SECTION 7.

Construction of Houses by Public Utility Societies and similar Organisations.

The particular constitution of Public Utility Societies has been dealt with in Part I.

Societies of this kind have an especial claim to financial assistance in as much as they can be formed by persons or bodies who have no purpose to serve, except the provision of satisfactory houses where they are needed. The interest payable on capital is limited, and any surplus of income goes to the maintenance and improvement of the property.

The Public Utility Society method is eminently one to be adopted by employers anxious for the good housing of their employees, by groups of persons who wish to use their savings in building houses for themselves, and by persons who are willing to loan money at a low rate of interest in order to secure good housing conditions in their villages, towns or districts.

It should be noted that the Governments of other countries in Europe have, since the war, relied chiefly on societies of this kind to improve the housing shortage, and have aided them substantially by loaning them money at a very low rate of interest.

In considering a policy of State aid to Public Utility Societies, two main difficulties have to be taken into account: first, the provision of capital; and, second, the removal of the discrepancy between the economic rent of the houses and the rent which the tenants can pay. As was indicated in Part I., the first difficulty was largely met by legislation, which empowered the Public Works Loan Board to lend at the current rate of interest 75 per cent. of the approved cost of the scheme.

The difficulty encountered in the inability of the tenants to pay an economic rent was met in the 1919 Housing Act by an annual subsidy of 30 per cent. of the annual loan charges, but, as this is no longer available, this question had again to be reconsidered.

The following suggestions were made in the early part of 1919 by the Garden City and Town Planning Association relative to new terms of financial assistance:—

1. The making of an annual grant by the Local Authorities out of monies provided by the State, which would enable Societies to meet the difference between the revenue derived from rents and their necessary out-goings.
2. The remission of rates on houses built by Public Utility Societies.
3. The purchasing and laying out of the land on which Public Utility Societies schemes are carried out, and the leasing of the land thus laid out to the Societies at the lowest possible ground rent.
4. The making of an annual grant direct by the State to Public Utility Societies on the same terms as any grant given to Local Authorities.
5. The reduction in the rate of interest charged on loans from the Government.

Under the Act of 1923 provision was made for the giving by Local Authorities of the sum of £6 for 20 years provided by the State, together with any payment which the Local Authority might decide to add. It was further provided that the Minister may make contributions to the extent of £6 for 20 years direct to "any Society or body of trustees or company established for the purpose of, or amongst whose objects or powers are included those of, constructing, or facilitating or encouraging the construction of, dwelling-houses for the working classes, being a society, body of trustees, or company which does not trade for profit or whose constitution prohibits the issue of any share or loan capital with interest or dividend exceeding the rate for the time being prescribed by the Treasury."

These terms did not, however, meet fully the claims made on behalf of Public Utility Societies, and attention may therefore be specially drawn to the provision made in the new Housing policy (vide following Section) that the increased contribution is to be made payable either through Local Authorities, or direct by the

Minister to Societies or Companies who do not trade for profit or whose constitution limits the rate of interest or dividend payable by the Society or Company, provided they are prepared to accept the special conditions as to letting and rents. The increased Exchequer contribution will, however, only be payable in respect of houses provided by private building enterprise or by Societies or Companies, subject to the requirement that the rents shall not exceed those which could be charged by Local Authorities if the houses had been provided by them.

SECTION 8.

The New Housing Policy.

The main features of this policy, which is both ambitious and comprehensive, are as follows:—

PERIOD OF CONSTRUCTION.

