FROM “LAISSEZ-FAIRE” TO “HOMES FIT FOR HEROES”:
HOUSING IN DUNDEE 1869-1919, VOLUME II

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From "laissez-faire" to "Homes fit for Heroes": Housing in Dundee 1868-1919

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Chapter 9: Powers and Action - Policy and social control

i) Local policy

The agglomeration of economic activity in the great cities of the nineteenth century and the large numbers of people who came to live in them, threw up a new set of challenges for those charged with local government. To meet the needs of citizens, the shape of local government institutions had to change, along with the means of administration. At local government level, the electors were more acutely aware of who the individuals up for election were and, through the rateable assessment, of how much they paid to finance the activities of their elected representatives. When the balance sheet failed to meet with approval, the town councillor would lose his seat. Because the system of paying for local government was a property tax, there was a direct link between the kind of house you lived in, the rent you paid and the taxes due for local services. In Dundee, those tenants with short-let homes who did not pay rates directly, but had them paid on their behalf by the proprietor, had no vote. By the same token anyone who was a domestic servant, lived in a lodging house or was not a householder in some other way, had no vote. This meant the local electorate was heavily skewed towards respectable groups in society. The rights and duties of the local electorate were voiced in the Dundee Courier and Advertiser in 1874, in a pre-election address on the responsibilities of the citizen.

"In a sense these elections are of more importance to the community than the election of the Members of
Parliament, because the representatives of the community in the Town Council, and more especially in the Police Commission, hold the strings of the public purse, and have much in their power for the town, both for good and evil." [DPL, C&A Sept 29, 1874]

The numbers of those elected representatives was increased from 20 to 27 by the 1871 local Act, and the electoral wards from three to nine, each having three members. The number of wards increased to 11, when Broughty Ferry was annexed in 1913. There was also one ex-officio member of the council, the Lord Dean of Guild, who was elected by the guildry of Dundee. Elections were held each November, when one third of the council (one from each ward) would retire from office and could offer themselves for re-election. This meant, once elected, a councillor normally served for three years. Councillors, by common practice, elected six bailies from among their number, two of whom retired in November each year, and a provost. The provost and bailies of the royal burgh were magistrates with police jurisdiction within the burgh. The provost, magistrates and town council formed the police commission. It appears councillors, perhaps in their capacity as bailies, were also ex-officio members of independent bodies such as the Board of Harbour trustees. In 1889 Queen Victoria officially elevated Dundee to the rank of a city, but it was not constituted a county of a city until 1894. The office of provost became that of lord provost in 1892, and the holder of that office ex-officio Lord Lieutenant of the County of Dundee in 1894.

Two areas in which influential groups brought pressure to bear on the institutions of government, were poverty and health
(see chapter 3). These two problem areas highlighted a lack of institutional development, in that the institutions which had existed to deal with poverty and protect citizens from disease were recognised as having failed. To meet these needs, new structures were formed. In the case of poverty, the legislation of the poor law brought a degree of administrative centralisation through the creation of the Board of Supervision. The new legislation also swept away the disintegrating remnants of the established church administration which had been increasingly unable to cope with the numbers of poor making demands on it, especially in the cities. In the field of public health, new legislation, both place-specific police Acts and national statutes drawn up in Westminster, created a new and growing army of local officials whose job was ultimately to prevent the excesses of disease. These two examples demonstrate two recurring themes in local government at this period; the creation of a peculiarly Scottish centralised administration which mediated between local authorities and central government in London, and the creation of a body of professional local authority officers in distinct departments with specific duties to carry out the policies of elected members.

In January 1870 Dundee Police Board - made up of town councillors and undertaking duties later inherited by the police commission and finally the town council - had three main committees, works, sanitary and finance, plus a special committee to deal with the improvement bill [DCA TC Minutes (1870-2) p1]. The sanitary committee was the one a growing town could not do
without. It had to get rid of muck and keep water clean for sake of rich as well as poor. It also had to make sure theft and violence did not rule the streets. Cleansing accounted for 31.3% of the city's expenditure in 1870-71 and watching 26%; paving and lighting took up another 23%, while only 2.3% (£700) was spent on public health [DCA TC Minutes (1870-71) p137]. Cleansing was of course a public health measure, but apart from this the council seems to have restricted its expenditure to circulating handbills on disease and fever, disinfectants to flush closes in populous areas and defraying the expense of the infirmary van [DCA TC Minutes (1870-72) pp5-6, 9-10, 27-8]. The town's finances in 1870-1 were on such a limited scale they could almost have been calculated on the back of an envelope. However, it was an administration already under strain. Although the official figures showed only a modest rise in crime, largely due to increased disorderly conduct, there was pressure to provide more constables. A comparison with other large towns and cities showed Dundee had one constable per 952 of population in 1871, compared to 537 in Glasgow, 572 in Edinburgh and 580 in Greenock [DCA TC Minutes (1870-2) p313]. The threat of cholera in 1871 and 1873 brought calls for more stringent measures to cleanse filthy houses [DCA TC Minutes (1870-72) p323; (1873-4) pp212-4]. The expenditure on public health for 1874-5 was estimated at £2,300 - over three times the 1870-1 figure [DCA TC Minutes (1873-4) p669].

At the beginning of January 1868, in an editorial on the previous year's progress, the Dundee Advertiser berated the
town's leaders.

"What the disagreeable man is to private society, Dundee was to other towns. Our evil reputation even spread to Parliament itself ... so notorious there was our reputation for squabbling, that there was the greatest difficulty in getting a Committee of Peers together to consider any matter which related to Dundee." [DPL DA 1868, Jan 3]

Despite inertia and resistance to change on the part of some of the police commissioners, the Advertiser felt able to report some progress. The Gas Works was in the process of being transferred from private companies to the town; a move which would give the community control over a major energy supply and make money for the town. Also in the process of being settled, was the right of the police commissioners to look after all new streets and determine their course and width.

"The Balgay Street decision settled forever all the nonsense about proprietors being allowed for the sake of the working classes, to build houses on any plan they chose - to become in a short time, as building progressed, dens of darkness and filth." [DPL DA 1868, Jan 3]

The commissioners had plans to improve the Seagate, Tally Street and Bank Street. This policy of improvement was almost a knee-jerk reaction to the muddle which a lack of development control had given rise to, and was indirectly concerned with housing standards. In 1867, Dundee's elected representatives had begun to thrash out their own local Act. Cllr James Yeaman was instrumental in setting up a parliamentary committee of the town council in 1865 to seek an improvement bill. He wanted the bill to include provisions on street construction, police laws, and to transfer the rights and works of the water and gas companies to the town council [DYB 1886 (1887) pp54-6]. These issues apparently caused "a great deal of bickering" and Yeaman retired.
from his seat in November 1865, having failed to get the support of Dundee's councillors. However, he was re-elected in December 1868, having campaigned on the water works issue, became Provost in July 1869 and succeeded in putting forward the 1871 Improvement Act [DYB 1886 (1887) pp54-6].

a) The era of local Acts

As discussed in chapter 4, there were a number of national Acts covering nuisances, improvement and policing prior to the 1870s. Local authorities could also apply to parliament to have a local act passed. Apart from gas, water and tramways Acts, Dundee had two major improvement acts passed, The Dundee Police and Improvement Act, 1871 (34 & 35 Vict. c153) and the Dundee Police and Improvement Consolidation Act, 1882 (45 & 46 Vict. c185). The Dundee Advertiser greeted the 1871 Bill with enthusiasm on January 3, a Tuesday.

"...our municipal authorities have under consideration a measure of no small magnitude for remodelling the streets of our town, and placing our building and police regulation in harmony with the sanitary and social enlightenment of the age." [DA 1871, Jan 3]

Yet by Friday the Advertiser's optimism had turned to pessimism, as self-interested groups brought their political pressure to bear on specific issues, threatening to erode the improvers' vision. The chief culprits were described by the paper as: The Dundee Association for Watching Over the Interests of Small House Proprietors.

"An Improvement Bill which would improve nothing appears to be the beau ideal of the legislative measure that would suit Dundee..." [DA 1871, Jan 6]

Objectors were portrayed as seeing the Bill as an attempt to
undermine free market forces by allowing the police commissioners, in effect the town council, to acquire land more cheaply and to confiscate property in the name of disease. Above all, the protesters felt any proposal which gave the local authority the right to build housing could only injure those who had invested capital in house property. The Advertiser described the existing system by which the city's representatives could acquire property - a jury trial - as dilatory, cumbersome and expensive.

"...if the Commissioners are to be driven to Jury Trials to ascertain the value of every house and shop required for our improvement, there will be an end of the improvements before they are begun." [DA 1871, Jan 6]

The Advertiser, owned by Liberal MP Sir John Leng, especially condemned the voting practices of town councillors and police commissioners - "one and the same" - who chose to vote differently on the same issue while wearing different hats. Without undertaking a more detailed study of local politics, it is difficult to assess to what extent the general desire to improve the city became corrupted by self-interest, but when newspaper columns' type takes on such an acid composition, there can be little doubt discussion of the 1871 Bill was conducted against a war of personalities.

"...we trust that the Provost, who has the honour of passing such important measures as the Gas and Water Acts, will not exhibit any feelings of jealousy because Mr Henderson is convenor of the Improvement Bill committee." [DA 1871, Jan 6]

The town council had divided into two factions over the water issue (how to transport water from Lintrathen Loch): the direct route party lead by Yeaman and Buchan, and the opposition, who
favoured a route via Crombie, led by Henderson and Robertson [DYB 1886 (1887) pp54-6]. In May 1872 the direct route became law.

"The contest was keen, and probably in no other municipal election was there ever so much vehemence and determination evinced." [DYB 1886 (1887) p57]

Yeaman was beaten by Robertson by four votes and James Cox became Provost. Yeaman's electoral popularity remained, however, and he was one of Dundee's two MPs between July 1873 and April 1880 [DYB 1886 (1887) p57].

The story of a water supply for Dundee is one of power struggles between self-interested burgesses and traders, who saw no need for water to be different from any other commodity bought and sold in the market place, and a town council who consistently underestimated the supply needs of an expanding city [Baxter (1911); Scrimgeour (1968)]. Until the 1870s the major sources of supply for citizens remained water carts and polluted wells. Plans for a water supply scheme were put to parliament in 1835, but were opposed by a private joint-stock company, who then put forward their own scheme in 1836, which in turn was opposed by the town council [Baxter (1911) p167]. In 1845 private speculators succeeded in having the Dundee Water Act passed, but in the long term supply was unsatisfactory, with some districts being periodically sluiced off in order to supply other areas. The municipality bought out the shareholders, at great expense, in 1869; in 1870 the waterworks ran dry. Municipal water commissioners succeeded in the 1870s in completing the Lintrathen Loch scheme, which by 1911 was able to supply the Dundee area with 2141 million gallons annually [Scrimgeour (1968) p281].
At first sight the 1871 Dundee Police and Improvement Act appears very wide-ranging [34 & 35 Vict c153]. It gave Dundee's police commissioners powers to clear slums, create streets, provide housing for displaced tenants, lay sewage and drainage (in particular to drain Lochee), control building design, borrow finance, reorganise the electoral wards and minor powers on everything from pawnbroking to gunpowder and diseased cattle. However, as a permissive piece of legislation the police commissioners were not duty-bound to carry any of the provisions out. The powers and rights it gave depended entirely on the will of elected members to use them.

"Nothing in this Act contained shall make it binding on the Commissioners to execute all the works by this Act authorised, but it shall be lawful for them, subject to the provisions of this Act, to execute such or such parts of the said works..." [1871 Act, 34 & 35 Vict c153, para 17]

Nor was it an innovative piece of legislation as it borrowed heavily from existing police and local Acts; for example clauses from the General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act of 1862 were incorporated. The two other major limitations to the effectiveness of the Act were the ten years rule and the 14 days rule. The first limited the period over which the police commissioners were empowered to make compulsory purchase and be involved in constructing drains or sewers. In effect the Act was designed to run out or lapse after ten years. The 14 days rule left no time for the commissioners to prevaricate over planning decisions - if a correctly submitted plan for a building was not turned down within a fortnight, then it could automatically be taken to have been approved, (for streets created by private
developers the period was 42 days after receipt). As far as the commissioners' powers to create new streets was concerned, the 1871 Act was deliberately inflexible. Each of the 18 projects earmarked for widening and other alterations was named and plans submitted showing the position of the new streets. Thoroughfares which the commissioners planned to stop up were listed. Owners whose lands or buildings were affected were listed in a "deposited book of reference". In short it was a plan to create new streets with a ten-year time limit and only the most minor provisions to alter the plan should unforeseen circumstances arise before the ten years were up. By 1874 The Dundee Advertiser complained the commissioners had failed to use the instruments of power the 1871 Act had given them in the interests of ordinary citizens. Their complaints revolved around building regulations, rather than new streets (see chapter 10, slum crusades). The 1871 Act was created to do three very specific things: to create new electoral wards and increase the number of councillors; to drain Lochee; to create new streets in the commercial heart of the city. The other powers the 1871 Act gave were largely inherited from previous police and nuisance legislation. It is quite likely there were councillors who neither wanted the strict building control powers the Advertiser championed nor had any intention of seeing them used to the full.

What marks out the city-centre improvements of the 1870s from later direct attacks on the slums themselves, was the way in which they were financed. Between 1871 and 1885 the commissioners sanctioned 171 new streets with an aggregate length
of 14 miles [BPP (1884-5) XXXI c4409-I, p85]. New wide streets in commercially attractive areas attracted investment and improvement was intended to be achieved without cost to the public purse.

"What is left of the ground, after enough has been taken to widen a nasty narrow lane into a spacious and handsome street, will be sold again for as much as the whole will now cost, and yet the transaction is continually misrepresented as if the whole cost of the ground would fall on the ratepayers." [DPL DA 1868 Jan 3]

Public services were managed with an eye to profit. The first and second Tramways Acts of 1872 and 1878 invested the police commissioners with the powers to set up tramways, via a company, which were then leased and operated privately with the long-term intention of a net surplus to the council [1872 Act, 35&36 Vict, c111; 1878 Act, 41&42 Vict, c94]. The council imposed conditions in the leases so that "workmen's cars" were run morning and night, and at meal hours on some lines.

"...as a rule the cars are very much crowded, especially in the mornings. For instance, from Lochee, which is practically a suburb of Dundee, two miles from the high street, where there are a great many workmen in connexion with the building trades, house building and shipbuilding, they get in the car in the morning..." [BPP (1884-5) XXXI c4409-I p87]

The public baths might have been worth subsidising as a disease prevention measure. In reality it was a profitable enterprise and increasingly popular. The number of baths taken rose from 13,390 in 1861 to 20,498 in 1866, and the police commissioners agreed to have plans for a swimming bath drawn up [DPL DA 1868 Jan 3]. Public markets, public slaughter houses and public graveyards in public parks all helped to keep various practises likely to endanger public health under the watchful eye of the
local authority, but they also brought in revenue. This business-like approach to running the city brought its own problems. Epidemics had brought home the real dangers of failing to deal with the filth and rubbish of the towns and legislation had made the town authorities responsible for collection and disposal. However, the filth had a real financial value as agricultural manure and the house proprietors argued they should be compensated. The problem was a serious one for the town's finances - manure sales provided 33.4% of the total revenue in 1870-71 [DCA TC Minutes (1870-72) p137]. The commissioners met a deputation from the House proprietors' Protection Association in February 1872 and in December John Mills tried to claim £3 6s for allowing dung to be removed [DCA TC Minutes (1870-2) pp451, 682]. Cllr William Brownlee, convenor, told the sanitary committee in February 1875, the scavengers removed 80-90 tons nightly from ashpits and courts [DCA TC Minutes (1875-6) pp40-2]. This was then transported out of the town and sold to farmers as manure, bringing in an estimated £9,700 in 1875-6, for an estimated expenditure of £2,470 [DCA TC Minutes (1875-6) pp232, 267]. The 1882 local Act had a clause emphasising the rights of contractors employed by the council to remove, sell and dispose of refuse on private premises, including animal dung accumulated over a 20-day period or exceeding two tons [1882 Act, 45&46 Vict, c185, para60]. The dispute was only resolved when the price of manure fell to a level where it became unprofitable to transport and sell.

In the 1880s the town council was not a theatre of
innovation.

"The municipal bodies in Dundee have not any striking record of work." [DYB 1883 (1884) p7]

Yet in 1882 a new local Act had been passed and might have been expected to have been followed by a flurry of municipal activity. The initial reason for this second major local Act was the ten year rule put in place by the legislature when the 1871 Act was passed. Even if there was no desire on the part of the town council for new powers, the local authority could not continue to go about its business without a new consolidating Act. The alternative would have been to adopt existing legislation, which was not tailor-made for Dundee, at a time when other major cities used their own Acts. To have chosen this latter course would have been to relegate Dundee to a second division of less-important Scottish towns. There were other pressing problems which a new Act could help to alleviate. The commissioners needed powers to raise monies to pay off debts contracted by them [1882 Act, 45&46 Vict, c185, p4]. In pursuing the policies of the 1870s, creating tramways and new streets, the town council had bought land with the intention of dividing it into lots and selling it gradually for building. As the introduction to the Act puts it, the money value of such lots was not immediately available. The town council had overstretched itself, but the debts appear not to have arisen as the result of the failure of a particular project, but were accumulated from several capital schemes which could be expected, given time, to turn in a profit. But the debt stood at over one-half million pounds. In other words, there was a cash-flow crisis. The Act allowed the town council to refinance by paying off debts, borrowing more money
and issuing debenture stock [1882 Act, 45&46 Vict, c185, pp82-96]. By general consensus it was a time for financial belt pulling. The Advertiser's Year Book for 1882 commented:

"...the community may be congratulated that so much local legislation was obtained at so little trouble and cost." [DYB 1882 (1883) p8]

William Blair, a noted house proprietor who was a councillor for Lochee from 1875-8, opposed improvements under the local Acts because they would entail an increase upon the police rates. His obituarist notes this indeed proved to be the case [DYB 1895 (1896) p65].