(1) The Government propose that the policy of the Chamberlain Act of 1923 shall be maintained and the period throughout which the Act will be in operation shall be extended to fifteen years instead of three years.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

(2) The terms of financial aid proposed under the new policy are thus explained in the Government Memorandum:—¹

The amount of the increased contribution proposed to be paid under this provision is £9 a year for 40 years, or if the house is situated in an agricultural parish in England and Wales or in a rural area in Scotland £12 10s. a year for 40 years. The Bill will lay down conditions defining "agricultural parish" and "rural area" for this purpose.² The special conditions applicable to houses for which these increased contributions will be payable will include the following:—

- (a) That the houses are let for occupation to tenants who intend to reside in them;
- (b) that they shall not be assigned or sublet by the tenants except with the consent of the Local Authority;
- (c) that they shall not be sold or otherwise disposed of except with the consent of the Minister or the Scottish Board of Health;
- (d) that contracts for the construction of the houses shall contain a fair wages clause;
- (e) that the rents to be charged for the houses shall not in the aggregate exceed the amount which would be payable if each house were let at the rent at present commonly charged in the area for pre-war working-class houses, except where the average deficit on the houses after receipt of the Exchequer subsidy would exceed the equivalent of £4 10s. a year for 40 years.

¹ Cmd. 2151.

² See Rural Housing, Part I.

RENTS OF THE NEW HOUSES.

(3) The object of the new housing policy is declared to be that of securing the building of houses to be let—not sold—to ordinary working-class tenants at rents which they can afford to pay, and Local Authorities will be called on to fix rents which shall not be greater than those paid for the ordinary working-class house built in the pre-war period, with of course the addition of the 40 per cent. permitted under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act of 1920 (see Part I.).

On careful analysis it would seem that the net rent (apart from rates) paid for the occupation of a cottage dwelling with three bedrooms in provincial towns of England and Wales was, on an average, 5/- per week, in the Middle and Outer zones of London from 8/- to 8/6 per week, and in Scotland from 4/6 to 5/- per week. To these figures must be added the 40 per cent. increase permitted under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act of 1920, and the present rents (apart from rates) for three bedroom cottages may therefore be taken to be:—

- (a) in provincial towns 7/- per week.
- (b) in the Middle and Outer zones of London
11/3 to 12- per week.
- (c) in Scotland 6/6 to 7/- per week.

Under the Government policy it is proposed, as a condition of receiving grants on the new scale, that rents equivalent to these shall be charged by local authorities for their new houses. It is moreover clearly anticipated that, when a sufficient number of new houses have been built and let, the restrictions placed under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act may be removed without giving rise to any fear that inflated rents will be demanded and secured for old houses.

It will be noted that in the case of agricultural parishes a further subsidy of £3 10s. will be given by the Government to Local Authorities.¹ In view of the extremely low rents already paid in rural areas and the low wages received by agricultural labourers, grave doubts have been expressed concerning the possibility of letting rural cottages at rents which the tenant can afford to pay. It is clear that even with economies in road-making, and with the reduction in the price per acre of land, it will be difficult to let rural cottages at rents of less than 4/3 per week. This aspect of the question will, however, without doubt be fully considered when the Government Policy is under consideration in the House of Commons.

¹ See Rural Housing, Part I.

SIZE OF THE HOUSES.

(4) It is proposed that the 2,500,000 houses to be built in the coming period of 15 years shall comply with the measurements prescribed under the 1923 Act (see Section 5). Whatever may be said with regard to the desirability of concentrating attention in the immediate future on the construction of small houses, the stereotyping of the measurements for two-and-a-half million houses has aroused strong criticism, and it is possible that the limits may be altered when the Bill is under discussion in the House of Commons.

COST OF THE HOUSES.

(5) Much of the time devoted to the negotiations which have taken place between the Minister of Health and the Local Authorities was given to the endeavour to determine the cost of building and the charges to be met in payment of interest, sinking fund, repairs and outgoings. The experience gained in this regard by Local Authorities led them to adopt the view that an all-in cost for land, roads and buildings of £500 per house must be assumed. Of this sum of £500, land cost represents £25, roads and other estate charges £50, and building and other charges in connection with the scheme £425. In some areas of cheap building it is possible to build at a total cost of less than £500. There are, however, on the other hand, many areas throughout the country in which the building cost is substantially greater. In any case, £500 is substantially less than the price asked by house-builders engaged in the provision and sale of subsidy houses coming within the measurements of the Act of 1923. Prices of from £600 to £700 are being asked and readily obtained for such houses.

The following statement of expenditure and income will be studied with interest:—

£500 House let at 7/- per week (apart from rates) in a manufacturing town.

	f.	s.	d.
£500 at $4\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.	23	15	0
Sinking Fund $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. (20 years for roads, 60 years for building, 80 years for land)—estimated	4	0	0
Repairs, collection, management, etc., 30 per cent. on net rent	5	9	3
	£33	4	3
Less rent, 7/- per week	18	4	0
	£15	0	3

It will be seen from these figures that the total loss on an urban house costing £500 (all-in) let at a rent of 7/- per week—

plus rates to be paid by the tenant—will be £15 0s. 3d. per year. Under the scheme of subsidy provisionally agreed to, £9 of this loss will be met by a Government subsidy for 40 years. The Local Authority for their part will be called upon to charge a rent not greater than that current in the district for ordinary houses built in the pre-war period with 40 per cent. added under the provisions of the Rent and Mortgage Restriction Act. From the statement given, it is obvious that the amount of £4 10s. which the Local Authority will be called upon to contribute to supplement the Government subsidy, will not be sufficient to meet all the deficit, and the 30/3 outstanding, will under the Government scheme be added to the rent, making a total of about 7/6 per week plus rates.

The point of special importance which emerges in considering this table of income and expenditure, is the recognition that subsidies of a substantial kind must be given, if Local Authorities are to build and let houses at rents which working-class families can afford to pay. It is possible that in the course of time the rate at which money can be borrowed may fall to a substantial extent. If money could be borrowed at the pre-war rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., the loss on a scheme would be diminished by £6 5s. But there is no immediate prospect that those with large capital sums in their possession will be willing to lend them at pre-war rates of interest.

The cost of building may also fall in the course of time. It represents now a figure from 80 to 100 per cent. higher than the cost of building before the war. There seems, however, to be no immediate prospect of this cost being substantially reduced.

NUMBER OF HOUSES.

(6) With regard to the number of houses to be provided under the long-run policy of the Government, the following points are reproduced from the Financial Memorandum issued to Members of the House of Commons.¹

The object of the proposals for which Exchequer provision is sought is the completion of approximately 2,500,000 houses of the type required in 15 years. Negotiations have taken place with representatives of the Building Industry with the object of devising means for ensuring that there shall be available the labour and materials necessary for the carrying out of such a programme at reasonable cost. The representatives of the Industry have indicated that they are prepared to adopt means of augmenting the resources of the Industry which will render practicable a programme for providing the following numbers of houses in each of the next 15 years:—

¹ Cmd. 2151.

1925	...	...	...	90,000
1926	...	...	...	100,000
1927	...	...	...	110,000
1928	...	...	...	120,000
1929	...	...	...	135,000
1930	...	...	...	150,000
1931	...	...	...	170,000
1932	...	...	...	190,000
1933	...	...	...	210,000
1934	...	...	...	225,000
1935	...	...	...	225,000
1936	...	...	...	225,000
1937	...	...	...	225,000
1938	...	...	...	225,000
1939	...	...	...	225,000

The representatives of the Industry understand that it will be an essential condition of the Government proposals that the production of houses shall be at least two-thirds of the numbers above stated.

It is proposed that the continuance of the Exchequer contribution shall be dependent on this production being maintained and on the cost of providing the houses being reasonable. Provision will, therefore, be made to enable the Minister and the Scottish Board of Health to make an Order, to be submitted to both Houses of Parliament, terminating the liability to make Exchequer contributions (except in so far as houses have already been completed) either in the event of the production of houses as ascertained triennially falling short of two-thirds of the full programme proposed, or in the event of the cost being found after full enquiry at any time to be unreasonable. In any such inquiry regard would be had to all the circumstances, and in particular to the question whether any increase in cost was due to causes within the control of persons engaged in the building industry or the manufacture and supply of building materials.

It is proposed that the Exchequer contributions should be fixed in the first instance for houses built during the first three years only, and that before the end of that period, the position should be reviewed and, after consultation with Associations of Local Authorities, that the contribution for houses built during the next period of three years should be reduced, if the cost of building and other conditions warrant a reduction: any such reduction of contribution will be made by Order of the Minister of Health and the Scottish Board of Health, to be submitted to both Houses of Parliament. A similar review will be made every three years during the continuance of the scheme.