There were financial problems for Dundee's councillors to wrestle with, but these were a symptom of the growth in importance of local government, rather than gross mismanagement. The city's finances could no longer be worked out on the back of an envelope, because the city had become involved in a wider range of activities. Local government in the Dundee of the 1880s was big business and had grown hand-in-hand with the economic burgeoning of the city. The rateable valuation for Dundee grew from £382,382 in 1869-70 to £646,348 in 1879-80; in the same period, with some fluctuations, direct jute imports more or less doubled [DYB 1878 (1879) pp20-1,53; 1882 (1883)]. In 1883 233,883 tons of jute fibre was imported compared to 139,847 in 1880 - there were dramatic booms and slumps [DYB 1881 (1882) p39; 1885 (1886) p86]. Industrial expansion centred on a single industry tied the city to the cyclical vagaries of jute, but economic growth in general meant the city had the ability to raise more cash through the rates than ever before.
The 1882 Act had other consequences of some importance. All books, registers, deeds and documents, and all printed copies or extracts from them, were to be admitted as evidence in courts of law [1882 Act, 45&46 Vict, c185, para12]. This resulted in changes in the way council departments kept their records, and in general improved the quality of those records. After 1882 more detailed and consistent reporting from these records at council meetings, has meant the activities of council officials can be examined in detail (see ii, social control). The Act also provided for a mechanism of arbitration between the harbour trustees and the police commission by appointing named advocates to arbitrate and instructing them to publish their decision in the Edinburgh Gazette [1882 Act, 45&46 Vict, c185, para328]. This was a long-running dispute concerning rights of way, rateable assessments of harbour property and the watching, paving and cleansing of the harbour area. It would appear this legal mechanism, suggested by town councillors, was not an immediate panacea.

In 1884 municipal affairs were said to be quiet and the work of the police commission uneventful, despite the ongoing dispute with the harbour board. The public debt exceeded £1,750,000, but political attention was focussed on a national issue, the Franchise Bill - 20,000 marched in Dundee and the crowds applauded Gladstone [DYB 1884 (1885) p7]. The expansion of the esplanade was proposed in 1885, but cash was a serious obstacle and it was suggested it would be a grand monument to a benefactor
At Edinburgh on April 7, 1885 town councillor James Gentle, convenor of the works department, gave evidence to the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, chaired by Charles Dilke, and was interviewed for one-a-half hours [DA 1885, April 8].

"Mr Gentle gave evidence as to what had been done in Dundee as the result of the Improvements Bill [sic], and gave suggestions as to what might be done were Corporations to be invested with powers to enable them to acquire lands in the outskirts of towns, and to enable them to acquire property that was required in old streets for improvement purposes." [DA 1885, April 8]

This is an over flattering resume of the discourse which took place and it must be assumed it came from Gentle himself. The commission's members were well informed, apparently having read annual medical reports and other centrally collated statistics on the city, although peculiarly some were not aware of the rôle of the Board of Supervision [BPP (1884-5) XXXI c4409-I, pp85-92]. Gentle was less at ease with these figures and revealed some ignorance about the Public Health Act. He was, however, thoroughly acquainted with the building regulations in the 1871 and 1882 Acts, as well the works convenor might. However Gentle was also a builder.

"I see that Mr Gentle has been asked to give evidence before the Royal Commission. He is an able and independent man, but he is a builder and a house proprietor... Would it not be desirable to examine the Sanitary Inspector, the Medical Officer, and an intelligent Bible woman? This class of evidence would, I think, greatly help the Royal commission in getting at the real facts... A. RATEPAYER." [DA 1885, April 9]

Henry Broadhurst MP, one of the royal commissioners, was also
uneasy about the choice of Dundee's representative, and asked Gentle directly if there had been any dissatisfaction with the selection of witness. Gentle replied that he was not aware of any. Broadhurst kept returning to a particular property, owned by Gentle, in his questioning. Had extensive repairs had to be done, was it in first-rate habitable condition and how long was it since it was whitewashed? Gentle was vague and evasive in his replies, suggesting his factor dealt with these things [BPP (1884-5) XXXI c4409-I pp91-2]. Broadhurst also suggested to Gentle that Dundee's councillors were under the impression that most of the royal commission were property owners. Broadhurst obviously had access to an unofficial source close to, if not within, Dundee Town Council. It might have been expected there would be some reaction in the Dundee press in response to the letter from the anonymous A Ratepayer. In fact there was none. The Tory Courier, champion of the proprietor, would have seen Gentle as a suitable choice. The lack of any cries of scandal from the Advertiser may reflect an editorial policy geared away from the libellous mud-slinging of the mid-1870s, although the paper was prepared to publish a letter. Gentle argued much of the worst sorts of houses had been eradicated in Dundee in the period following the 1871 local Act. In general the royal commission found an air of complacency on housing matters. "Although the evidence... shows a not very desirable state of things in the housing of the working classes in the towns of Scotland, yet on the whole the only persons to whom reform might be looked for - the representatives of the more active local authorities - are not discontented with the condition of affairs." [BPP (1884-5) XXXI c4409, p7] In Dundee this complacency, coupled with a financial
straightjacket, meant no new initiatives were advanced. It must also be pointed out that Gentle was not the only councillor in 1880s with an interest in house property.

b) Influence and interest

The Dundee Landlords' Association was formed to counter what its members saw as unjust taxation of heritable property and a growing body of legislation against their interests. Its first annual report, probably published in the mid-1860s, shows its members discussed parliamentary bills concerning the poor law and statute labour on the roads, as well as the police bill [DPL Lamb 199(36)]. In fact any legislation which might in any way increase local taxation - the rates.

"With a committee conversant with what is passing, meeting regularly, and discussing public affairs, it may be expected that legislative or municipal action which it is desirable to counteract, will be pointed out in time for an efficient resistance to be brought to bear." [DPL 199(36)]

It was an influential pressure group, which had major house factors among its directors in 1882 and an architect as president. Henry McGrady, who had a wholesale grocery business and became provost in the late-1890s, was a prominent member [DPL 199(35)]. The landlords' group was one of a number of independent bodies set to press various causes, including philanthropic ones. Councillors were involved across a wide range and in many ways social standing in the community was measured by the associations individuals supported. Friendly societies were the way respectable people provided for old age, illness and death. The Ancient Order of Foresters in Dundee had 2,200 members and £12,620 in funds in December 1894, £5,320 more
than in 1888 [DPL Lamb 54(15)]. It was the kind of self-help organisation political and social leaders applauded during the second half of the nineteenth century. Its Dundee officials were predominately ex-bailies and ex-provosts, and most town councillors were said to be members in 1904 [DPL Lamb 79(13)]. Whether they were set up for overtly political purposes, such as the landlords' association or for higher moral purposes, contacts councillors made through such organisations were bound to have influenced decision making.

Many large property owners and house factors figured prominently in local life, but did they become directly involved in local politics in order to further their own interests? In March 1885 there was an upturn in building operations. The Dundee Year Book notes Bailie James Gentle had put up two ranges of terraced houses "of substantial character" in Hyndford and Rockfield streets, plus four "superior tenements" in Gardner St, Lochee [DYB 1885 (1886) pp44-6]. Bailie McKinnon built a four-storey block in the Hawkhill. In 1886 Gentle built three villas in Rockwell St, Cllr Speed "superior houses" in Blackness Rd and ex-Bailie Hunter three tenements in Jamaica St, Maxwelltown [DYB 1886 (1887) pp39-41]. Thus in the mid-1880s there were at least four police commissioners who sat in judgement over planning applications for buildings, three of them magistrates or ex-magistrates, who were themselves directly involved in financing and constructing new housing. Even if Gentle had ceased to build while he was a councillor, as a quarry master he would still have had a direct interest in the fortunes of plans for new stone
buildings, brick being an unusual and seldom used material in the city. This does not take into account those councillors who owned housing. In the mid-eighties it appears groups with an interest in property achieved an unhealthy degree of involvement in the main mechanism of housing regulation. In 1893-4, only one councillor, James Cowan, actually described himself as a house proprietor, but three others were builders and two architects and valuers [D Dir 1893-4]. Builder John Bruce was also a bailie, but three of the other five bailies were chemists and druggists, so it would appear retail chemists had more of an undue influence on council business than those in property in the mid-nineties. The town council was overwhelmingly dominated by traders - most of them described themselves as merchants of one sort or another; it was almost a chamber of commerce in 1893-4, only solicitor William Nixon stands out as coming from a non-commercial background.

The analysis of the valuation roll from 1911 in chapter 7 clearly shows property ownership was widespread, and it would have been strange if many councillors between 1870 and 1920 did not turn out to have investments in house property. However, it seems large owners and prominent house factors were more likely to pursue office as a financial manager or spiritual leader in their local church, than in municipal politics. David Craig, who owned 231 tenement flats in 1911, had been a Baxter Brothers mill manager and at the time of his death held several company directorships in the city. Yet, the only office this temperance follower took was as treasurer of Chapelshade Church, Newport.
David Thomson factored 1611 tenancies from his business premises in Bank Street, Dundee in 1911, and became president of the proprietors' and factors' association. When he died in 1931 he had served on the town council as finance convenor and had been a magistrate - but not in Dundee. The apprentice joiner who set up as a factor in 1880, ended up as an elder of the kirk living in a fine villa in West Newport [DPL Obituary book II, June 30 1931]. Well-known Dundee figures like Craig and Thomson, both to some extent self-made Victorian men, expressed their prominence in local society by choosing not to live in Dundee and their personal standing as public figures was enhanced by taking up roles in their home communities, especially positions in the church. Robert Lickley was senior partner of A & R Lickley which managed 1360 tenancies in 1911. Although he was prominently associated with Dundee Liberal Association as a vice-president, he did not pursue political office. Again he chose the church, and was an office bearer with Panmure Congregationalist Church and superintendent of the Hilltown Mission Sunday School [DPL Obituary book II, Dec 3 1925]. The most extreme example of religious fervour among house factors was that of J & E Shepherd (managed 2040 tenancies in 1911). Brothers Joseph and Edward saw the light when the North American evangelists Moody and Sankey visited Dundee in the early 1870s. Along with business colleague Charles Stewart the Shepherd brothers set up the Childrens' Free Breakfast and City Mission, spreading the word to the young on a full stomach. Joseph died young in 1885, but Edward went on to become Dundee's version of General Booth, running bible classes, Sunday missions.
Charles Stewart became the grand old man of Dundee's YMCA, but pursued a less wholly religious course as a member of the school board, with an involvement in the city's embryonic colleges of further education [DPL Obituary book I, Dec 25 1885; II, Jan 23 1931, Jan 20 1931]. John G Sibbald, Dundee's largest house factor in 1911, was deacon of the bonnetmakers, the guildry representative on the harbour board and assessor to the guildry. He was defeated in a poll in 1912 for Lord Dean of Guild, a position in which he could have exercised ancient if limited powers over the development of the heart of the city. Those who were most involved in the business of owning and letting property in 1911 and who might have sought political office chose other avenues. This does not mean those who were in office had few vested interests in property. What the analysis of the 1911 valuation roll shows is that investors in house property were predominately shopkeepers and other traders. An examination of the lists of councillors in the Dundee Directories shows these are the social groups from which the town council was overwhelmingly drawn between 1870 and 1920. Henry McGrady, a wholesale grocer and provisions merchant, owned 301 tenancies with a valuation of £2191.70 in 1911. Owning house property must have brought him a reasonable return, but it was not his main line of business despite being one of the largest individual owners of property in 1911. He was Lord Provost of Dundee from 1896 to 1899 and presented its citizens with a bronze statue of Queen Victoria put up in Albert Square. McGrady is the most prominent example of a councillor who also had interests in property. A detailed examination of the records could be
expected to show most of his colleagues owned or were trustees for relatives who owned houses.

c) The rise of Labour

Some historians have identified a profound crisis in the British state dating from around the 1880s, which became acute between 1910 and the mid-twenties [Langan & Schwarz (1985)]. As a succession of crises developed, new forms of state organisation and social regulation arose - the interventionist state.

"...in the closing decades of the nineteenth century the liberal state and its attendant modes for regulating civil society could no longer be reproduced by means of liberal policies, practices and objectives." [Hall & Schwarz (1985) p9]

Whether or not a "dramatic shift" is a fully convincing analysis, the response to the challenges to late-Victorian and Edwardian society meant the concept of laissez-faire was cast off. One obvious indication of the change in the ideas of state and society, of public and private, was the slow death of the Liberal party itself, following splits in 1886 over Home Rule and in 1916 over the conduct of the war. Yet, despite the growing popularity of socialist ideas, the Liberal party managed to hang on to much of its Scottish support up to 1914.

"The remarkable feature of pre-war Scottish politics was the ability of the Liberal Party to retain its support amongst the Scottish working class. The issues that Liberalism stood for still had an appeal. There were few signs that a belief in free trade was seriously questioned in a country whose leading industries were so dependent on exports." [Fraser (1985) p59]

It was an export trade coming under increasing threat. Britain's world economic dominance waned throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century.
"By 1900... Scotland encountered increasing competition as other nations accelerated in the industrializing race, especially Germany and the United States, pitting their protectionism against Britain's free trade, and their renewed national dynamics against Britain's tendency to relax." [Checklands (1984) p172]

The Checklands point out Scottish industry was not passive; engineering and shipbuilding responded vigorously and the Clyde continued to launch about a fifth of the world's ships. Other industries and places were not so fortunate - by 1885 Dundee had lost the market for sacking for most of the world's grain trade to the Indian jute industry [Lenman (1977) p186]. The tonnage of ships launched in Dundee fell from 25,300 in 1883 to 4,800 in 1897; Stephens left in 1894 and Gourlays closed in 1908 [Lythe (1979) p80]. Mature industrial Scotland had a business community dominated by autocratic magnates and one which was increasingly challenged by its employees. There had been fundamental changes in the personnel, role and policies of the Scottish trades councils between 1885 and 1895 [Fraser (1978) p6]. Strike activity and union membership increased dramatically after 1908, reflecting the strength of trade unions and the growth of the labour movement [Wrigley (1982) p92]. Shipyard workers went out in Clydeside in 1908, boilermakers in 1910, Dundee's dockers in 1911 and Glasgow's in 1912 [Dickson (1980) pp271-2]. It was not only the male working-class movement which was flexing its political muscle. Women were putting pressure on to expand democracy by campaigning for female suffrage. There was indeed a series of crises.

William Walker gives a full account of Dundee's changing political scene during this period in his book Juteopolis [Walker
In 1906 the Jute and Flax Workers' Union was formed in opposition to the Rev Henry Williamson's maverick Mill and Factory Operatives' Union, whose 5,000 adherents were never organised in any true sense [Walker (1979) pp170-1]. In 1905 when the rivetters went on strike the engineers won a pay increase, but the jute workers' strike to prevent a 5% cut in wages was short-lived and unsuccessful [DYB 1905 (1906) p89]. The jute and flax union formed in the aftermath was never as effective as it might have been because of the bitter quarrel between its two leading figures, Nicholas Marra and John Sime [Walker (1979) p332]. Nevertheless, the union succeeded in winning members and organising them. Sime's greatest success was the Cox Brothers strike of 1911, when the firm tried to reduce spinning squads, but were forced to revert to former practices [Walker (1979) p296]. Jute workers supported the 1911 carters and dockers strike, when a lorry was flung in a dock and the Black Watch were called out. Any impression of Dundee as a sea of militancy in the years before the First World War would however be misplaced. Employers saw the jute and flax union as a way of discipling a workforce given to unorganised action and a standing joint committee was formed.

"It is the case that when trade unions in Britain were evincing an unprecedented militancy, the Dundee textile unions were forming fairly harmonious relationships with employers." [Walker (1979) p313]

Standard rates were drawn up for various jobs, but Walker senses but for the war, the committee would not have survived.

"Dundee's jute workers do not give the impression that they would faithfully have paid union subscriptions for piece-meal progress in wages and conditions obtained by respectable officials in regular and regulated discussion with employers behind closed doors, and
During the war union membership and funds rose. Between 1917 and 1920, Sime was able to extract concessions from employers in such a way each one appeared to be a defeat for the employers [Walker (1979) p394]. The Jute Trade Board was created and during the summer of 1918 mill employees worked a 40 hour week instead of the usual 55. The end of war eventually brought a set of very different circumstances - serious trade depression and unemployment.

Walker is right to say the publication of the Dundee Social Union Report in 1905 was an important catalyst in transforming the political and social climate in the city.

"At a meeting called to launch the Jute and Flax Workers' Union, two prominent female members of the Social Union addressed the assembled workers to deprecate the poor wages paid by Dundee textiles." [Walker (1979) p200]

The two women were Agnes Husband, an Independent Labour Party member and the leading social reformer Mary Lily Walker. What the 1905 report did was to define the city's social problems in a statistically sound way which was difficult to refute and it was backed by respected citizens [DPL D 5634(b)G]. The Social Union was founded by George Ogilvie, a solicitor and Sheriff substitute for Dundee, and the members of its inquiry committee included Alexander Elliot, who retired from the town council in 1903, and Charles Templeman, the medical officer of health. The report covered housing, household finances, wages, female labour, infant mortality and included a medical inspection of schoolchildren. Not only did the report provide the proof Dundee's citizens'...
social condition was unacceptable, it did it by welding statistical facts with individual examples and an analysis demonstrating the causes and consequences of allowing things to remain as they were.

It is not surprising a heightened awareness of social problems should be followed by the election of Dundee's first Labour MP. Although Labour's James Macdonald only polled 354 votes in 1892, he more than trebled this in 1895. It is important to acknowledge the diversity of "labour" political organisations in Dundee in the 1890s - they included the Dundee Labour Church, Irish militants who met in David Fanns' barber shop and the Dundee Radical Association who were actually Liberals who wanted a working-class candidate [DPL special articles, vol 13:147]. The Liberals were seen as unassailable in Dundee; they had successfully kept the Conservatives and Unionists out during the second half of the nineteenth century.

In the 1906 general election, the prominent social campaigner the Rev Walter Walsh was among those who gave support to Alexander Wilkie, secretary of the shipwrights and a member of the Labour Representative Committee's executive. Wilkie had been turned down by "the Liberals of Reform Street" as a Lib-Lab compact candidate, despite being a moderate man, no socialist and a former Liberal parliamentary candidate [Southgate (1968) p348]. He ran a lavish campaign against Sir John Leng's Liberal successor stockbroker Edmund Robertson, attracted Liberal votes and saw himself as a "progressive" [Fraser (1985) p46]. Labour had limited success in the 1906 election in Scotland, but Wilkie
won one of Dundee's two seats in a contest where there were both Liberals and Unionists. In the January 1910 election Labour's vote doubled in Scotland. Winston Churchill, then a leading member of the Liberal cabinet, became one of Dundee's two MPs following a byelection engineered in 1908 to save face - Robertson became Lord Lochee. An unofficial Labour candidate, GH Stuart, almost succeeded in pushing Unionist George Baxter into third place in the poll. Dundee was described to Churchill as "a seat for life". He and Wilkie were Dundee's MPs until the infamous rout of 1922 when Prohibitionist Edwin Scrymgeour headed the poll with 32,578 votes [Southgate (1968) p350].

After 1905 there were also profound changes in the makeup of the town council. The weights and measures scandal of 1905 brought Edwin Scrymgeour into the council. The Rev Walter Walsh was elected in 1906 and John Reid in 1907 - both supported the trades union movement [Walker (1979) p200]. The year 1906 was something of a watershed in Dundee's municipal history. The Advertiser's year book commented:

"In municipal affairs the year that has gone is remarkable rather for the acerbity and loquacity which have characterised their conduct than for the amount of work done by Town Councillors." [DYB 1906 (1907) p5]

Debates were so heated and long-winded standing orders were passed to set time limits to the speeches. Suspension and summary ejection provisions were made and "party feeling displayed." Recriminations flew about officials and accusations were made about their conduct. William Mackison was displaced as burgh engineer and in return bitterly accused two councillors of having been supplied council property without payment. The
amounts involved in the "works scandal" or "waggon incident" may have been trivial and the bookeeping system may have been to blame, as The Advertiser claimed in its yearbook, but the political damage was widespread and tainted officials in the works department for years. Mackison raised an action against the city corporation, and after his death in the autumn of 1906 his trustees decided to pursue it. The long, drawn-out court case was decided in the council's favour in March 1909, but it kept notions of shady dealings within the local authority alive. By the time of the November 1906 elections some councillors declared a "distaste for public life" and retired. The poll was the largest for many years and a total of nine new councillors elected - making up a third of the council [DYB 1906 (1907) p158]. Scandals, scenes and midnight sittings continued throughout 1907 and 1908.

"Personality pervaded the Council. Debate was characterised by the most opprobrious epithets. Playing to the gallery... led to long and lively meetings, and business dragged." [DYB 1908 (1909) p5]

At one stage the town council sat for 12 hours and 45 minutes. There was a gas office scandal. An "extraordinary row" erupted during a meeting in February 1908 when it was proposed to raise burgh engineer James Thomson's salary from £500 to £750 [DPL PJ February 8, 1908]. Trades unions and Labour organisations sent deputations to this meeting, angry that important officials were to get increases when the city's ordinary employees were to get none. Commenting on 1908, the Dundee Yearbook stated almost everybody working for the council and who had councillor friends had their salary revised, adding £1,200 to the salaries bill and £3,400 to wages - the equivalent of 1½d per £1 on the rates.
Seven councillors did not seek re-election in 1908, including one ex-provost and the current Lord Provost Longair, claiming disgust with the conduct of public life. Nine new members were returned, which strengthened the hand of the treasurer James Urquhart, who became the new lord provost [DYB 1908 (1909) pp7-8]. There was a fuss over the municipal motor car in 1909, and feelings became embittered when the municipalisation of Sidlaw Sanatorium was thrown out after the cost was made public [DYB 1909 (1910) pp5-6]. But by 1910 it was reported municipal meetings had become dull.

"As a result of the elections this year and the previous year, the disturbing elements were expelled, with the result that harmony took the place of the discord which had become familiar." [DYB 1910 (1911) p5]

Some of the tumult of these years can be ascribed to the activities of Cllr Edwin Scrymgeour, a Christian socialist who founded the Scottish Prohibition Party and who had a gift for routing out a scandal. Scrymgeour argued a cronie system operated between officials and councillors, and his fans crowded the gallery to see him throw meetings into uproar with his well-timed, if destructive, accusations. A counter-attack was launched by Dundee Citizens' Union, formed in November 1908, whose aim was to promote a sense of responsibility in public affairs. In the 1909 election, with the backing of the city's newspapers, they sponsored five candidates and Scrymgeour was defeated [Walker (1979) p374-6]. Between 1905 and 1910 the composition of Dundee's town council was reshaped in a way which brought housing issues to the forefront.
It would be misleading to give the impression municipal politics was an essentially dull affair after 1910. Edwin Scrymgeour remained a thorn in the flesh for many in local politics after his short-lived defeat in the 1909 local elections. When he returned as a councillor he went back to his old tricks and even when he gathered greater political respectability, stirred things up at council meetings. In September 1919 there was a "scene in the council", according to the local press, over the hospitality and entertainment of official visitors to the city, one of them Sir George McCrae of the Local Government Board. Scrymgeour was persistent about the lavishness of these banquets and Cllr High tried to stop his diatribe. Scrymgeour retorted this was a matter of business not "fish-cadging".

"This remark brought Mr High to his feet, and approaching Mr Scrymgeour in a threatening manner, shouted - If you say that again I'll land you on the jaw. A hot dialogue then ensued... which appeared to be vastly entertaining to the remainder of the Committee... During a brief lull in the storm the Treasurer loudly announced that the accounts were carried..." [DPL cuttings book, September 24, 1919]

Although Scrymgeour had an undoubted flair for routing out scandal, he did not use that skill in a very constructive way. Instead of turning the tide of opinion, he often destroyed the debate. The housing reformers were generally successful in keeping Scrymgeour well away from their committee's deliberations, which meant he raised his objections at full council meetings. When it came to housing he championed what he probably saw as the people's cause. He opposed the Greenmarket and Overgate slum clearance schemes because he believed the empty houses available were all at higher rents [DCA TC Minutes (1913-
Although he supported state-built housing, he wanted central government to pay for it, not Dundee's workers [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p178]. With Cllrs Robertson and Fletcher he opposed the Logie housing scheme every step of the way, battling for unrealistic financial subsidies and idealistic cottages. Scrymgeour stood as a Prohibitionist in 1908, 1910 and 1917 general elections and can fairly be said to have been the joke candidate. But in 1918 he took over 10,000 votes from Churchill and Wilkie and in 1922, against the background of the political failure of Lloyd George's coalition, topped the poll. Scrymgeour benefited from Dundee's two member system, where electors had two votes but could not allocate both to the same candidate. In 1922 Labour fielded only one candidate because Communist Willie Gallacher was in the field. As well as being seen as a sort of second Labour candidate, Scrymgeour was the choice of Liberals who would not vote Conservative and Unionists who would not vote Liberal [Southgate (1968) p351].

The next watershed year in municipal politics in Dundee after 1909 was 1919. In the November municipal elections Labour candidates captured eight seats and ten of the 34 councillors were described by the press as Labourists.

"A striking feature of the general results is the heavy defeat of many old members, their being apparently a strong desire to secure new blood." [DPL cuttings book, November 5 1919].

Figures like prominent trades unionist Nicholas Marra, who had previously managed poor thirds, now put sitting councillors like RM Noble to the bottom of the poll. Excepting the two Broughty Ferry wards, every city ward returned at least one Labour
"A patent feature of the day's doings was the large number of women who quite evidently were voting for the first time." [DPL cuttings book, November 5 1919].

In the parish council elections, held on the same day, four women were elected out of 23 - perhaps not a particularly impressive statistic, but every woman who had the courage to stand was elected. Agnes Husband and Mrs A Mitchell, stood for Labour. Mary Allan, who topped the poll in ward four, was a prominent suffragette associated with the Women's Freedom League and pioneer of day nurseries [DPL Obit book, p134]. The local political scene was changing and local political bodies began to reflect the depth of these changes in their compositions. The post-war economy was slow to pick up in Dundee. Effectively the days of jute were over with the end of the First World War. At the end of November 1919 the unemployed marched to the town house and demanded jobs to tide them over the depression. Nicholas Marra made a speech berating Dundee MP Winston Churchill and told his audience the cost of Churchill's Russian adventure, (supporting counter-revolutionary Whites against the Bolsheviks in the civil war), would have kept unemployment benefit going for over two years [DPL cuttings book, November 28 1919]. Dundee's people were not prepared to wait for Liberals who supported Churchill and Lloyd George to deliver when there were few jobs and prices, especially food, were rising. That Dundee staple the mutton bridie shot up to 6d - the seller was accused of profiteering [DPL cuttings book, November 20 1919]. The expectation that free market policies would provide was being challenged at all sorts of levels in the post-war world.
Welfare measures could provide a shock absorber for capitalism, without conceding drastic change in the structures of industry and society. The measures of control adopted by local authority officials were not designed to transform urban society, but to keep the economic machinery going by maintaining a set of social standards (see chapter 3). By the last quarter of the nineteenth century local officials had a wide range of sanitary powers which affected both landlords and tenants, and the paragraphs of figures read out at Dundee Town Council sanitary committee meetings chronicle their use. In the three years 1891-2 to 1893-4, 7,762 statutory notices were served on owners or occupiers of property for the abatement of nuisances - an average of almost 50 each week [DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, pp656-7]. In the same period 5,343 visits were made to lodging houses, about 34 a week, and 5,765 visits to short-let houses, or 37 a week. Under Dundee’s Improvement Act of 1882, in this three-year period, sanitary officers dealt with 109 property owners, closed 39 properties and had 45 repaired - in all 595 houses were affected and an estimated 1,572 tenants [DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, p653]. The sanitary police had been stalking the tenement closes and backcourts.

The concept of a nuisance, generally taken to mean a health threatening situation, was one enshrined in common law and abating them was one of the traditional powers of the old Dean of
Guild Court [chapter 4; appendix]. Nuisance became the basis for the 1846-57 Removal of Nuisances Acts; public authority officers could complain of a nuisance after receiving a certificate from two medical doctors. A sheriff could issue an order against the owner or occupier to have the nuisance removed, and in 1856 officers were given the power of entry to properties where they believed nuisances existed. Although Shaftesbury's lodging house Acts of 1851 did not apply to Scotland, similar powers to make local authorities responsible for regulating them were introduced in the 1856 Act for the Board of Supervision. This latter Act acted as a catalyst for the appointment of sanitary inspectors in several Scottish towns. Once the 1867 Public Health Act came into being, authorities in larger towns were obliged to appoint sanitary inspectors. In January 1868 Dundee's police commissioners recommended Thomas Kinnear, already inspector of nuisances under the police and nuisances Acts, for the post of sanitary inspector and he was finally appointed in December [DA (1868) Jan 17; DCA Police Board minute book No 3, mss]. Although it is difficult to get a good run of figures on notices served to abate nuisances until 1882, when Dundee's second local Act was brought in, properties were being inspected for nuisances at least 15 years before that and perhaps as much as 25 years. For example, in January 1872 a report was read to the council, but not laid down in the minutes [DCA TC Minutes (1871-2) pp421-3]. Kinnear's early duties as a nuisance inspector arose out his job as a police officer, and he only ceased to be a public servant on his death in 1913 - despite attempts to remove this rather disagreeable man from his post. His reign as sanitary inspector
lasted 45 years and the way in which local authority powers were translated into deeds was very much at his discretion.

Although figures for inspections of lodging houses are scarce before 1882, Dundee's Police Commission had been registering, licensing and inspecting lodging houses for about thirty years. In January 1855 there were 964 registered lodging houses on its books and between June 16 and December 29, 222 houses were refused licences on grounds of size, 63 people were convicted of keeping lodgers without a licence and 39 registered keepers were brought before the court for flouting the regulations [DA (1855) Jan 5]. The police commissioners were so pleased with the lodging house inspector's record his wages were raised from 24s a week to 27s, an annual salary of £70 4s. At some point before 1870 this inspector's duties were added to those of the sanitary inspector.

However, individual inspectors could only have had a limited impact on a city of around 80,000 people by the mid-1850s, and its population was set to double by the turn of the century. Even so, initially Kinnear's duties were not confined to strictly sanitary matters. At the beginning of January 1870, in the middle of a fever epidemic, hackney carriage licensing was devolved to a Mr Parr to allow Kinnear more time to inspect lodging houses - commonly characterised as low dens riddled with morally and physically diseased people [DCA Police Board minutes, 1870-72, pp5-6]. In May 1883, following new rules and regulations on common lodging houses, Kinnear made a plea for
extra inspectors.

"As the time of the present sanitary staff is fully occupied with other pressing duties, I do not see how these Regulations can be properly enforced unless by adding to the strength of the department. The regulation of lodging houses and prevention of overcrowding has an important bearing on the health of the community..." [DCA PC/TC Minutes 1882-3, p285]

In many ways Kinnear's job was to police, contain and prevent disease. Because the fear of an epidemic - no respecter of class or age - was so real, Kinnear was able to build up a sanitary department with a sizable staff during his career; by the time of his death there was a chief inspector, an assistant sanitary inspector, ten outdoor officers and a clerk [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) p743]. In return Kinnear gave monthly reports to the town council's sanitary committee as evidence of how his team were tackling sanitary evils.

The scope of the activities of the small army of local government officials - including the burgh engineer and the medical officer of health - shows just how the fear of disease had given these officials the power to keep a watch on ordinary people's lives by the early 1890s (figure 9:1). As soon as a case of infectious disease was confirmed, not only could the feverish invalid be removed to the city's isolation hospital, but the chaff-filled mattress, bedding and many of the family's clothes could be taken too. In February 1885 Kinnear reported:

"The beds, bedding and other articles of wearing apparel which had been exposed to the germs of infection from zymotic disease in 143 separate dwellings within the Burgh, and consisting of 2,410 different articles, were removed during the month to King's Cross hospital, where they were carefully disinfected, then washed and returned to the owners. The chaff in 139 houses where zymotic diseases formerly
Return of work and sanitary improvements, Dundee sanitary department, 1892-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry</th>
<th>numbers</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statutory notices served on owners or occupiers of property for the abatement of nuisances</td>
<td>2730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits to lodging houses</td>
<td>1912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits to houses let for less than six months to enforce cleanliness</td>
<td>1482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complaints registered at office</td>
<td>807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brushes given out to clean houses</td>
<td>4433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooms cleaned by above brushes</td>
<td>8900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stairs and passages cleaned</td>
<td>775</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cases of infectious disease</td>
<td>2562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling-houses disinfected</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Houses where chaff destroyed</td>
<td>387</td>
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<tr>
<td>Houses where clothes removed</td>
<td>802</td>
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<tr>
<td>Notices served on teachers informing them of infectious disease in homes of pupils</td>
<td>3419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCs/cisterns introduced/improved</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privies/ashpits introduced/improved</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinks introduced</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House and drain ventilators provided</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visits during property reconstruction</td>
<td>851</td>
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<tr>
<td>Properties reconstructed</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosecutions for overcrowding etc.</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, pp656-7.
existed was removed and destroyed, and the occupants provided with new chaff at the expense of the Local Authority." [DCA TC Minutes 1884-5, p136]

The home could be fumigated or disinfected. Children could be forced to stay away from school until the teacher had been sent a sanitary department certificate stating their home was free from infection. Fever brought with it the spectre of death, loss of income and the traumatic powers of the sanitary inspector. Under the 1882 Dundee Police Act, it also brought the full force of the law. Failure to notify a doctor or the city's medical officer could mean a 40s fine. Obstruction of officers carrying out disinfection or removing articles, a £10 penalty and a daily fine of up to 40s. If a tenant left a house within six weeks of an infectious disease without disinfecting it to the satisfaction of a doctor, or giving notice to the owner, or having lied about it, he or she ran the risk of another £10 fine [1882 Act, 45 & 46 Vict., c185, pars 246-9, 251-2]. The powers existed before 1882; in 1874 Thomas Whitton was fined 10s 6d, or seven days, for failing to fumigate a house from which a woman with typhus had been removed [C&A, Sept 30 1874].

When fever took a hold on the city, the sanitary machine came under great strain. The public had to be warned - in January 1870 handbills were printed and circulated to the whole town, and the sanitary committee issued more in February [DCA TC Minutes (1870-72) pp9,15]. In 1891-2 there were 790 cases of infectious disease and 610 houses were disinfected; in 1892-3, 2562 cases and only 750 houses disinfected [DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, p656-7]. But, officials were kept most busy inspecting
properties for nuisances, lodging houses for infringements of the regulations and checking short-let houses were clean - at least 6,000 visits a year or 120 a week. When a property was reconstructed, the figures from 1891-4 suggest it would be visited at least four times - no drain, privy or cistern went unnoticed. And some poor soul noted down every brush loaned "to the poor" and the number of rooms it was purported to have cleaned - nearly 5,000 brushes and over 10,000 rooms a year between November 1891 and October 1894 [DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, p656-7].

According to Kinnear many of the properties dealt with under the 1882 local Act in the period 1891-4 were concentrated in specific districts - he mentions Blackscroft, Foundry Lane, Hilltown, Rosebank, Overgate, Scouringburn, Hawkhill and Session Street [DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, p653]. All were concentrations of older tenements spread around the town centre. Outside of this broad zone, only "the Bog" in Lochee seems to have come in for close scrutiny - an Irish ghetto within a peripheral industrial village swallowed and swollen by Dundee. (You are unlikely to find "the Bog" on a published map; the predominately single-room homes in terraced back-to-back rows lay between Miller's Lane and Kerr's Lane in a low damp spot. It is interesting sanitary officials used this bigoted slang expression in their records.) Without a detailed statistical analysis of the original departmental records, it is impossible to know to what extent specific areas were deliberately targeted at this time, or whether specific individual owners or properties were singed.
out. However, Kinnear does admit to using scare tactics.

"Many of the proprietors are voluntarily repairing their properties without being called upon by the commissioners." [DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, p653]

Proprietors were being invited to improve their houses before Kinnear and William Mackison, the burgh engineer, used the law to close them down. And where properties were reconstructed or repaired, new tenants and better rents could be got. Kinnear reports improved conditions were generally maintained and the communal courts and closes – popularly characterised as hotbeds of disease – were kept in better condition.