The charge on the Exchequer consequent on these proposals will depend on the extent to which the full programme is carried out and on the variation of the amount of contribution made from time to time. On the assumptions:—

- (a) That the full programme of 2,500,000 houses is carried out;
- (b) that $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the houses are built in agricultural parishes, and
- (c) that the full increased Exchequer contribution is payable in all cases,

it is estimated that the maximum charge on the Exchequer and on local rates would be as shown in the following table:—

Year.	Exchequer Charge. £	Charge on Local Rates. £
1924-1925	278,000	135,000
1925-26	1,072,000	521,000
1926-27	1,905,000	925,000
1927-28	2,823,000	1,371,000
1928-29	3,827,000	1,859,000
1929-30	4,946,000	2,403,000
1930-31	6,195,000	3,010,000
1931-32	7,601,000	3,693,000
1932-33	9,180,000	4,460,000
1933-34	10,930,000	5,310,000
1934-35	12,824,000	6,231,000
1935-36	14,761,000	7,172,000
1936-37	16,699,000	8,113,000
1937-38	18,636,000	9,054,000
1938-39	20,573,000	9,995,000
1939-40	22,511,000	10,936,000
1940-41 to 1963-64	23,156,000*	11,250,000*
1964-65	22,878,000	11,115,000
1965-66	22,084,000	10,729,000
1966-67	21,251,000	10,325,000
1967-68	20,333,000	9,879,000
1968-69	19,329,000	9,391,000
1969-70	18,210,000	8,847,000
1970-71	16,961,000	8,240,000
1971-72	15,555,000	7,557,000
1972-73	13,976,000	6,790,000
1973-74	12,226,000	5,940,000
1974-75	10,332,000	5,019,000
1975-76	8,395,000	4,078,000
1976-77	6,457,000	3,137,000
1977-78	4,520,000	2,196,000
1978-79	2,583,000	1,255,000
1979-80	645,000	314,000

* Per annum.

PROVISION OF LABOUR AND MATERIALS.

(7) Space will not permit the discussion in detail of the vital problem of the necessary supply of labour and materials essential to the carrying into effect of this programme. It will, however, be clearly recognised that the giving of subsidies on any scale will fail to produce the houses so urgently needed, unless there is a great augmentation in the supply of labour and of building materials. There can be no doubt as to the wisdom of the action taken by Mr. Wheatley in bringing into consultation representatives of the employers and operatives in the building industry and the firms engaged in the production of building materials.

The pledge given by the industry to take the necessary steps to secure the increase both in the number of operatives and in the volume of building material is a good beginning, but it is generally

felt that great public vigilance must be shown and a large amount of public action must be taken by Housing Committees and Education Committees of Local Authorities to ensure the increase in the supply of apprentices. The line which will probably be followed by Local Authorities in this regard is contained in the following recommendations reproduced from Memorandum No. 32 issued by the National Housing and Town Planning Council:—

(a) All builders engaged on public work, either national or local, or engaged in building houses in respect of which subsidies are given should be required, as a condition of their contract or the receipt of the subsidy, to train a specified proportion of apprentices.

(b) A Central Committee of Employers and Operatives should be set up and be charged with the definite duties of arranging for the recruitment of apprentices and the provision of adequate facilities for their training.

With regard to the work of the members of this Committee it is suggested that their duties should include the bringing into existence of local committees comprising representatives of employers and operatives, as well as members of the local education authority and technical board, with the distinct purpose of securing the flow of apprentices into the industry and administering a re-organised system under which the old method of training apprentices on actual work shall be supplemented by special training classes which every apprentice will be required to follow.

APPENDIX I.

Increase in number of houses in England and Wales 1901-1914 (as given in the Annual Reports of the Board of Inland Revenue) and total number of marriages 1901-1921.¹

(a) Year	(b) Increase of Houses over £20	(c) Increase of Houses under £20	(d) Marriages
1901	43,358	90,415	259,400
1902	33,516	88,344	265,750
1903	85,797	41,549	261,103
1904	31,426	101,205	257,856
1905	32,758	112,838	260,742
1906	32,098	80,471	270,038
1907	21,076	79,950	276,421
1908	24,216	73,260	264,940
1909	15,283	87,181	260,544
1910	25,506	10,651	267,721
1911	12,370	80,165	274,577
1912	13,779	46,250	283,195
1913	15,539	43,141	286,583
1914	17,867	52,225	294,401
1915	...	...	360,885
1916	Return discontinued during the		279,846
1917	war and not yet resumed.		258,855
1918	...	...	287,163
1919	...	...	369,411
1920	...	...	379,982
1921	...	...	320,768

Column (b) and (c) gives net annual increase of inhabited houses charged to Inhabited House Duty and exempt.

¹ Return of Commissioners for Inhabited House Duty.

APPENDIX II.

Relation of Housing Accommodation to Population.¹

Year	Empties	Being Built	Population Increase	Inhabited Houses Increase	Excess expansion of accommodation
1801	3.65				
1811	2.84	.90	14.0	13.8	— .2
1821	3.34	.92	18.1	16.2	— 1.9
1831	4.83	1.00	15.8	18.8	3.0
1841	5.88	.93	14.3	18.6	4.3
1851	4.68	.81	12.7	11.6	— 1.1
1861	4.94	.73	11.9	14.0	2.1
1871	6.14	.89	13.2	13.9	.7
1881	8.00	.96	14.4	13.4	— 1.0
1891	6.83	.70	11.7	12.8	1.1
1901	7.17*	.99	12.2	14.9	2.7
1911	5.72	.53	10.9	14.1	3.2

*Figure inflated by inclusion of lock-up shops in 1901 Census.

In the table given immediately above, the column of empties shows the actual surplus of houses at each date over the effective demand. The column of houses being built shows the activity of the building trade at each date. The last three columns show the relative increase of population and of housing accommodation, any expansion of accommodation greater than that of population proving, in the period, a tendency for more rooms to be occupied per head.

¹ Return of Commissioners for Inhabited House Duty.

APPENDIX III.

Housing Act, 1919.—Return of Weekly Rents agreed by the Minister of Health or awarded by the Rents Tribunal in respect of Houses erected under Assisted Housing Schemes. (The figures shown are exclusive of rates, taxes and water charges.)

Type of House	Type of Local Authority	19/- to 22/11	15/- to 18/11	11/- to 14/11	7/- to 10/11	3/- to 6/11
A 2.—Living-room, scullery and two bedrooms.	No. of Boroughs	Nil	1	8	35	6
	Urban Districts	Nil	Nil	4	21	12
	Rural Districts	Nil	Nil	Nil	6	2
	Totals		1	12	62	20
A 3.—Living-room, scullery and three bedrooms.	No. of Boroughs	Nil	6	43	235	25
	Urban Districts	Nil	1	31	359	54
	Rural Districts	Nil	Nil	8	296	227
	Totals		7	82	890	306
A 4.—Living-room, scullery and four bedrooms.	No. of Boroughs	Nil	1	2	10	Nil
	Urban Districts	Nil	1	4	7	1
	Rural Districts	Nil	Nil	Nil	5	2
	Totals		2	6	22	3
B2—Parlour, living-room, scullery and two bedrooms.	No. of Boroughs	Nil	3	9	5	Nil
	Urban Districts	Nil	Nil	2	10	Nil
	Rural Districts	Nil	Nil	Nil	1	1
	Totals		3	11	16	1
B3—Parlour, living-room, scullery and three bedrooms.	No. of Boroughs	1	34	112	217	1
	Urban Districts	Nil	18	140	382	14
	Rural Districts	Nil	4	63	392	97
	Totals	1	56	315	1001	112
B4—Parlour, living-room, scullery and four bedrooms.	No. of Boroughs	3	14	69	26	Nil
	Urban Districts	4	20	53	55	Nil
	Rural Districts	Nil	2	16	18	1
	Totals	7	36	138	99	1

The above statement relates to the schemes of 1,208 Local Authorities who have erected houses under the 1919 Act.