"...the real advantages gained have been that the dwelling-houses and their surroundings are in a cleanly state, and in a healthier condition than formerly, that the sanitary conveniences provided are in regular use, and that the houses are now being occupied by a superior class of tenants." [DCA TC Minutes 1893-4, p181]

It was a social policy which was not only designed to remove the sty, but the pigs as well. The following sections examine the execution of local authority policies in greater detail.

a) Detecting nuisances

The post of sanitary inspector was created in 1868 in Dundee in order to prevent health-threatening nuisances, but the post of inspector of nuisances extends at least to the 1850s, and the legal concept of a nuisance was much older. Quite simply, where people lived together in a town, there had to be ways of preventing indiscriminate construction and unhealthy buildings. The Dean of Guild Court had been a means of doing this in Scottish burghs. In rapidly growing cities a new mechanism
A large part of the 1871 Dundee Improvement Act gave the town's officials powers to control new building and the formation of new streets [1871 Act, 34 & 35 Vict, c153]. The Act required owners to deposit plans drawn one inch to eight feet (1:96) of proposed buildings with the principal sheriff clerk of the county of Forfar (who had an office in Dundee), and a set of duplicate plans with the commissioners (i.e. the town council's surveyor). This was not something new - the 1871 Act refers to buildings passed by the commissioners prior to the passing of that Act (par 61). The police commissioners, in effect the town council, were not however bound to execute all the works authorised by the 1871 Act - as an enabling Act the council had to take a conscious decision to carry each part out, however as a local Act it was tailor-made to meet the city's perceived needs. Regulations were set down on the number of storeys a property could have, on room size, the number and size of windows, ventilation and the pipes, flues and gutters. As well as showing the position and dimensions of the building, externally and internally, the plans had to show the position, mode, size and material of the drainage and water supply system. The foundations could not be excavated until the commissioners had passed the plans. Once passed, it was up to the town's officials to make sure the plans and the commissioners' recommendations were adhered to. The burgh surveyor could inspect any building in progress, had to be notified 24 hours before any drain or sewer was covered up and notified again when a building had been completed. The careful
policing of drains under construction was the means of making sure new nuisances posing a threat to the town's health were not constructed. Clean water was the best form of preventative medicine.

What about buildings constructed prior to 1871? A building could be certified unfit for human habitation and closed under the 1867 Public Health Act, and a similar clause exists in the 1871 Act - owners were given the opportunity to be heard and present evidence to have the order revoked. However, the sanitary department were given other powers to act where drains caused concern.

"Where in the opinion of the Commissioners there is reasonable ground to believe that the drainage of any building... is defective, ... the Commissioners may, between the hours of nine o'clock in the morning and six o'clock in the evening, enter upon and inspect any such buildings or lands, and if need be make such excavations... as they think fit... doing as little damage as possible; and if upon inspection the same be found satisfactory the Commissioners... shall make compensation..." [1871 Act, 34 & 35 Vict, c153, par 98]

Entry and inspection could only be made with the consent of the owner, occupier or a person in charge, or with written permission of a magistrate, except in cases of urgent necessity. Inspection powers were couched in careful language emphasising the need to respect private property - consent, minimal damage and compensation. But, the intention is clear - new buildings were to be closely scrutinised on paper and the ground, and older buildings would not escape scrutiny. For the intention to be carried out effectively, the town needed a team of qualified officials.
Nuisances were largely matters of water, drainage and sewage and inspection did follow in the wake of the 1871 Act. In March 1872 the case of four proprietors, who had been ordered to install sinks and water, was discussed by the sanitary committee [DCA TC Minutes (1871-2) p506]. In July 1873, when there was a cholera scare, a return was made detailing the number of houses in specific streets had neither ashpits nor wcs - in all 3690 houses [DCA TC Minutes (1873-4) pp212-4]. More than 1,000 of these houses were in the Overgate and the Nethergate, the mediaeval town centre. As there was no proper means of sanitation, the owners and inhabitants of these homes must have caused nuisances to exist. Residents sometimes appealed to the inspectorate to take action against house proprietors; in March 1872 a petition was received from the inhabitants of Lowden's Alley in the Hawkhill, complaining of the state of the street and the gutters [DCA TC Minutes (1871-2) p505].

From 1882, there is a clear run of figures on the number of statutory notices served upon proprietors or their agents for the removal or abatement of nuisances (figure 9:2). These show an extraordinary change in policy in 1916, when the number of notices served increased more than tenfold. Looking at the figures prior to the change of direction in 1916, there appears to be two main phases of activity, from 1888-1900 and 1901-1915 (figure 9:3). Charles Templeman, the medical officer of health, described 1890-97 as a slum crusade period, during which 51 properties were cleared away and 139 reconstructed or repaired [DCA TC Minutes (1905-6) p114]. This was a deliberate onslaught
Figure 9: Notices served to remove nuisances, 1882-1916

Notices served to remove nuisances, 1882-1916

Notices served

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<th>Year</th>
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on proprietors, which coincides with the main peak of notices issued prior to 1916. The record suggests most notices were served as a result of visits made on the inspectorate's own initiative. During 1899, 36% of notices served arose from complaints received; in 11 cases legal proceedings were taken, and nine of these were successful [DCA TC Minutes (1899-1900) pp347-9]. The small number of prosecutions is perhaps indicative of the desire to use the notices as an end in themselves, to exert pressure on proprietors and to a lesser extent tenants. Figures on the number of nuisances attended to following the serving of notices, show the vast majority of owners and factors responded positively (figures 9:4, 9:5, 9:6, 9:7). These diagrams do not show any particular seasonal pattern to the issuing of notices.

The two periods into which the graph can be divided prior to 1916, may reflect tension between landlords and the local authority. Around the turn of the century, some proprietors and house factors did feel the council had allowed officials to issue notices too freely, while the council had been failing to clean and flush the tenement back courts often enough. It was an ongoing argument and the Dundee Landlords' and House Factors' Association submitted a memo to the town council in May 1901.

"The Memorialists state that the Cleansing Department fails to carry out the enactments of the Dundee Police Acts. In Section 151 of the Act of 1882, special instructions are given that the visits of the Scavengers shall be at least twice a week for the purpose of cleaning the Ashpit and flushing the same with water..." [DCA TC Minutes (1900-01) p853]

The inspector of cleansing, reporting on June 25, insisted tenements were cleaned two or three times a week, sometimes daily
Figure 9: Notices served to remove nuisances, 1885

Month

Notices served

Notices served

Jan

Feb

Mar

Apr

May

Jun

Jul

Aug

Sep

Oct

Nov

Dec

300

200

100

0
Notices served to remove nuisances, 1895

- Attended to
- Yet unimproved

Month

Notices served
Notices served to remove nuisances, 1900

Notices served

Month

Jan
Feb
Mar
Apr
May
Jun
Jul
Aug
Sep
Oct
Nov
Dec

0
100
200
300

Attended to
Yet unimproved
Figure 9: Notices served to remove nuisances, 1905

Month

January February March April May June July August September October November December

Notices served

- Attended to
- Yet unimproved
in the centre, but pointed out owners of private houses on the outskirts considered once a week too often. He did, nevertheless, admit many of the water pipes in older properties were too narrow to allow a decent flush. However, the ensuing discussion shows the real argument, as far as the sanitary committee was concerned, centred on a group of house factors said to "systematically neglect" their properties. Doubt was cast on whether the house factors' association really expressed the views of "the general body of owners".

"If Agents who deal with large quantities of property would adopt the system of having it supervised by a competent tradesman, the necessity for the service of Notices would be lessened... the Factors' Association would not allow their old-fashioned midden system to perish without a desperate struggle, but, whatever their prejudices in attempting to block the way, the question of improving the condition of these back courts cannot be much longer delayed." [DCA TC Minutes (1900-01) p854]

A number of problems coincide at this point. Firstly, in March 1901 Cllr Alexander Elliot submitted an extensive proposal of sanitary reform, which was published as an appendix to the town council minutes, although the views expressed were Mr Elliot's own and it is likely he and Inspector Kinnear disagreed strongly. Cllr Elliot argued for a stringent interpretation of the letter of the law to bring dirty tenants and negligent landlords to heel. Had this strategy been employed in the way Elliot envisaged, the workload of the medical, sanitary and burgh engineer's departments would have been substantially increased. Secondly, the local authority was struggling to find a better way of dealing with sewage and rubbish. Water closets were becoming more common - proprietors were building brick extensions on to the rear of tenement blocks in better areas to provide wcs
for each floor and sometimes each house, which allowed them to increase the rents, (1027 wcs were put up at 325 properties between August 1904 and November 1905) [DCA TC Minutes (1905-6) p114]. But, rubbish was still piled in an open midden or ashpit for "the scaffies", and where there were also dry closet privies and the likelihood of tenants adding buckets of effluvia to the midden, the problems of frequent cleansing are obvious. The scavengers' carts set out at 4am, and refuse was wheeled from the pits to the streets; the streets were cleared by 7am, with the help of 50 horses [DCA TC Minutes (1905-6) p111-2]. In 1901 Dundee's sanitary committee thought themselves "practical men" and described the Glasgow and Manchester's bin systems as faddist and expensive. In 1905 it was remarked that Aberdeen and Edinburgh's systems cost too much in terms of horsepower. However, by this time it had been decided to replace ashpits and middens with a bin system, already being used in Maryfield and Pitkerro Road (both areas with a high percentage of owner occupiers in 1911). The stumbling block was that the council had no powers to compel house proprietors to adopt a bin system. The costs of a bin system would have been seen as part of the costs of managing a property and would have eaten into factors' profits - hence the opposition of the factors' association and the allegation that the problem was one of insufficient cleansing on the part of the council. The message in the minute of the meeting on June 25 1901, finally discussed six weeks after the memo was sent, was that the number of notices served on owners and factors could be reduced if the factors were prepared to cooperate in improving the condition of tenement back courts by
getting rid of the middens. A degree of willing cooperation on
the factors' part would have been advisable if Elliot's Draconian
measures, with the implicit promise of statutory notices falling
like confetti on the factors' heads, were to be avoided. It may
be a coincidence, but the number of notices issued on owners and
factors did not reach the levels of the 1890s for another 15
years.

In February 1916 the housing and town planning[committee] decided on a
radical change of policy designed to raise the quality of
tenement housing in the city (figure 9:2, p431). A visitation
committee was formed which carried out monthly visits to specific
areas of the city and classified the properties into three
categories: I - where immediate action should be taken; II - put
on a waiting list for action immediately after the war; III - to
be reconsidered after the war. A special register was kept and a
plan was made of the districts dealt with [DCA TC/EH; see section
i, chapter 10 ... ].

b) Visits to lodging houses

Lodging houses were usually inhabited by one sex, and
residents rented a bed, not a room, and brought in their own
food, cooking it in communal kitchens. Rooms were dormitories of
single beds, licensed to hold a number of "inmates", and rates
were cheap. In short they were dosshouses; the places where
after 1880 police took the homeless rather than have them in
their cells [DYB (1882) pp63-4]. Mid-century concern about
lodging houses and their itinerant inmates' habits resulted in a number of "model" lodging houses, designed to set an example to the other registered houses. The good citizens of Dundee expressed their anxiousness about the moral character of these establishments and the physical threat these dens of fever posed for the rest of the community. The police commissioners took action against overcrowding because of that threat to public health. Inspections took place from at least the mid-1850s; 39 registered keepers were brought before the courts during 1854, and 63 people convicted for keeping lodgers without a licence [DA Jan 5, 1855]. The 1871 Dundee Police and Improvement Act laid down specific space provisions for lodgers:

"No person shall suffer any lodgers to sleep in any room in any house belonging to or occupied by him unless there be four hundred cubic feet of space at the least for every person sleeping in such room; and any person who shall offend against this enactment shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding forty shillings, and a further penalty not exceeding twenty shillings for every day on which such offence shall continue." [1871 Act, 34 & 35 Vict., c153, par 100]

There was no alteration to these regulations in the 1882 Act [1882 Act, 45 & 46 Vict., c185, par 139]. There were further powers in the two local Acts to convict and fine prostitutes and those keeping disorderly houses. In 1898 byelaws were altered to raise the fines to £5 for an offence and 40s per day for continuing the offence [DCA, TC Minutes 1897-8, pp123, 202-3]. The 1898 byelaws made sure lodging houses were austere and unwelcoming places. Carpets and bed curtains were forbidden, beds had to be of an approved type (e.g., freestanding metal), the sexes were strictly segregated, beds had to be vacated by 8am and not occupied for another ten hours and intoxicated persons were
not to be admitted. There had to be freedom of access for local authority officers at all times.

The sanitary officers inspecting lodging houses did so primarily to uncover overcrowding, and only night-time visits could be fully successful in discovering breaches of these regulations. A journalist investigating "the resting places of the poor" in 1888 reported it was the duty of the sanitary inspector to visit lodging houses once a week.

"It may be stated that those who wish to start a lodging house have first to apply to the sanitary authorities. Officers inspect the premises, measure the rooms, and if the place is found suitable the application is granted. Cards showing the number of persons who are allowed to sleep in the rooms at one time are displayed in a conspicuous place, and if that number is exceeded when the officers visit the place a prosecution follows." [DPL DYB 1888 (1889), p137]

However, the inspectors do not seem to have been entirely predictable in their pattern of visits. In 1874 the Dundee Courier and Argus described a series of inspections as "raids" in the heading on its police court reports. The standard fine for keeping two or three lodgers more than a license allowed was 5s or three days in prison, and it appears inspectors took their tape measure with them to Roger's Close in the Cowgate.

"There were five persons sleeping in one room containing only 868 cubic feet, being only breathing space for two persons. [C&A, Sept 26, 1874]

Despite the assertion visits took place weekly, figures from 1882-1919 show dramatic fluctuations in the level of visits [DCA, TC Minutes]. There were only 71 inspections reported in February 1883 and all were by day, but in February 1884 there were 436, 176 of them by night. During the First World War the inspections
fell to around 30-60 a month, and declined to single figures in 1920. Looking more closely at sample years - 1885, 1890, 1895, 1900 and 1905 - comparisons can be made between day and night visits and the level of visits generally (figures 9:8, 9:9; 9:10; 9:11; 9:12;). The overall pattern is one of a slow decline in the level of inspections and throughout, by narrow majority, most visits were made by day. There is evidence the popularity of lodging houses had declined by 1920, despite the shortage of accommodation after the First World War. A sanitary inspector's report dated January 14, 1921, noted the loss of 39 beds at 167 Overgate, property of the town council, which had stood empty since July 1917,

"...there being no demand for this class of housing..." [DCA, Sanitary Inspector and Medical Officer of Health Reports, 1919-23, p156.]

The front building, which had 19 rooms, was converted to dwelling houses, while the building at the back with five rooms was demolished. A few pages later commenting on the general shortage of housing in the city, chief sanitary inspector Robert Mitchell wrote:

"At 31st December, 1920, there were only 23 houses that could be let and occupied as dwelling-houses, and even then 14 of these houses, situated as they are in congested areas, would be of low grade." [DCA, Sanitary Inspector and Medical Officer of Health Reports, 1919-23, p159.]

Yet, the number of beds provided by common lodging houses had severely declined by 1920. In 1899 there were 678 beds in ten lodging houses; in 1914 a detailed report shows there were 11 lodging houses on the register offering 748½ places for males and 58½ for females [DCA TC Minutes, 1899-1900, pp338-344; 1913-14 pp679-680]. But in the 1920 report it was stated there were only 443
Figure 9:8

Visits to lodging houses, 1885
Visits to lodging houses, 1890

Visits

Fig. 9:9
Visits to lodging houses, 1900

By day
By night
Mitchell might be expected the last number of houses were changing over 60, and previous inspections would have been done in May 1910; in all there were only four lodging houses performed as being out of definition as their charge over 6. However, this leaves four houses against check for, 1Comercial Street, which presented 1946 as only been in 1914, there was an estimated lodging houses offering 700 beds between 1914 and 1916, approaching half of the total. Of the three houses left off the register at the beginning of the war. These common lodging houses may have been closed during the war, however, it was a temporary register of the lists of lodging houses in which 1925 a new registration took place of new lodging houses offering 700 beds [B.C. T.C. Register of Orange County Lodging Houses]. This register included 51 Commercial Street, which had 296 beds in 1925, and it did not close until July 1920. Many of the smaller-sized lodging houses closed in the late 1930s, but the last of the Rock...
two establishments left on the register, 19 Overgate which had room for 20 male lodgers, and 18 Peter Street which had room for 20%. The level of inspections fell to single figures after the war because of the decline of this form of accommodation; fewer establishments were subject to the regulations. It may be in part due to the impact of the war on the male population of the city. The men at the front would not need a bed in Dundee. To some extent this was an artificial decline. To be subject to the regulations in 1920 charges per night had to be 6d or below. Mitchell wrote he expected the law to be changed as a number of houses were charging over 6d, and pricing themselves out of the inspections net. Nine lodging houses were re-registered in May 1918; in April there were only four, but three are noted as being outwith the definition as their charge per night was over 6d [DCA, TC Minutes 1917-18, p621; 1918-19, p581-2]. However, this leaves two houses unaccounted for, including 55 Commercial Street which provided 241½ male beds in 1914. Taking into account the three houses left off the register, and assuming capacity as at 1914, there was an estimated loss of around 400 beds between 1914 and 1918 - approaching half of the total available at the beginning of the war. These common lodging houses may have been closed during the war due to a lack of demand. However, it was a temporary loss - under bye-laws issued in March 1925 a new registration took place of nine lodging houses offering 700 beds [DCA TC/EH Register of Common Lodging Houses]. This register included 55 Commercial Street, which had 236 beds in 1925, and it did not close until July 1946. Many of the medium-sized lodging houses closed in the late 1930s, but the last of the Rock
family's lodging house empire did not close its doors in North Lindsay Street until March 1956.