In 42 Districts rents are less than 4/-, 40 of these being Rural Districts. Rents of over 21/- are being obtained in 2 Districts, both being Boroughs.

APPENDIX IV.

Comparative Expenditure on Food, Rent, Clothing, etc.¹

Food	60 per cent.	Fuel and Light ...	8 per cent.
Rent and Rates ...	16 "	Other Items ...	4 "
Clothing	12 "		

(Calculation based on Budget Enquiry of 1904)

APPENDIX V.

Rate of Wages for Mining.¹

AREA.	Average Wage per Shift Worked (all Workers included)							
	June, 1914.		Nov., 1918.		Jan., 1921*		Oct., 1922.	
	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
Scotland	6	8.88	13	2.17	20	10.10	9	2.32
Northumberland ...	6	2.17	12	3.95	20	3.60	8	8.47
Durham	6	2.55	11	8.25	20	1.10	8	10.89
S. Wales and Mon.	6	9.22	13	7.55	21	6.80	9	5.38
Eastern Division...	6	7.75	12	4.04	20	3.90	9	9.85
Lancs. & N. Staffs.	6	0.33	11	1.83	18	11.90	8	5.11
N. Wales	5	10.04	11	0.82	18	10.88	8	0.93
Cumberland	6	2.24	12	11.84	20	6.50	9	7.16
Bristol	4	8.63	9	9.81	17	5.50	7	8.41
Forest of Dean ...	5	3.97	10	5.52	18	3.40	7	10.43
Somerset	4	9.43	10	7.00	18	5.00	7	0.54
Great Britain ...	6	5.64	13	2.17	20	3.90	9	3.00

* In January, 1921, an output bonus of 3/6 per shift was payable under terms of agreement with Government (28th Oct., 1920), rendering wages in this month highest in the history of the industry.

NOTE.—The October, 1922, figures exclude the amount of Subsistence Allowances payable in the areas of Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, South Wales, Lancashire and North Staffs., which if added would slightly increase the average figure shown for these areas, and for the country as a whole, by amounts ranging from ½d. to 2d. per shift.

Printing.¹

	Dec., 1914.	Dec. 1918.	Dec., 1920. Peak Rate.	Nov. 1922. Latest Rate
Compositors:				
London	39/-	72/6	100/-	92/6
Grade I. Towns ...	38/-	70/-	97/-	81/6
" VI. "	25/-	58/-	82/6	66/-
Lithographic Printers:				
London	40/-	—	100/-	92/6
Grade I. Towns ...	36/6	—	95/-	78/6
" III "	33/-	—	92/-	75/6

¹ Report on Wages, Prices and Profits prepared by Labour Research Department, January, 1922.

Railwaymen.¹

	Dec., 1914.	Dec., 1918.	Dec. 1920. Peak Rate.	Dec. 1922. Latest Rate
Goods Porters:				
London	20/- 24/-	53/- 57/-	72/6	51/6 49/-
Industrial Districts	19/- 23/-	52/- 56/-	71/6	51/6 47/-
Rural Districts ...	15/- 21/-	48/- 54/-	66/-	51/- 47/-
Guards (all areas) ...	*25/- 35/-	58/- 68/-	72/- 82/6	52/- 65/-
Drivers	30/- 48/-	—	70/- 88/-	57/- 72/-

* According to years of Service.

APPENDIX VI.

Variations in Value of £1 in Food.¹

July, 1914 ... 20/-	Jan., 1917 ... 10/8	July, 1919 ... 9/6
Jan., 1915 ... 17/-	July, 1917 ... 9/9½	Jan., 1920 ... 8/5½
July, 1915 ... 15/-	Jan., 1918 ... 9/9	July, 1920 ... 7/9
Jan., 1916 ... 13/9½	July, 1918 ... 9/6	Jan., 1921 ... 7/2
July, 1916 ... 12/5	Jan., 1919 ... 8/8	June, 1921 ... 9/2

APPENDIX VII.

Wage Rates in the Building Trade.²

Area.	Dec. 1914.	Dec. 1918	Dec. 1920★ Peak Rate	Dec. 1922★ Latest Rate
London—Bricklayers ...	11½d. an hour.	1/5 + 12½%	2/4	1/8
Labourers ...	7½d. "	1/4½ + 12½%	2/1	1/3
Manchester (Grade D)				
Bricklayers ...	10½d. "	1/6	2/4	1/8
Labourers ...	6½d. "	1/2	2/1	1/3
Exeter—Bricklayers ...	8½d. "	1/-	2/-	1/4½
Labourers (Gr. C) ...	5½d. "	10d.	1/9	1/0½
Glasgow—Bricklayers ...	10½d. "	1/4½ + 12½%	2/4	1/8
Labourers ...	—	1/0½ + 12½%	1/11½	—

*The shortening of the working week from 44½—53½ hours to 44 all round must be taken into consideration when comparing these rates with those for the previous years, as building operatives are paid on an hourly basis.

¹ Report on Wages, Prices and Profits prepared by the Labour Research Department, January, 1922.

² Labour Research Department.

APPENDIX VIII.

List of the Social Services, showing the Total Expenditure from all sources other than Loans in 1919-20 (latest figures available).

NOTE.—Unemployment Benefit, War Pensions and Housing not included.

Government Publication.	Social Service.	Amount Expended.	Total.
P 189	<i>I. Education :</i>	£	
	<i>a. England and Wales ...</i>	58,459,232	
	<i>b. Scotland ...</i>	10,350,780	
			£68,810,012
	<i>II. Crime :</i>		
Cmd. 1713	<i>a. Police and Police Stations, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	17,363,359	
Cmd. 1713	<i>b. Administration of Justice, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	1,117,329	
P 189	<i>c. Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	490,635	
P 189	<i>d. Inebriates " " " ...</i>	26,692	
P 245	<i>e. Prisons " " " ...</i>	1,075,500	
P 245	<i>f. Criminal Lunatics, Eng. & Wales ...</i>	83,500	
P 245	<i>g. Law Charges and Courts, Sco ...</i>	96,500	
P 245	<i>h. Police (rates estimated) " f. ...</i>	1,450,000	
P 245	<i>i. Prisons, Scotland ...</i>	165,500	
P 189	<i>j. Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Scotland ...</i>	293,354	
P 189	<i>k. Inebriates ...</i>	1,475	
			£22,163,844
	<i>III. Health :</i>		
P 189	<i>a. National Health Insurance, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	23,420,000	
P 189	<i>b. Nat. Health Insurance, Scotland ...</i>	2,892,283	
P 189	<i>c. Maternity and Infant Welfare, England and Wales ...</i>	1,180,196	
P 189	<i>d. Maternity & Inf. Welfare, Scot. ...</i>	132,352	
Cmd. 1713	<i>e. Sanatoria, etc., Tuberculosis, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	2,100,712	
Cmd. 1713	<i>f. Sanatoria, etc., Venereal, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	299,953	
Cmd. 1713	<i>g. Sanatoria Various, Eng. & Wales ...</i>	3,114,407	
Cmd. 1713	<i>h. Lunatics and Asylums ...</i>	6,981,388	
P 189	<i>i. Hospitals and Treatment of Disease, Scotland ...</i>	654,375	
Cmd. 1713	<i>j. Mental Deficiency, Eng. & Wales ...</i>	292,740	
Cmd. 1713	<i>k. Baths and Washhouses, etc., Eng. and Wales ...</i>	1,508,652	
Cmd. 1713	<i>l. Parks and Open Spaces, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	2,530,181	
P 245	<i>m. Scottish Board of Health, Scot. ...</i>	693,000	
Cmd. 1713	<i>n. Sewers and Sewage Disposal, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	7,316,856	
Cmd. 1713	<i>o. Disposal and Collection of Refuse, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	6,499,455	
Cmd. 1713	<i>p. Public Street Lighting, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	2,396,348	
			£62,012,896
	<i>IV. Assistance :</i>		
Cmd. 1713	<i>a. Poor Relief, Eng. and Wales ...</i>	19,201,915	
P 189	<i>b. " " Scotland ...</i>	2,873,448	
P 189	<i>c. Old Age Pensions, Eng. & Wales ...</i>	13,696,260	
P 189	<i>d. " " Scotland ...</i>	1,844,445	
			£37,616,068
	Grand Total ...		£190,602,820.