In 1885 increases in the total number of visits are attributable to an increase in inspections by day. However, in 1895, 1900 and 1905, the level of day visiting is reasonably constant, and it is the number of visits by night which makes for erratic swings in the pattern of total visits. Inspection would be most successful as a deterrent to rule-breaking on the part of lodging house keepers, if the officers could employ an element of surprise. Erratic swings from month to month in the level of inspections must reflect the tactics used by sanitary officials. But there are likely to be a number of contributory factors to the adoption of particular visiting strategies by officials. Inspection was in part a health measure, and at times when public health was believed to be threatened by illness or epidemic, the frequency of inspections at places where itinerants stayed could be expected to increase. Secondly, inspections could rise when officials suspected overcrowding was on the increase. This might happen when keepers became complacent about evading officials, or when the demand for places in lodging houses surged. The latter might be expected to happen in periods of economic instability or depression when those in debt might be forced to give up more permanent homes and the numbers of people homeless rose. Thirdly, inspections might rise for political reasons, either as a result of pressures from groups outside the sanitary department, or as a result of tensions between individuals within it.
The overall level of inspections in 1885 is much higher than in the other sample years, and there are two prominent peaks in June and October. There is no apparent medical reason why visits should rise dramatically in these two months. In spring 1886 there was a smallpox outbreak in Lochee after a young millworker visited friends in Leith [DCA TC Minutes 1885-6, p235]. She returned and worked in the mill for several days before falling ill, and it was thought she had spread it among her colleagues. Visits rose to 522 in April 1886, 71.8% by day, higher than at any point in 1885. Outbreaks of highly infectious diseases probably did lead to increased inspection of lodging houses and might explain individual peaks. But, only very prominent outbreaks of disease were recorded in the sanitary inspector's reports or in the pages of the Dundee Yearbooks. Without a rigorous analysis of records directly relating to the incidence of disease, it is difficult to come to any clear conclusion on the influence it had on the level of inspections.

However, economic circumstances are described with greater clarity in the Yearbooks. In 1882 there was a marked improvement in the jute trade following a period of stagnation, which encouraged increased investment in jute production and wage inflation among skilled workers, especially engineers [DYB 1882 (1883); 1883 (1884) p5]. The boom was short-lived; in 1884 trade was depressed, investment shrank, ships were idle, wages were cut and employment was scarce.

"...at the present moment many of the labouring poor, for lack of work, are dependent on charity for
The riveters in the shipyards went on a ten-week strike. OG Miller and Sons closed their linen works with the loss of 1200 jobs and little prospect of alternative employment. In 1885 wages were again lowered with brief protests from a workforce who, we are told, wisely submitted. The jute trade improved in 1886, but employers cut wages by 5% in June. The parochial board had to increase the poor rates by a half-penny because of high unemployment and destitution.

Applications to the poorhouses rose to 923 people at midsummer (presumably June), a level at which serious overcrowding was reported. There can be little doubt there were increased numbers of people in financially insecure circumstances in 1885, but were people being forced to leave relatively secure short-let houses for beds in lodging houses? Valuation roll analysis shows unlet houses were concentrated at the bottom end of the market. Houses valued at less than £5 accounted for 34% of the total housing stock in 1884-85 and for 74% of those unlet. Unlet houses of comparatively low valuation are likely to have included large numbers of one-roomed dwellings, and were probably in the least desirable areas of town. If people living on a narrow economic margin were made homeless by financial pressures, the numbers of houses unlet would surely rise. In fact the numbers of houses unlet were significantly lower in 1884-5 than they had been for the previous four years. However, the levels of around 3000 unlet houses experienced in the early 1880s were unusually high. In 1895 unlet houses stood
Figure 9: 13

Unlet houses, Dundee, 1880 – 1885

Year

1880 1881 1882 1883 1884 1885

100 200 300 400

Houses

Source: Dundee Year Book 1886 (1887) p163.

453
at 1136 and at 1931 in 1901-2. Only in the depression year 1907-8, do they climb again to 2817, and in 1911-12 to 2866 [DCA, TC/En/11; TC/En/16]. Also, low-value houses accounted for a larger percentage of the houses unlet in 1884-5 than in the previous four years, indicating problems letting short-let houses to the poorest in the city. However, the confused picture the evidence on unlet houses gives makes it difficult to draw the conclusion there would be more customers for lodging houses, never mind that keepers would be willing to run the risk of contravening the regulations.

Between November 1889 and April 1890, inspections of lodging houses consistently topped 200 visits a month, but dropped below this level from May to the following February and the pattern became more erratic (figure 9:9, p445). In this case there is some evidence for a switch in policy on the part of the sanitary inspectorate.

"All the lodging houses were found in a satisfactory state, except in 3 cases, the occupiers of which were brought before the Magistrate in the Police Court, and charged with a contravention of the Rules and Regulations respecting common lodging houses - a fine of 10s 6d was imposed in one case, and the other cases were admonished and dismissed." [DCA, TC Minutes 1890-1 pp293-4]

The sanitary department were finding very few prosecutable cases, despite making frequent visits, and when they did prosecute, the chances were the lodging house keeper would be admonished. Under these circumstances it made sense to cut down on the total number of visits, while making the best use possible of the element of surprise. During 1895 the level of monthly inspections was not consistently above 200 visits, and by 1900 it had dropped to
Below 100 (figures 9:10; 9:11, pp.446-7). In 1899 there were ten lodging houses providing 678 beds [DCA, TC Minutes 1899-1900, pp.338-344]. During the year 572 inspections were made between 8am-10pm and 599 between 10pm-8am, yet there were no cases in which legal proceedings were taken. Either visiting was an effective tool preventing people contravening the regulations, or the sanitary department was using verbal persuasion to gain immediate improvements in preference to the drawn out procedure of taking keepers to court. The latter could of course be a cloak for widespread corruption, although it should be stressed there is no evidence for this and it was not suggested at the time. Most of these lodging houses had beds for fewer than 40 people, notable exceptions being 97 Overgate which had 109 beds (male and female) and 55 Commercial Street which had 279 (all male). These last two were obviously more commercial enterprises, and the latter may have been a branch of a Glasgow chain, as an application for renewal for the license shows.

"Robert Burns, presently registered as a keeper of a Common Lodging house at 55 Commercial Street, Dundee, and residing at 31 Watson Street, Glasgow. The premises, as presently registered, consist of 9 apartments for 279 male lodgers. The woodwork of the bunk beds is all, more or less, over-run with vermin. I would therefore recommend that the whole of the present beds and woodwork in connection therewith be gutted out, and iron campbeds provided in their stead."

[DCA, TC Minutes 1897-8, p.756]

Robert Burns was the managing director of Burns Homes Ltd., and the local manager of the Dundee premises was David Carlyle Burns. The Rock family ran a group of three lodging houses, which collectively provided over 200 beds in 1899 and over 280 in 1925. Given the few pennies charged for a night and the costs of sanitary department improvements, it would not be surprising if
only the two small lodging houses on the register in 1920 were still in business. However, this is a false impression, due either to the failure of the regulations to keep pace with inflation or due to temporary closure during wartime. Despite the cost of sanitary department recommendations the number of lodging house beds rose by a fifth between 1899 and 1914, and the records show beds continued to be available in substantial numbers in the twenties and thirties [DCA TC/EH].

Inspections at night dropped off after the turn of the century, although inspectors still employed occasional raid tactics (ie December 1899, February 1900, March-April 1905) (figures 9:11; 9:12, pp447-8). In 1903 only 76 visits were made between 10pm-8am to the ten lodging houses, and not a single keeper was notified of any irregularity, least of all prosecuted [DCA, TC Minutes 1903-4, pp346-7]. In February 1906 a keeper was fined 10s or seven days, for keeping sheets and pillowcases in a filthy condition [DCA, TC Minutes 1905-6, p255]. When Patrick Rock, keeper of 97 Overgate, was repeatedly found under the influence, he was severely warned, but not prosecuted [DCA, TC Minutes 1905-6, p671]. Although the number of beds provided rose from 678 in 1899 to 807 in 1914, inspecting common lodging houses no longer seems to have been as high a priority. Few keepers were prosecuted, and those misdemeanours recorded were not grave threats to the physical or moral welfare of Dundee's citizens (eg. failing to report contagious illness or keeping a house of ill-repute). Sanitary officials took a less draconian approach to policing lodging houses in the early-twentieth century. It is
difficult to tell whether the perceived threat to the community had lessened because the houses were better-run, or whether fewer prosecutions resulted because the courts were failing to convict keepers for alleged offences. Another reason for changing tactics may simply have been to make better use of the inspectorate's time. Whatever, officials still used the element of surprise or raid tactics, suddenly swooping on keepers and their inmates in the dead of night (e.g. March-April 1905, figure 9:12, p448).

c) Visits to short-let houses

Visits made to short-let houses made the biggest impact on the lives of ordinary citizens. One of the advantages of being able to move up the social ladder and take a yearly tenancy, must have been the freedom from the threat of inspection. Houses let for less than six months were interpreted by local officials as coming under sections of public health and local Acts which entitled them to visit private homes; by day to detect filthy houses and by night to detect overcrowding. This was a deliberate policy to target specific groups of tenants, and the decision to adopt these tactics had the support of the medical officer of health, A M Anderson.

Dr Anderson put forward his arguments for visits to detect overcrowding to the sanitary committee in a report dated June 9, 1885. In public health and local Acts, the term lodger was not defined; in effect any house in which a person might be lodged,
could be described as "a house let in lodgings".

"The object of dealing with houses let in lodgings is to prevent overcrowding to an extent which may be dangerous or injurious to health, and to enforce cleanliness and sound sanitation. I am of the opinion that overcrowding generally, as well [sic] in private houses as in houses let in lodgings, should be considered and dealt with... the rate of mortality is not equally distributed amongst the population generally, but that among some classes and from certain diseases such rate is excessive, and that the excess prevails amongst the population living in houses of 1 and 2 rooms, where also overcrowding to a dangerous extent prevails." [DCA, TC Minutes 1884-5, p316]

To support his case, he produced a table of figures for 1884 showing a direct association between a high death rate and small houses; 23.34 deaths per 1000 in one and two-roomed houses, 14.68 in those with three or more rooms. The annual death rate of children under five was 67.09 per 1000 in 1884, 81% of them in one or two-roomed houses. Dr Anderson was employed to reduce figures like these and it was in his interest to dramatise them to get the powers and resources he sought. In fact a quick calculation from his own table of figures shows 70% of the population lived in one or two rooms, yet only 65.5% of all deaths in 1884 were among inhabitants of these houses. Dr Anderson went on to argue many small houses were overcrowded because tenants took in lodgers.

"From inquiries I caused to be made into 86 houses, containing a large number of inmates - varying from 6 to 12 each house - I find the result to be a total number of 636 inmates, of whom 36 were lodgers, or rather more than 5½ per cent." [DCA, TC Minutes 1884-5, p317]

He proposed measures be adopted to prevent overcrowding and to improve ventilation and lighting standards. To tackle overcrowding he drew the sanitary committee's attention to: section 44 of the Public Health Act 1867 and section 139 of the
Dundee Police Act 1882, dealing with houses let in lodging;
section 16 of the Public Health Act 1867, under which any house overcrowded or injurious to health could be deemed a nuisance;
section 37 of the Public Health Act 1867, under which provisions on common-lodging houses could apply to overcrowding in any house [DCA, TC Minutes 1884-5, p317]. Overcrowding was clearly defined in the report as where there was less than 400 cubic feet for every person aged eight or over; 150 cubic feet for children under eight. The occupier was liable for prosecution as author of the nuisance. Although houses let in lodging were required to register as such (and many did), because the legislation failed to clearly define what a lodger was, any premises where a person might be boarded, or any rooms or house let for a short period, came to be interpreted by local authority officials in Dundee as falling within the scope of the legislation.

Whether Dr. Anderson made his report on the instruction of his superiors in Whitehall, or whether it was compiled on his own initiative is not clear. In July 1884 the Board of Supervision (forerunner of the Local Government Board for Scotland and a branch of an emergent Scottish Office), requested to be informed of the action Dundee's councillors were going to take in consequence of the Medical Officer of Health's report [DCA, TC Minutes 1884-5, p360]. The sanitary committee duly appointed a sub-committee, convened by the Provost, to consider making regulations under section 44 of the Public Health Act 1867. This sub-committee included a prominent local builder and house proprietor James Gentle among its members. On August 10 the
sanitary committee directed the town clerk to publish the "adjusted" regulations, in terms of the statute, in the Dundee Courier and Argus (the local Tory newspaper) [DCA, TC Minutes 1884-5, p405].

So it would appear in August 1884 a new set of regulations applying to houses let in lodging were brought into being by the local authority to combat the problem of overcrowding in small houses. However, 250 visits were made to "houses let in lodgings or for a shorter period than six months" in September 1883, and 241 in October - that is visits were being made to small houses, defined by short tenure, before Dr Anderson's report was considered by councillors. A difference in the way the figures were presented might then be expected after August 1884; in fact the sanitary inspector's monthly reports do not separate day and night visits until March 1900, possibly in response to section 72 of the Public Health Act 1897. In his monthly report in September 1900, Thomas Kinnear makes it plain these visits were for the same two different purposes earlier visits were made for:

"There were 34 visits made by night to weekly let houses, or houses let in lodgings, for the prevention of overcrowding, and 704 by day, for enforcing cleanliness amongst the occupiers." [DCA, TC Minutes 1899-1900, p1084]

Cleanliness was more important than overcrowding in September 1900, but was this true prior to 1900? In 1884 Dr Anderson's main concern seemed to be overcrowding. Yet, Dr Anderson linked together overcrowding, lack of cleanliness and high mortality from certain diseases (particularly typhus, said to be rarely found in English towns), as being associated with particular
social groups living in small houses. He wanted to tackle all of these, and wanted to be able to get inspectors into these people's homes. The emphasis he placed on overcrowding added weight to his argument, because certain sections of the Acts he drew attention to would allow inspection of the kind he wanted to take place. The clauses on overcrowding gave him the means to inspect houses, even if overcrowding was not the issue which gave him the most concern. The fact the inspections were already taking place when Dr Anderson was putting forward a case for them, perhaps indicates a tension between officials trying to get to grips with the realities of living conditions in the city and local politicians who had to account for their activities. Dr Anderson may also be guilty of using the influence of the Board of Supervision to force the hand of a reluctant town council. Another possibility is that the Board of Supervision required Dr Anderson to take some sort of action, but the council attempted to slow procedures down, by firstly demanding a report, and secondly by forming a sub-committee. This could have left the medical officer in the position of carrying out a policy, despite the fact that all the legal niceties had not been observed.

The monthly totals of visits to short-let houses have been graphed from September 1883 to October 1920 (figures 9:14; 9:15; 9:16; 9:17; 9:18). The figures do have significant gaps where no visits were reported to the sanitary committee, especially in 1899-1900 and 1916-18. This does not mean inspections did not take place, although during the First World War the department
Figure 9: Dundee Sanitary Department: visits to short-let houses, 1883-1920 (1)
visits to short-let houses (2)
visits to short-let houses (3)
visits to short-let houses (4)
Figure 9:18

visits to short-let houses (5)

Looking at the graph more closely, the first major peak occurs in 1915, a year which has already been described as one of

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was under pressure as a result of staffing difficulties and it seems likely the inspection system broke down. The most striking thing about these totals is the statistical range between which visits fluctuated. 'Up to the turn of the century, for the most part the number of visits was below 300 a month, but when inspections went above this in 1885 and 1889, they were twice and five times that figure. Between 1891 and 1898, the pattern is not so extreme, but it is still very erratic, at times dipping below 100 and at others reaching over 500. In 1899 the record breaks down, but in the following three years visits soared between less than 100 a month to well over 1000. In 1903-6 inspections dropped again, staying below 400 a month, and this pattern is also true after 1909, with a gradual decline to 1916. In the immediate post-war era inspections remained below 300 even at their peak. There can be little doubt the sanitary department adopted raid tactics in planning their inspections. 'Unlike common-lodging houses, there was no necessity to visit a designated set of premises at reasonably frequent intervals, and this would appear to contribute to an even more erratic pattern of inspection.

"...two of my staff take what is known as night lodging house duty once every week, commencing at midnight and terminating about 4am. No particular night is chosen, so that the visits cannot be anticipated by the occupiers... the officers go through the houses in the more densely populated parts of town for the purpose of detecting and preventing overcrowding - fully 1,000 visits being made annually for this purpose." [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p1322]

Looking at the graphs more closely, the first major peak occurs in 1885, a year which has already been described as one of
economic depression, when financial pressures are likely to have driven families into smaller houses. A smallpox outbreak in Lochee and a typhus epidemic are likely to have contributed to a sharp increase in the number of visits made. Likewise a smallpox outbreak reported by medical officer of health Dr Anderson early in 1889, coincides with sharp rise in visits [DYB (1890) 1889, p6]. By contrast a pleuro-pneumonia outbreak in June 1889 coincides with the lowest level of visiting that year. This reflects the different tactics employed against a highly infectious, indiscriminate and emotive disease, and a chest illness which bore a stronger relationship to the workplace, damp conditions and poverty. Visiting reaches an unprecedented peak in December 1889. There is no obvious reason why this happened, although health reasons cannot be ruled out. Outbreaks of disease did result in more pressure being put on sanitary officials. A leader in the Dundee Advertiser on May 16, 1885, argued that small houses should be measured and penalties inflicted where tenants breached the numbers of persons allowed. It stated typhus,

"...has always been most prevalent among the worst fed and most poverty-stricken inhabitants, whose houses are overcrowded, whose general surroundings are most filthy, and who reside in the most densely populated localities.

"It is not difficult to predict that the existence and the enforcement of such regulations will powerfully assist sanitary authorities in their efforts to stamp out typhus, and to materially improve the physical, if not the moral welfare of those poor unfortunate individuals who form no small part of the population of every large town..." [DA May 16, 1885]

In 1899 the record of visits made breaks down, but when it resumes in 1900 it ushers in the period of highest peaks, 1901-3.
Again there are specific outbreaks of disease which can be associated with these peaks. There were two cases of smallpox in August 1900 at a tenement in Bernard Street. The first victim was Joseph Tully, and the medical officer of health Charles Templeman reported the following to the town clerk.

"He was at once removed to the Smallpox Hospital, and the other inmates of the house taken to a temporary Reception House. Re-vaccination has been offered to everyone in the vicinity, and especially to those who are known to have visited the house." [DCA TC Minutes (1899-1900) p1049].

When it came to dealing with smallpox, a clear set procedure was followed and action would be taken to make sure no one in the district was harbouring a smallpox victim. At the end of August 1900 a fearful warning was issued by the Local Government Board for Scotland. A case believed to be bubonic plague had been discovered in Glasgow and authorities were urged to make adequate preparations.