¹ The rates have been estimated as equal in amount to the Exchequer Grant.

² In Scotland this is included under Poor Relief.

³ In Scotland this is included under Poor Relief.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION.

Part I.

SECTION A.

1. How have the working classes in your district been housed during the past 50 years? What are the good points and bad points of the new houses, of "made down" houses, and of tenement buildings, etc.
2. If you were offered for the same rent, the choice of three rooms in a "made down" house in a wide street, a three-roomed flat in a block dwelling with a bare courtyard below, or a small self-contained working-class house in a narrow street, which would you choose, and why?
3. A railwayman, earning good wages and who has saved a bit, his wife and four children want a house. They are trying to decide whether to apply for a new municipal house at 15/- rent, to borrow money from a Building Society to build a house for themselves under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, or to join a Public Utility Society and live in a house constructed with their assistance. How would you advise them?

SECTION B.

1. "One family, one dwelling, and every family a dwelling." Do you think that this ideal is attainable, and if not, what could be done immediately to improve housing conditions?
2. What are the main reasons for the shortage (a) generally, and (b) in your own district? Suggest reasons for the cost of building being unusually high (or low) in your village.
3. Show how bad housing affects health and conduct and give any results of over-crowding known to yourself.
4. Give an example known to you—
 - (a) of hardship incurred by the owner of a house who cannot get possession.
 - (b) of hardship incurred by a tenant who is threatened with eviction.

Part II.

1. What are some of the chief obstacles in the way of rapid house building?
2. Criticise the Government's new proposals and give your own views as to how the shortage may best be met.
3. What is an "economic rent"? Which is the better policy: an all-round increase in wages, or a Government subsidy towards rents?

Apart from the books and Government Publications mentioned in the footnotes, the following will be found useful for further information:—

HOUSING.

“**The National Housing Manual.**” By Henry R. Aldridge. National Housing and Town Planning Council. £2 2s. nett.

✓ “**The Home I want.**” By Capt. R. L. Reiss. Hodder & Stoughton. 1/6 post free.

“**Nothing Gained by Overcrowding.**” By Raymond Unwin, F.R.I.B.A. Garden Cities Association. 6d., postage 2d.

“**The Housing Problem.**” By J. J. Clarke, M.A. Pitman. 21/-, postage 9d.

“**Housing and the Public Health.**” By John Robertson, M.D. Cassells. 5/-, postage 9d.

“**Labour Saving in Small Houses.**” Garden Cities Association. 9d., postage 1½d.

“**The Betrayal of the Slums.**” By the Rt. Hon. Christopher Addison. Herbert Jenkins, Ltd. 2/6, postage 4d.

“**Garden Cities of To-morrow**” (3rd edition). By Ebenezer Howard. George Allen & Unwin. 3/6, postage 4d.

“**Speculative Building as Affecting the Housing Problem.**” By Walter Cook (“The Builder”). 2/6, postage 3d.

“**The Future of Local Government.**” By G. D. H. Cole. Cassells. 6/-.

“**Housing: the Facts and the Future.**” By Major H. Barnes. E. Benn, Ltd. 25/-.

“**The Working Woman's House.**” By A. D. Sanderson-Furness and Marion Phillips. 1/6, postage 2d.

RURAL HOUSING.

“**Rural Housing.**” By Wm. G. Savage, B.Sc., D.P.H. 7/6, postage 9d.

TOWN PLANNING.

“**Town Theory and Practice.**” By C. B. Purdom and Others. Benn Bros. 5/-, postage 4d.

“**Practical Town Planning.**” By J. S. Nettlefold. 2/-, postage 6d.

PAMPHLET

P