"The committee remitted to the Sanitary Inspector to get additional temporary assistance, and visit and report on all dirty houses and places in the city, and endeavour to put them right." [DCA TC Minutes (1899-1900) p1050]

The fear of disease could be just as powerful a catalyst as the arrival of an epidemic. In February 1901 the medical officer of health was given the authority to get extra assistance to help him cope with the extra work caused by the smallpox outbreak [DCA TC Minutes (1900-01) p330]. By March 12 the city had been clear of cases for 18 days and the reception house was empty, but the inquest was just beginning. It was alleged the properties concerned, including that in Bernard Street, had poor drainage.

"The committee directed the Sanitary Inspector to put in force the powers conferred by Section 67 of the Act of 1892, especially as to Tenants keeping their houses
in a filthy condition." [DCA TC Minutes (1901-2) p452] Templeman was premature in thinking the smallpox threat had passed. In April there were a further five cases, and in May the local authority started to provide free vaccine throughout the city. The vaccinations could be got from 9-10am and 6-8pm and doctors were paid 1s 6d for every person injected. A matron and a male assistant were appointed to Polepark House, the reception house [DCA TC Minutes (1901-2) p569,676]. Between April 9 and May 14, 1901, there were 16 smallpox cases, by September 10 the reception house was empty again, and only four patients were convalescing in hospital. By now Templeman had something else on his mind.

"As is usual at this season of the year, scarlet fever has begun to manifest itself." [DCA TC Minutes (1900-01) p1253] During September 147 cases of infectious disease were notified against 91 for the previous month and 73 for the previous September; 52 cases were scarlet fever, 38 measles. In October the measles outbreak was said to be concentrated in Hilltown, Maxwelltown and the east end of the city - areas with a high population density [DCA TC Minutes (1901-2) p38]. By March 1902 infectious disease were said to have fallen back, and the report for April states:

"For the first time since the Hospital was opened no cases of scarlet, typhus or typhoid fever have been admitted during the month." [DCA TC Minutes (1901-2) p739] This chronicle of disease matches the pattern of visits made to short-let houses during 1901-2. The smallpox scare of spring and early summer coincides with a peak in visits made. The summer lull is followed by a new peak at the time when scarlet fever and
measles was prevalent. A second summer lull may well correspond to the reduced number of fever cases during April and May. However, the number of visits made more clearly reflects the anxiousness of the council to be seen to be doing something to prevent a smallpox epidemic. A fever outbreak, especially measles, may well have meant the authorities had again to act in response to rumours some of the victims had smallpox. In short, the medical reports alone were not sufficient to cause huge rises in the number of visits, political pressures had also to be put on the sanitary department to cause a jump of these proportions.

In March 1901 Cllr Alexander Elliott submitted a proposed scheme of sanitary reform to the council. He argued against any provision of housing for any class of people and a more stringent enforcement of sanitary laws against dirty tenants as a means of encouraging landlords to provide better-quality housing.

"...the majority [of tenants in renovated tenements] did not seem to enjoy the wholesome alterations in their surroundings, and continued to indulge in their dirty habits, so much so, that many of these renovated dwellings are now about as insanitary as they were before...

"...I am far from advocating the introduction of a system of oppression. I wish to act in the spirit of fairness. What therefore is good for the negligent landlord, cannot be bad for the slovenly tenant.

"...I know that unless a firm hold is taken of this class of people, you will never make progress..."

[DCA TC Minutes (1900-01) pp544-5]

The 11 section proposal, although issued as an appendix to the town council minutes, makes it clear these were Elliott's own views, and not those of the council. Yet, for it to be included
it must have reflected a number of councillors' views and we should not forget that Elliott was the sanitary committee convenor. Here then is a significant move on the part of a group of councillors to step up the number of inspections being made of houses occupied by "this class of people" - the short-let tenants. It appears to have been produced without any real input from sanitary department officials. This is surprising since sections on topics such as wc accommodation, the ashpit system and paving of courts, were among the sanitary department's areas of expertise. For a more illuminating explanation of the extraordinary pattern of visiting sanitary officers undertook 1899-1903, we have to turn to look at the career of the sanitary inspector, Thomas Kinnear.

Kinnear, the inspector of nuisances and a police officer, was appointed sanitary inspector in 1868 under the Public Health Act 1867 at a salary of £78pa [DA 1868, Dec 25]. The bulk of the statistics examined in this chapter date from the 1882 Dundee local Act, and Kinnear got extra inspectors to help him in this work in 1883. By 1914, the sanitary department had 12 staff. When Kinnear was first appointed to his duties, his paymasters could not have envisaged the important rôle the sanitary officer would have by the end of the century. Kinnear turned out to be in the perfect position to build his own little empire. In September 1899 "the question of the books" arose. The sanitary inspector was obliged to keep a journal in a form laid down by the Local Government Board for Scotland for use by local authorities. A curious minute appeared for October 10, in which
a letter from Kinnear to the town clerk is recorded [DCA TC Minutes (1898-99) p1097-1101]. In the letter Kinnear stated the journal was in use, but as it was cumbersome, he presented it in the form of a monthly extract, a move which he said had been approved by the sanitary committee.

"A book of a similar kind has been kept by me since the 1st of January 1877, and we are now using the fifteenth volume." [DCA TC Minutes (1898-99) p1099]

A simple misunderstanding perhaps, but one that coincides with an acute shortage of figures for short-let visits in 1899. Two days later, on October 12 1899, we find Kinnear replying to a sanitary committee minute calling for his resignation.

"Having regard to the Minute of the Sanitary Committee, suggesting that I should retire from my Office of Sanitary Inspector, on an allowance of £150 a year, being less than one-half my salary, I think it respectful to the Committee, and to the Council itself, to explain why I am unable to accede to the suggestion of the Committee." [DCA TC Minutes (1898-99) p1105]

Kinnear was 57 and had given 40 years service to the police and the city; a reference was made to "recent friction", and the committee expressed satisfaction with the situation. Perhaps the whole issue was merely pre-election hot air; certainly the figures reappear in November 1899. The town council minutes do not record the September 12 minute Kinnear refers to, nor does it appear that the books had been discussed. The issue was not worthy of column inches in the Dundee Advertiser either, a newspaper normally eager to make the most of council members' differences of opinion. In February 1902, Kinnear requested more staff in a report on staffing and duties [DCA TC Minutes (1901-2) p431]. He seems to have been asked to provide information on prosecutions, and sought to justify the low number of
prosecutions compared to the amount of work his department had undertaken. In November 1902 Kinnear well and truly hit the headlines [DA 1902, Nov 20]. Town councillors had been called to the sanitary committee meeting on November 19, because the compulsory retirement of the sanitary inspector had been proposed. Lord Provost Barrie took the chair, as sanitary convenor Alexander Elliot was party to the charges. The minutes of a previous discussion were read in closed session, which took over an hour. The minute was approved and a letter to the LGBS moved. Bailie Robertson said:

"While acknowledging Mr Kinnear's length of service, and desiring to deal with him as generously as possible, it must be recognised that the present condition of things had arisen out of his own conduct and his gross vulgarity towards the convenor and members of the committee. It was not one act or even two, but had extended over a period of years..." [DA 1902, Nov 20]

The committee finally agreed to readjust the minute, but that the Lord Provost and the town clerk should try to come to an arrangement with Kinnear - it was thought he would accept a pension of £200-£225. Specific charges were never made open, and Kinnear did have supporters such as Cllr Speed, who while acknowledging Kinnear's brusque manner, said what appeared harsh to some would be pleasant to others. It would take a tough character to carry out unpopular sanitary department policies, but the nature of the job did require good communications between key officials and their departments. Cllr James Urquhart outlined the basic problem.

"...the relations between the Inspector and the Medical Officer of Health and the Inspector of Cleansing were of a most unsatisfactory description, for the reason that Mr Kinnear had not spoken to either of these gentlemen for a number of years." [DA 1902, Nov 20]
Relations with Kinnear were so poor, these other officials communicated with him only in writing. From the moment of the apparently insignificant books crisis Kinnear was under attack, particularly from the sanitary committee's convenor, Elliot, who compiled his proposed scheme of sanitary reform in March 1901. This document placed a particular emphasis on stringent sanitary controls and a systematic system of inspection involving the sanitary inspector, medical officer and burgh engineer [DCA TC Minutes (1900-01) p545]. While it made no direct criticism of any local authority officials, Kinnear would be left in no doubt that he was being criticised. As insults and insinuation abounded, Kinnear stepped up the number of visits made to short-let homes 1900-03, especially in November - municipal election month.

The issue did not die there. In February 1903 the sanitary committee asked the LGBS for their advice. Kinnear was putting in a claim for £4,000, for extra services allegedly rendered. In March the LGBS replied. The contents of the letter and its discussion were kept secret, but it was "generally understood", according to the Dundee Advertiser, that if the town council had good reason to dismiss Kinnear they could do so [DA 1903, March 25]. Councillors felt they could continue to attempt to force the inspector to retire. Kinnear insisted he would not retire, but,

"...he said he would in future do nothing to slight his Committee, and particularly the Convenor, and hoped the matter would not be pressed." [DA 1903, April 3]

Cllr Brownlee spoke strongly in his favour,
"...he never had the slightest difficulty with the Inspector, than whom [sic] he never found one to work more harmoniously..." [DA 1903, April 3]

Elliot said he had evidence of excessive friction dating back to 1874. In 1879 Kinnear had had to apologise to Cllr Cowan; in 1882 Cllr Perrie moved his dismissal after Kinnear threatened to assault Cllr McKinnon. Elliot refers to insults, blasphemy and snubbing. Bailie Robertson described Kinnear as intolerable and vulgar.

"He had frequently been censured, and he had apologised, using the vilest vocabulary of the slums one day and apologising the next..." [DA 1903, April 3]

Nevertheless, Cllrs Martin and Doig successfully moved the matter be deferred for six months. However much councillors disliked Kinnear, they were never able to find sufficient grounds to actually dismiss him, instead appealing to him to resign. Kinnear never did the honourable thing. He continued to make claims for extra work in 1908, 1909 and 1912. Kinnear argued he had undertaken "gratis services" to the city, he wanted better pay and he threatened to resign offices for which he was technically unpaid. The council told him to ask leave of the LGBS, probably hoping the board would ask the veteran to resign [PJ 1912 Mar 30]. The whole issue resolved itself when Kinnear died in 1913.

Kinnear was a prickly character, yet he was able to retain supporters. The attacks made against him were at a personal level, and while his relationship with other officials was poor and could not have contributed to the successful pursuit of a clean and healthy city, there was little real criticism of his
competence as a sanitary inspector. The pattern of short-let visits made in 1899-1903 probably owes more to the crisis in Kinnear's career than to other causal factors. The November election-month peaks observed in those years, can also be seen in a more minor form in others (eg. 1894-6, 1906-8). Kinnear may have been rather blunt and at times downright rude, but he was neither politically insensitive nor politically inept. He successfully built a small empire of his own, and kept it.

What was it like to be visited? Inspection could not have been a pleasant experience for tenants. Tying visits to weekly tenure was designed to make sure respectable people escaped the inspections net. The inspector's knock on the door implied the occupants of the house were suspected of being unclean or of allowing overcrowding. The tenants' views go unrecorded, but in the 1880s journalists were beginning to investigate how people were living in the heart of the cities. They were social explorers in the way David Livingstone was an African explorer, except that the cities' alleyways and back streets were their uncharted continent. In 1883 Andrew Mearns published one of the most famous accounts The Bitter Cry of Outcast London, which compared pestilential rookeries to slave ships and generally emphasised the human dangers lurking in London's courts. George Sims' graphic account of his travels into the dark side of life, How the Poor Live, was first published as a serial in The Pictorial World in 1888. Quick to recognise the success of this series, the Dundee Advertiser published a series also titled "How the Poor Live" in 1888. A journalist reporting on the resting.
places of the poor accompanied the sanitary inspector on his rounds. In the middle of the night they went to Smith's Pend in Session Street, where:

"...the houses are the most miserable apologies for human dwellings to be seen out of Ireland."

The inspector climbs the stairs and knocks on a door.

"What dae ye want?
We want to see in your house.
Wha are you?
The Inspector.
What do you want annoying folk at this time o' the morning?
Come, now, open the door at once, was the premptory demand.
The door was opened, and the bull's-eye of the officers' lanterns lighted up one of the dreariest domestic scenes I ever witnessed. There was little or no furniture in the room. A broken-down bedstead occupied one corner; the other corners were empty. The inmates seemed to be sack-sewers, as their stock-in-trade and a quantity of loose cloth lay at the foot of the bedstead.
How many are there of you in this house?
Three, replied a voice from the bed."

[DYB 1888 (1890), p138]

The writer goes on to describe other houses, in particular one where a half-naked young woman and her three-month baby were lodged with the woman's sister and four other children. The officials measured the room and found 1413 cubic feet of space.

It was a deliberately sensationalised form of reporting, but the account of the Session Street visit has the essential ring of truth to it because it appears to stick to a factual description of the event as it happened. There are no comparisons with savage tribes or pondering on the pathetic picture of child life. Yet, there is no escaping the intrusive nature of the inspection - the invasion of privacy and the reluctant cooperation of the occupants. The proportion of night visiting and the role it played in the sanitary department's overall strategy is unclear,
but the impact on individuals is.

Were people prosecuted as a result of the inspections? The sanitary inspector's monthly reports made little mention of the number of occupiers prosecuted and whether they were fined or admonished. When the visits first took place, officials put pressure on the owners and managers of house properties, rather than their tenants. In February 1884 it was reported:

"There have been made 187 inspections of houses let for shorter periods than six months. A large number of these were found in a dirty state, and the proprietors or factors were by notice called upon to clean them."

[DCA TC Minutes 1883-4, p167]

In this case the inspectors may have been more concerned with the filthy state of common areas, such as landings, entrances, staircases and washhouses, rather than the individual homes. From the figures which are available, it is clear prosecuting occupiers was not the main purpose of the visits. In 1891-2 the inspectors made 2084 visits, about 174 a month, yet there were only 42 prosecutions - 3.5 per month. Even when a prosecution was made, there was no guarantee the individual would be fined. In 1893-4, 20 prosecutions were made under section 139 of Dundee's 1882 Act, which stated no person shall suffer lodgers to sleep in any room unless there is 400 cubic feet per person. Fines for breaking this regulation were anything up to 40s, plus 20s per day. Out of these 20 prosecutions, 9 resulted in fines, and 11 were admonished [DCA TC Minutes (1893-4)]. It appears the courts were prepared to reject anything less than a watertight case; prosecutions fell to four in 1900, despite 3428 inspections, but all of them resulted in fines [DCA TC Minutes
In November 1905, 11 cases of overcrowding were discovered, ten tenants were warned and one was prosecuted, found guilty, but dismissed with an admonition [DCA TC Minutes (1905-6) p149]. Commenting on the level of prosecutions in 1902, at a time when he was being called upon to justify his activities, Thomas Kinnear told the town council:

"These are not so numerous as you would perhaps have expected, nor as they might have been; but I have during the last quarter of a century found that verbal persuasion has been more effective in the promotion of cleanliness and the carrying out the laws of health and sanitation than the terrors of the Police Court." [DCA TC Minutes (1901-2) p431].

He reported 27 people had been prosecuted for chopping or abusing water closets used in common (probably because they poured ashes into them), but 17 were dismissed and fines ranged from 2s 6d to 5s. Of 16 prosecuted for overcrowding, 7 were dismissed and fines ranged from 2s 6d to 20s.

"For failing to wash and sweep stairs, landings and passages in connection with dwelling-houses 38 persons were reported for prosecution. Four were admonished, and before the summons could be served upon the others the necessary work was done." [DCA TC Minutes (1903-4) p446]

Thomas Kinnear's inspectorate had three main courses of action open to them. They could verbally warn a tenant, using various threats, but take no action. They may have used indirect methods, such as informing owners or factors of the situation, which might result in an improvement, or even evictions. There is no suggestion in the records that inspectors did this, but as an informal course of action, there would be no necessity to record or even acknowledge the exchange of information. Finally, inspectors could prosecute. Although the number of visits made is invariably massively out of proportion to the number of
prosecutions, only genuine lodging establishments may have been prosecuted. By definition short-let houses were occupied by tenants who could move house at short notice; if served with a summons, they may well have moved rather than appear in court. In fact all the evidence points to the courts being a very ineffective way of dealing with the problems the inspections were set up to combat. In 1905, in the wake of Dundee Social Union's report, the town clerk submitted a report on the propriety of getting extra powers to deal with dirty houses. The committee saw no reason to take any action, but the clerk makes the point that no council had the power to deal summarily with a defaulter. A notice had to be served, and only if it was ignored could a prosecution take place [DCA TC Minutes (1905-6) pp1178, 1188-9]. The delay involved in issuing notices must have meant many prosecutable cases never reached the courts.

Prosecuting tenants could do little to make sure people did not live in overcrowded conditions. Only in cases where lodgers were being taken in on a commercial basis, could a prosecution hope to make any impact. Quite simply the majority of Dundee's citizens lived in one and two-roomed houses, because they could not afford to pay the rent of a larger house, and officials did recognise this. In 1911 the medical officer of health stated overcrowding - defined as 400 cubic feet per person - was not extensive, and where it did occur it tended to be confined to the family.

"These people, living generally in single-roomed houses, have a small wage and a large family, and find it at times a difficult feat to make both ends meet financially, and paying the rents of houses of two
rooms is beyond their means. In cases such as these we temper justice with mercy, and advise the occupier to endeavour to get larger premises at a rent which can be paid." [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p1323]

His figures show an average of 63 cases of overcrowding were discovered each year in the period 1903-10. Only 17% of cases in this period were considered serious enough to be worth prosecuting. In four-fifths of all cases a verbal warning was issued. The MOH pointed out he had to adhere to the definition of overcrowding set down in Acts of Parliament, which was also used by the Registrar General. In July 1911 the Lady Health Visitors (chapter 10), had attempted to draw attention to what they saw as excessive overcrowding, saying three-quarters of the homes they had visited were overcrowded. They took overcrowding to mean any house with more than two persons per room. The MOH's report was in part a response to allegations that inspectors were failing to uncover and deal with the true scale of overcrowding. The difference is one of perspective. The lady visitors wanted a fundamental alteration in the whole basis of Dundee's economy (the jute industry's reliance on low-paid female labour), but local authority officials could only deal with the worst excesses within the framework of the law.

d) **Brushes loaned to the poor**

Lending out brushes seems firstly, an odd thing for a local authority to want to do, and secondly, an odd set of statistics to want to examine and discuss. However peculiar, it is difficult to ignore the sheer size of this operation - every year
thousands of brushes were loaned to the poor to clean their homes between 1882 and 1919 (figure 9:19). For the local authority to lend out rather than give away brushes, an official would have to keep a register of who had borrowed each brush and there may have been a means for recovering brushes which had not been returned. This set of figures is also one of very few quantified reflections of what went on inside people's homes. In 1887, 7390 brushes were loaned, in 1895, 5493, in 1910, 5371. The trend is certainly a downward one, but never fell below 1915's figure of 2766 in a year for which there is a complete record. Overall, although the number of households increased in this period, there were probably significantly fewer people who considered themselves poor enough to want to borrow, rather than buy, a brush after 1900 than in the 1880s. According to Dundee Town Council's valuation roll data (chapter 5), there were 36,121 households in 1895 [DCA, TC/En/11,16]. A rough calculation suggests 15% of all households borrowed a brush at some point during the year. However, this service was specifically for the poor, and since there were 11,562 tenancies let for less than £5 per year, it would be more reasonable to assume 47.5% of these households borrowed a municipal brush - almost one in two. In 1919, 3232 brushes were borrowed and there were 5288 tenancies valued below £5 - a borrowing rate of 61%. A tenancy under £5 is not a fair way of assessing the number of poor households in Dundee, as a large family in a £8 house would be much poorer than a widow in one valued at £4 10s. Between February 1879 and May 1892 we are told how many rooms were cleaned with the borrowed brushes. Annual averages suggest 1.6 rooms were cleaned with
Brushes loaned to "the poor", 1882-1919

* No figures Mar - Sep 1904
each brush in 1882, 1.9 in 1885 and 1.89 in 1890. This does point to borrowers living in one or two roomed houses, and therefore low-value tenancies.

We are not told how the officials responsible for lending brushes decided who deserved a loan and who did not, but it is unlikely affluent social groups or artisan groups, who prided themselves on their respectability, would want to be seen queueing to borrow a brush. Given that not much passed in a tenement block without one or other of the neighbours seeing what was going on, being observed carrying a municipal-issue brush must have carried some stigma outside neighbourhoods where people regarded themselves as poor. It is also quite likely that those who borrowed brushes did so more frequently than once a year. Without a range of detailed social statistics which the brush-lenders had no business to collect, it is impossible to tell who the brush-borrowing citizens were, but the level of annual brush borrowing remains impressive.

However, brushes loaned is a monthly set of statistics, not an annual one. Plotting the monthly figures for sample years (1885, 1890, 1895 and 1900) does show a clear seasonal pattern to brush borrowing habits (figures 9:20, 9:21, 9:22, 9:23]. In 1885, 1895 and 1900 there is a summer peak. This gathers pace from about May, peaks in June and falls gradually over the summer months. Environmental determinism is an unfashionable ideology, but warmer summer temperatures do seem to have led to some late-spring cleaning. People may also have been encouraged to clean
Figure 9: Brushes loaned and rooms cleaned, 1885.
Figure 9:21

Brushes loaned and rooms cleaned, 1890

Number

- Feb 1891
- Jan 1891
- Dec 1890
- Nov 1890
- Oct 1890
- Sep 1890
- Aug 1890
- Jul 1890
- Jun 1890
- May 1890
- Apr 1890
- Mar 1890
- Feb 1890
- Jan 1890
- Dec 1889
- Nov 1889
Figure 9: Brushes loaned, 1900

Number

- Brushes loaned

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 1899</td>
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<tr>
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their homes, stairs and closes in an effort to combat summer illnesses we would now associate with food poisoning. However, the May removal term is another strong contender in explaining the summer loan pattern (chapter 8, the missive system). People moving into a new house would want to make sure it was clean before arranging their possessions. Yet, the brush borrowers were "poor", and therefore probably took short-let tenancies. A possibility is that many short-let removals took place in summer, a supposition which cannot be confirmed without access to factors' records. A good cleaning at home may also have been a feature of women's summer holiday from the mills.

The other prominent seasonal peak occurs in December-January, which we can almost be certain is associated with the holiday period. Ordinary Scots celebrated New Year rather than Christmas. An important part of the traditions surrounding Hogmanay is offering generous hospitality to friends, neighbours and strangers alike. An open door policy on that one night of the year meant all and sundry were expected at, and might inspect, your home. Local customs varied, but generally it was thought unlucky to carry old debts into the New Year, and the same went for a dirty house. In wealthier households the maids spent part of New Year's Eve cleaning the silver, in poorer ones the floor would be swept clean.

None of this helps to explain why brushes were loaned by the council in the first place. It was undoubtedly a sanitary measure and yet again aimed at getting rid of disease by
encouraging the poor not to accumulate filth. As far as this research has gone, nothing has emerged which directly helps to explain the need to lend out brushes. A possibility is the police commissioners were anxious to provide the means of cleansing inside the homes of the target social group most affected by epidemic disease, without invading those homes by undertaking to do the task directly. Providing brushes for loan was a cheap and less contentious option than a force of domestic cleansing officers.
Chapter 10: Powers and Action - Crusade and build

i) Slum crusades

Throughout the period 1868-1919 four waves of action against specific problem areas of housing, the slums, can be identified. The form the action depended partly on the aims, personality and influence of the individuals involved, and the existence of a political will to take action. What these four slum crusades have in common is that they are easily identifiable as unique events in response to a perceived failure in the urban environment. As such the slum crusades have a spatial dimension. Urban social problems were defined as shapes on the ground which varied in scale as the definition of what was socially problematic changed.

a) The nasty houses campaign

The local improvement Act of 1871 gave Dundee's city fathers powers to clear slums and streets, and to control what was built in the city. The effectiveness of the Act depended entirely on the political will of those elected to implement the Act's provisions, and on the ability of officials to translate those desires into deeds. Reflecting on the year gone by, the liberal-minded Dundee Advertiser said about 1873:

"Our local Parliament must be commended for setting a good example to all similar bodies, either here or elsewhere, in the carrying out of public improvements."

[DA 1874. Jan 2]

The Dens Burn, running through an area dominated by Baxter
Brothers' flax mills, was being bridged and Bucklemaker Wynd widened - the new road ran to the north-east of the centre and in the spirit of the age the wynd was renamed Victoria Road. Only a group of speculators held up improvements at the Murraygate in the city centre. However, the impression this gives of a working and effective Improvement Act is misleading. The Advertiser reported Sanitary Neglect in Dundee on September 29, 1874.

"In 1871 we obtained an Act which was to make our dwellings as nearly perfect as houses erected by professed speculators could be. Our rulers were armed with instruments completely fitted, as everybody thought, to save the humblest householder from the negligence, the selfishness, or the avarice of housebuilders and house proprietors." [DA 1874, Sept 29]

This overstates the powers of the 1871 Act, but deliberately so before calling the real sanitary state of the city to the attention of the newspaper-reading public. The timing of the campaign was carefully chosen. The intentions of Liberal MP Sir John Leng's editorial staff may have been humanitarian, but they were also political. In the few weeks before the municipal elections held in November, the Advertiser felt itself "compelled" to call the ratepayers' attention to several sanitary facts which in spite of the Act were growing up in Dundee. It was a deliberate attempt to get the voters to put men sympathetic to Sir John's views on the town council. The paper went on to list the details of several properties built following the 1871 Act, the number of families living in them, the range of rents payable and particularly the sanitary state of the buildings. For example at Springhill it was reported there were no water closets, only six dry pits, each used by 12-16 families. At William Street 40 families shared five closets, and the paper
voiced concern about the way the stairs were ventilated and the
use of a "shoot" (chute) to discharge refuse into an open cess
pit. The article spares the reader the extremes of vitriolic
condemnation, but it does choose to name the owners of the
buildings concerned. One in particular was singled out - William
Blair - a bookseller and newsagent who was actively campaigning
in the municipal elections and who had the misfortune to be heard
by a reporter stating cleanliness is next to godliness. The
message to the Advertiser's readers was:

"Where is the use of paying heavily for improvements if
for every creator of miasma we pull down we allow a new
and a more costly one to be put up?" [DA 1874, Sept 29]

"The viz inertia of officialism is proverbial... if we
have to write for weeks our little best to stir, it
shall be done." [DA 1874, Oct 2]

Again the Advertiser listed specific tenements and all their
ills. The width of roads, provision of closets and ventilation
systems all came in for scrutiny. One tenement still being built
was said to be occupied in its upper storeys. Another two
squares of "ill-thought" buildings were being put up by a
syndicate who are all named. A close and a yard were described
as "mockeries of sanitary legislation". Filthy water was said
to ooze and blocks were invaded by fever - it was reminiscent of
Chadwick's reports in the 1840s. Reporters took on the guise of
sanitary sleuths, going as far as to dig up pipes to inspect
them. In one case the plans submitted to the police
commissioners had shown six inch drainage pipes, but journalists
discovered four inch pipes had been laid down [DA 1874, Oct 2].
The Advertiser argued the increased number of fever cases
recorded in 1874 was attributable to the "nurseries of disease"
built in the years following the 1871 Act. Most of the criticism was directed at the police commissioners' works committee and their surveyor.

"The types we have given surely show that the letter of the spirit of the Improvement Act had been defied by insufficient width of roadway, insufficient means of ventilation, insufficient water-closet and ash-pit accommodation." [DA 1874, Oct 2]

The Advertiser did not go unchallenged. In the same issue of the paper, a letter was published from Alexander Smith, a house proprietor who had not yet become a victim of the Advertiser's campaign. He pointed out the police commissioners had failed to abide by their own Act, by not cleaning out ashpits twice a week.

"...the practice is to put in mill stour, and to let that... ferment in the pits for a fortnight or three weeks... If you could tell us of any way by which we could compel the police to do their legal duty in the matter you would do more for the sanitary good of the town than by a whole year's writing of such leaders as you have given us..." [DA 1874, Oct 2]

Smith's solution to this particular problem was to put the cleansing of the town out to contract. AC Lamb, a Murraygate hotelier and respected antiquarian, suggested the sanitary committee's goal was to make cleansing financially profitable as much as to preserve health. In some manuscript notes on housing conditions in 1874, probably the basis for a speech, Lamb agreed unsatisfactory new blocks had been built as a result of poor supervision by the authorities [DPL Lamb 368 (21)]. The Advertiser's main argument did therefore have supporters within the same social groups house proprietors were drawn from. A group of proprietors attempted to take action for damages against
the newspaper, but the proceedings against John Leng & Co were abandoned on the advice of counsel that an action could not be sustained.

The campaign continued despite the protests of the landlords and the Advertiser cocked a snook at proprietors and factors who were described as at their wits' end to square their rents with low wages and supply the tremendous demand for impurity [DA 1874, Oct 9]. The Advertiser's hand had gained strength and the emphasis of the campaign became altogether more personal, the focus shifting from nasty houses to nasty men. James Gentle, a prominent builder who became a local politician, is slated. William Blair apparently let "hovels at rack rents", yet denounced as dishonest other public men. The descriptions of Blair's hovels are very detailed, including exact measurements of individual rooms, the spaces between blocks and the widths of closes.

"...the Wellgate Patriot, who preaches sanitas sanitatum, has three four-storey houses in less than the width of a modern English street, and abuses as blunderers the local authorities who have forbidden him to build a fourth." [DA 1874, Oct 13]

These blocks had neither ashpit nor wcs (outside or inside), leaving tenants to use buckets in their rooms and make journeys to other proprietors' pits. Again the emphasis has changed, for the buildings now under attack were built prior to the 1871 legislation. By this time the Advertiser was campaigning for all available legislation to be properly enforced. James Gentle responded by organising an indignation meeting, at which the newly-formed committee appointed a sub-committee to report back.
to the committee. A wonderful example of action through inaction, but one which gave the Advertiser more time and a specific list of targets. The chairman of the indignation meeting, ex-Bailie Buchan, was next in the firing line. A reporter sought out one of his properties.

"...when the Gentle indignation meeting was being arranged, whitewashers gave it a visit and a rough wash over... even now there is at the foot of one of the stairs a struggle for supremacy between sewage water and whitening, in which the sewage water has the best of it." [DA 1874, Oct 16]

The Tory Courier and Argus observed the attempts to prove landlords were the only group from which "evil councillors" were drawn, with amused curiosity.

"...it seems to have been long ago determined that no more house proprietors must get into the Council, no matter what their qualifications may be." [C&A 1874, Oct 5]

The Courier took the free-market view no right-minded proprietor would deliberately exclude sanitation, because it added value to their properties, and said house proprietors had the strongest reasons for seeing the town was managed with cheapness. The beleaguered landlords must have taken comfort from the Courier's statement that water closets were less healthy than ashpits, the only problem being the town did not empty them often enough. According to their rivals, the Advertiser had sanitation on the brain.

"The chief symptoms of this disease have been a relish for examining cesspools and spouting about them, together with a keen desire to throw dirt at certain persons..." [C&A 1874, Oct 14]

The Courier maintained the town could never be as healthy as the country and working people could not inhabit cottages while the
price of land dictated they must live in blocks of houses. There was no room for "gushing sentimentalism" - the properties were in demand, their unhealthy state was the result of inefficient cleansing by a body whose only overseers were themselves.

"There is the utmost need of some radical change, and we are distinctly of the opinion that change should take the form of cleansing the town by contract." [C&A 1874, Oct 14]

For the Courier the housing issue was a cleansing issue and the villain of the piece was the public authority and not the owners of the tenements. Having put itself firmly in the proprietors' camp, the Courier published Blair's Valediction, accusing the Advertiser of printing "the ravings of a deranged intellect" [C&A 1874, Oct 19]. The following day, accompanied by a long discourse on cleansing, the Courier reported a new building had been demolished by the police commissioners opposite Logie churchyard in Lochee Road. Constructed by James Gentle, the walls were not as thick as shown on the plans passed and they were made of brick and mortar instead of stone and lime as approved.

William Blair lost in the election, but polled more votes than he was accustomed to getting. If the Advertiser's campaign was meant to stir up an election fever, it could be said to have failed since more than half the electorate did not vote at all. However, those who did vote apparently expressed their opinion on the campaign through the ballot box. Lamb summed it up thus:

"...public opinion demonstrated itself so decisively at the municipal elections, that the Police Commissioners did not hesitate to lay down and enforce regulations which will prevent vast ranges of tenements being reared in the suburbs of the town, which, in the course
of a few years, must have become nests of fever and pestilence." [DPL Lamb 368 (21)]

The Advertiser did seek to put pressure on councillors so they would take a more positive approach to enforcing and policing the housing standards regulations embodied in the 1871 Act. In this it seems they were successful.

The Advertiser's series of diatribes against the proprietors and the local authority appears less extraordinary when seen against the mounting concern about social ills, including housing. There were also significant tensions between landlords and the city - the House Proprietors' Association was in the middle of a long dispute with the police commissioners over who should pay for lighting tenement courts. The People's Journal - Leng's weekly tabloid and the Advertiser's stablemate - ran a semi-fictional series in April about House-hunting in Dundee. This purported to have been written by a working man, who arrived in Dundee only to have his housing aspirations shattered. He painted a portrait of villainous house agents, loose morals and overcrowded conditions [PJ 1874, April 16, 26]. In its own way, this two-part series voiced real concerns about the way in which respectable working people could become victims of a system of housing allocation, which in extreme cases could drag them down to the level of the slum dweller; a helpless fly caught in a web of social ills undermining moral strength.

"Dundee has been greatly demoralised by inadequate accommodation, and consequent indiscriminate mixing and familiarity of the sexes." [Lamb 54(18)]

The only solutions to social problems in Scottish cities which were taken seriously in the mid-1870s were self-help ones.
Social scientists were a fringe group and sometimes viewed as some sort of weird sect which could safely be ridiculed. In October 1874 the Social Science Congress met in Glasgow. Founded in 1856, it intended to guide the public mind in the diffusion of sound principles. The Advertiser commented it was a pity the congress attracted so many impractical dreamers and added social well-being could not be attained by artificial means. The Edinburgh-based Scotsman, which took the view legislation could give working men votes but not comfortable homes, was less sympathetic.

"...the working men of Glasgow are not likely to be much strengthened, morally or intellectually, by the oratorical pap which formed the staple of several of the speeches." [Scotsman 1874, Oct 6]

In Dundee it was not all talk. One solution put forward was to construct houses cheaply from concrete, a plan which literally got off the ground in Clepington Road in 1874. Lamb claimed, rather extravagantly, that any rubbish could be mixed with cement to raise up substantial buildings [Lamb 227(21)]. Another solution was for people to build their own homes. In October 1874 a set of plans for tenement houses was displayed by The Working Mens’ Houses Association (Ltd) in the Advertiser’s office windows. The idea was not new for Dundee. Following the example set in Edinburgh by Dr James Begg, the Dundee Co-operative Building Company had been set up in 1862 [PJ 1874, May 16]. It built 40 houses in ten two-storey tenements in Blyth Street. Ground floor houses had two rooms and a wc, while the upper floor flats also had an attic room. These were sold to company members, who borrowed from the company to finance the purchase.
However, several houses built remained unoccupied for two years and the company was forced to reduce its prices and was liquidated in 1869 [SRO BT2/96]. The plans exhibited in 1874 had been approved by the police commissioners on September 28 and were built by the Dundee Working Men's Building Company at Court Street, providing 104 houses [RCAHMS AND/240]. This company included the Provost James Cox, a jute merchant, among its subscribers [SRO BT2/566]. The houses were built despite severe and public criticism in the press by Lord Kinnaird, who had been involved with Sir Sidney Waterlow's model dwellings in London, and felt two-roomed houses should not have been included. The shareholders were mainly clerks and artisans and the vast majority held only a single share. The final winding-up meeting was held in March 1880, but a liquidator had been appointed as early as February 1877 [SRO BT2/566]. In 1911 these houses were in the hands of a single owner.

b) Jesus in Juteopolis

Housing issues could only be sensationalised and sell newspapers for short periods. The impact of philanthropic projects was dwarfed by the enormity of the mass of housing required to meet the needs of the city's population. The social problems remained, the story became too familiar and interest could not be sustained. One exceptional character who made it his business to keep the issue in the public eye was the Rev Walter Walsh.

"The slum crusade, with all that it implies, has taken a new lease of life, thanks in some degree to the
Minister of an independent congregation, Walter Walsh had no higher authority to disapprove of his municipal activities. He became convenor of a specially constituted committee to deal with housing reform and town planning. At the close of 1908 they had a scheme for providing homes for working people under consideration, but had difficulty deciding what form it should take. Cottage homes were rejected as impractical, leaving members to thrash out a model tenement. Garden city ideas were gaining currency and social reformers were no longer seen as a bunch of cranks. Using scientific methods Dundee Social Union had laid bare the facts of tenement life in their 1905 report. A Citizens' Association was formed in the city in 1908 to foster the idea of municipal service. Also in 1908 the "shreiking sisterhood of suffragettes" attempted to foil the election of Winston Churchill in protest at their own political impotence. Meanwhile, Mrs Carry A Nation was taking direct action against intemperance. An American saloon-smasher, she whipped up prohibitionist fervour and raided drinking premises. A Scottish departmental committee on house-letting had published their report in 1907. The popular climate was one in which a charismatic churchman could be elected to public office on a social reform platform and be expected to carry out some of the housing reforms he espoused.
how the messages he wanted to spread might best be brought home. He used the pulpit, the town council and the printing press to help create a "Christlier city." One of his publications was a softback book *Jesus in Juteopolis*, a morally good penny dreadful. A pulpit story, it was released in 1906 and applied the fictional art to the ultimate sacred personage. Walsh claimed to have been inspired by the 1905 Social Union report and his professed aim was to promote civic revival. According to this tale, at the second coming Christ arrived at Dundee's harbour and proceeded to journey through the slums. After 90 days in the wilderness of Strathmore, pondering on what he has seen, Christ returns to preach anti-capitalist sentiments to workers and employers alike. Through his fictional Christ, Walsh promoted social revolution through love.

"...it seemed to him that both Town House and Town Church were built upon the bodies and souls of his brothers and sisters. Their very existence depended upon the perpetuation of a social and industrial system which by necessity included the impoverishment and degeneracy of vast masses of people." [Walsh (1906) p29]

A hundred pages later Walsh has the provost reading the Riot Act amid fluttering red flags and as revolutionary pamphlets roll off the presses. During dockside riots the skies dramatically blacken, miracles occur and Christ disappears. Towards the end of this book Walsh has difficulty reconciling his sacred hero with a socialist revolution, which may reflect his own inner struggle. Walsh bemoaned the intellectual poverty of those managing the municipalities. Whether *Jesus in Juteopolis* was a successful means of spreading a municipal reform message is doubtful, but it does give some indication of the Christian
passion and socialist zeal which drove Walsh to the centre of
decision-making at a local level.

A town council special committee on housing and town
planning was brought into being in October 1907 largely at
Walsh's instigation [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) pp1201,1273]. With
Walsh as convenor, it first met on October 25 and by November 15
he had submitted a draft report [DCA TC Minutes (1907-8) p67].
This was fast work given that the municipal elections took place
between these dates. Walsh wanted the council to enforce Section
138 of the 1882 local Act. According to Walsh this section
provided for the demolition of unfit houses. In fact this
particular part of the Act refers to the right to certify a
building as unfit for human habitation and to prevent it being
let or occupied until it is made fit [1882 Act, 45 & 46 Vict,
c185, par 138]. However, closing orders would have been a
necessary prerequisite to slum clearance and Walsh wanted to put
a systematic slum clearance scheme into action. Acting on the
draft report, the committee instructed the city engineer (James
Thomson) and the medical officer (Charles Templeman) to prepare a
statement on the number of houses in the city falling under that
section (138) beginning with a blackspot marked on a map. These
two men would have been sympathetic to Walsh's aims. Thomson
wanted to get his ideas on town planning off the draughting board
and clearing slums in the centre would have given him an ideal
canvas to work on. Templeman was involved in setting up social
welfare schemes such as the restaurants for working mothers and
clean milk depots at this time (chapter 10). Sanitary inspector
Thomas Kinnear, who thanks to his brusque manner was not on speaking terms with many of the other local authority officials, is notable by his absence from this project.

In January 1908 Thomson and Templeman submitted a document dealing with 69 properties in the Blackness and Brook Street area in wards eight and nine just west of the city centre [DCA TC Minutes (1907-8) p337]. This list was submitted to the public health department for their consideration in accordance with the legislation. The special committee did not see clearing these slums as an end in itself. At the meeting at which this document was submitted, the committee resolved to make a representation to the Convention of Royal Burghs (a Scottish joint-committee of local authorities), asking them to send a memorandum to the Government, requesting a simplification of existing national legislation to allow Scottish local authorities to borrow on the same favourable terms as in England. It is not at all clear Walsh's special committee had the right to make such a representation without it being discussed by the full council and it may never have been made. However, it is clear Walsh's master plan was to replace unfit slums with new municipal housing paid for by a central government loan under the provisions of the Housing of the Working Classes Act 1890.

Despite the initial speed with which Walsh had worked, the report he had written was still at a draft stage. At the special committee's meeting on February 10, it was discussed and Cllr John Reid for one was not prepared to accept everything Walsh
suggested [DCA TC Minutes (1907-8) p375]. He asked for parts dealing with properties belonging to small owners and on letting houses to the poor at less than standard rents to be deleted. The meeting was adjourned and the report discussed, altered and further revised on February 19 and 26 [DCA TC Minutes (1907-8) pp442]. On March 18 the discussions finally ended and the revised draft was sent to the town clerk for consideration of legal aspects [DCA TC Minutes (1907-8) p457].

There is no further mention of the report until a full corporation meeting on November 19, when Cllr Reid asked for a sub-committee to be appointed to investigate Walsh's allegations of conspiracy in connection with the housing report [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) pp84-5]. An amendment for no enquiry was carried. Obviously Walsh felt aggrieved. On October 1 he had resigned his seat, withdrew the resignation on the 12th and withdrew the withdrawal on the 13th [DYB 1908 (1909) p11]. Somehow he was persuaded to stay. Walsh remained a controversial figure. He finally left the city in January 1913 to take up a new Christian ministry in London. A note of appreciation was recorded by the housing and town planning committee. Even this standard token was challenged. At a full corporation meeting Bailie Macdonald and Cllr Girrity proposed the minute in appreciation of Walsh be deleted; they were out on their own, for an amendment was carried 18 votes to two [DCA TC Minutes (1912-13) pp 203, 256].

The series of inspections Walsh's draft report had set in
motion continued despite the tensions over his document. In December 1908 detailed inspection reports were placed before the committee and where unfitness was disputed owners or their factors were heard by them [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) p241]. In an article on municipal achievements Lord Provost Urquhart reported the "sanitary dwellings crusade" had dealt with the West Port, Brook Street and Blackness Road districts, and was now taking action in Blackscroft, the Cowgate and the Wellgate. He describes the policy as being to close defective houses [DYB 1908 (1909) pp54-5]. In 1909 James Thomson reported there had been a further crusade against insanitary buildings and "exhaustive inspections" of 204 properties, and that 1,014 houses would be dealt with [DYB 1909 (1910) p67]. (It is assumed these figures included properties in the system and whose fate had yet to be decided.)

The Register of Inspections of Insanitary Dwelling Houses covers the period from the beginning of the Walsh crusades in 1908 to 1920 [DCA TC/EH]. However, clear figures on how much this series of inspections accomplished are only available for 1908-13. They show activity peaked in 1910 and there was a rapid decline in the number of properties dealt with thereafter (figure 10:1). On this evidence landlords and factors were willing to improve their tenants' homes, rather than have them shut up; only 18.5% of the houses dealt with were removed from the rented market as a result of being declared unfit for human habitation. During 1908-13, the register shows 312 houses containing 415 rooms were closed, affecting 851 people, and 848 houses...
## Inspections of insanitary dwelling houses, Dundee 1908-13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Properties dealt with</th>
<th>Houses closed</th>
<th>Houses improved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>315</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>848</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Register of inspections, DCA TC/EH pp44,49.
containing 1,374 rooms were improved, affecting 3,151 people. This suggests the vast majority of the houses closed were one-roomed dwellings, where those improved were more likely to be two-roomed. The figures also show there was an average of 5.35 houses per property, which is low - tenement blocks usually had at least eight houses leading off a common stair and often many more. Either there were houses in properties dealt with which were neither closed nor improved, or many of these properties were not purpose-built tenements. The latter would include single-home properties sub-divided into one-room dwellings and cottages in back courts.

The Walsh crusade lost impetus after 1910, and in 1912 improvement schemes become the focus of attention. While it lasted it affected more than 4,000 people and made 851 of them homeless. There is little doubt the crusade did not take the form Walsh intended - he wanted a programme of closure and improvement linked to the provision of new homes for those in most need. Although the figures available cover a six-year period, almost 70% of the people whose homes were either closed or improved were affected within a two-year span. Given that the inspections targeted specific areas of the city in turn, the impact on individuals in those areas must have been far more concentrated than the figures initially suggest. Making 851 people homeless in a city of 170,000 over the space of six years, might appear to be a small price to pay for improving the homes of 3,151 people and putting pressure on proprietors and factors to upgrade other dwellings. The picture is rather different when
it is considered the people affected lived in small areas and the majority of inspections were made over a shorter period. In reality the houses improved had higher rents to cover the expense of the improvements made, which meant the poorest tenants had to search for cheaper homes elsewhere. In short the crusade did little for the lot of the poorest stratum in urban society whom Walsh wanted to help most. It was a consequence acknowledged in a town council report by AW Paton and Thomson, dated December 1914.

"...the action of the Town Council has had the unintended effect of increasing the burden of rents upon many tenants who, it is believed, can ill afford to have fresh burdens imposed upon them by property owners in their demand for an adequate return on the expenditure incurred by them in the improvement of insanitary properties which they possess." [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p192]

c) The Greenmarket Scheme

In February 1912 James Thomson produced a set of plans and a report detailing improvements which could be made to the city. This was a grandiose scheme which envisaged the creation of a new civic centre, reclaiming 85 acres from the estuary to form an esplanade and the construction of a Tay road bridge. These three ideas were presented as options for the future as part of a comprehensive and progressive scheme [DYB 1912 (1913) p42]. It was hoped to put the first part of the scheme into action by Whitsunday 1914. This involved scheduling and clearing out the Greenmarket and the Overgate, which it was estimated would leave 600 and 2,300 people homeless respectively. The cost, including
tramways along an improved Overgate, was put at £223,000 [DYB 1912 (1913) pp41,44]. The 1911-12 valuation roll shows there were only 42 tenancies left in the Greenmarket and nine of those were unlet [SRO VR/98/122]. Around three-quarters of the people who had lived in the Greenmarket had lost their homes, although the town council did not gain all of the parliamentary powers necessary for the scheme until July 1913 - by which time it had already purchased £75,000 of property [DYB 1913 (1914) pp53-4].

The overall plan was the culmination of Walsh and Thomson's town planning initiatives (see part ii). In November 1910 they had put forward a plan of action involving the inspection, improvement and condemnation of insanitary buildings, leading to the full-scale clearance of slum areas [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p86]. This followed on directly from the crusades started by Walsh. However, the central improvement scheme was designed to enhance civic pride as well as open up and improved congested and run down areas [DCA TC Minutes (1911-12) appendix]. The plans for a covered market area (220ft by 200ft) with a roof garden, a revamped docklands area and all the public offices gathered together in one place crowned by a city hall, obviously required a reorganisation of land use within the city centre. The Greenmarket, situated between the docks and the Town House in the High Street, was a prime candidate for clearance to make way for this imposing and formal display of municipal aggrandisement. Thomson pointed out these two areas of housing, especially the back courts, were inferior and should not be difficult to acquire.
By October 1912 the council had agreed to spend £10,000 buying up what were essentially slum properties [PJ 1912, Oct 5]. The People's Journal portrayed the council as property hunters and derision was showered on the announcement a rate of a penny in a pound would pay for it. A cartoon showed a councillor lavishing money out on buying up "the happy homes". There was a feeling the landlords would benefit undeservedly, because the mass buy-out would push property prices within the scheme area up. However, the Lord Provost assured citizens the valuations were being kept secret and sellers would not know what the prices were, in order to prevent speculation in the area [PJ 1912, Oct 5]. He added purchase and improvement would "necessarily" be very slow. It is difficult to believe this policy could have been wholly effective. Many proprietors would have sold their houses to the council with the assistance of their factors. Most factors, including the largest firms, were also in the property valuation business. A house agent negotiating on behalf of more than one client would know what each had been offered and what the going rate for the area was. While there is little likelihood of organised collusion between the proprietors themselves, it is possible the smaller number of factors - in their role as property valuators - did make informal contact to establish just how much the council was prepared to pay, and it is difficult to imagine property prices would be depressed as a result.

The November 1913 Improvement Committee sub-committee report
on displacement and rehousing showed 2,880 people in 675 houses lived in the Greenmarket and Overgate improvement areas [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) pp55-6]. However, it also showed 1,433 "suitable" houses were vacant "in the neighbourhood" (figure 10:2). A second report drawn up by Thomson and Cllr Peter McCabe, dated January 1914, compared rents in the Greenmarket and Overgate with those of empty houses in three zones. It showed rents were similar within a half-mile radius, but slightly higher beyond that [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) pp 282-284]. The figures also show there was not sufficient vacant housing within a quarter-mile radius to meet the needs of displaced people, but the council did not draw attention to this, arguing there was plenty of housing available.

"...having regard to the facts... no housing scheme involving the erection of new dwellings is required..." [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) p284]

Thomson and McCabe described the vacant houses as being just as well situated to factories as the ones scheduled for demolition, but they also said the inhabitants were millworkers, labourers and the "occasionally employed". Many of these latter two groups would have picked up casual work in the dock area and it could have been argued there were special circumstances operating which required them to live in close proximity to the docks - an area where there was insufficient empty housing. The November 1913 and January 1914 reports on displacement and rehousing discuss the issue as if 585 people were resident in the Greenmarket at the time. The 1911-12 valuation roll demonstrates they could not have been - the entries show tenements had been closed, were not subject to the payment of rates and officially had no tenants.
### Figure 10:2

**Displacement and rehousing in the Greenmarket and Overgate, 1913**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Houses of one room</th>
<th>two rooms</th>
<th>three or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of people to be displaced living in...</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant suitable houses in area</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected excess</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Sub-committee report, DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) pp55-6.
The inhabitants had been displaced. It is difficult to believe the councillors who requested information on rents were not aware of this. The valuation roll suggests that although the houses were closed, shops on the ground floor continued to trade (perhaps on a temporary basis) after the inhabitants had left. There was never any political will or humanitarian intention on the part of Dundee’s councillors to provide homes for the Greenmarket’s tenants. But, there was a clear legal requirement to prove there was sufficient alternative housing for those displaced by slum clearance schemes. Dundee’s own 1882 Act gives the town council—the police commissioners—powers to take down buildings and lay out lands, but it also states:

"The Commissioners shall not eject or displace from the lands and property referred to... any number of persons from the labouring class exceeding five hundred, without a certificate from the sheriff that other and suitable accommodation exists within the burgh or the immediate neighbourhood..." [1882 Act, 45&46 Vict, c185, par 11]

In 1913 the council spent £27,420 acquiring a dozen properties in the Overgate area, bringing its total expenditure on property for demolition to £75,000. In the first four months of 1914, it spent £37,661 on another 26 in the Overgate, Castle Street, Shore Terrace, High Street and Crichton Street [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) pp242,789]. Property purchases in the improvement area continued at a reduced level during the rest of 1914 and 1915, but still amounted to tens of thousands [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) pp318,1085]. The scheme got a huge financial boost in April 1914 when local industrialist Sir James Caird offered £100,000 to build the new city hall and city chambers.
The gift ensured his family name remained on the lips of Dundonians for decades thereafter. However, the offer had strings attached: the project was to be carried out by the city architect (James Thomson), completed within three years and business premises were to be included in the design. In short Caird wanted municipal facilities which would enhance the commercial profile of the city in the early-twentieth century. Councillors voted 30 to two to accept the money [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) p677].

The central improvement scheme was a plan to enhance the city's civic importance dressed in the cloak of a slum crusade. When the council debated and agreed to proceed with a provisional order to obtain powers for the improvements in 1912, Cllr Soutar, the treasurer, put it like this:

"What the Council was asked in this motion to say was they had honestly come to the conclusion that there was a necessity in the interests of public health and public decency for that portion of town known as the Overgate area to be dealt with." [PJ 1912, Oct 5]

The central area of the city was described at the meeting as morally and sanitarily unhealthy. The same could easily have been said about the Wellgate or the Hilltown to the north of the centre or the Hawkhill or Lochee to the west. What was special about the Greenmarket in particular, was that it was also in the wrong place. The growth and prosperity of Glasgow had allowed the city's leaders to crown George Square (an eighteenth century creation following Edinburgh's new town example), with imposing Italianate City Chambers in the 1880s. This over-the-top building right in the heart of Glasgow's commercial centre,
surrounded by office blocks with elegant facades, exuded and basked in wealth and confidence [Gibb (1983) p119]. Dundee had an inadequate town hall in the midst of city centre slums and its municipal offices were scattered throughout them. Sir James Caird's generous gift was a means of investing in the commercial future of the city. As Lord Provost Urquhart put it, Dundee needed to improve its "shop front" [DYB 1911 (1912) p54].

d) 1916 Action Area

Slum crusades put pressure on those who rented out property to the mass of the population, to keep the tenancies to certain minimum standards, primarily to safeguard health. The tools local authority officials used to do this were available to them outside crusade periods, but crusades had the effect of altering the priorities of officials even if no extra manpower or cash was allocated to the departments concerned. The sanitary department served notices on house proprietors or their agents to remove nuisances and from 1882 there is a good run of figures showing the pattern of service (see chapter 9, ii). The period 1882-1919 has been graphed and the data shows a dramatic ten-fold leap in the number of notices served from 1916 onwards (figure 9:2, p431). It is extraordinary for such a positive policy shift to occur during a period of national crisis, when so many other projects were quietly deferred until the close of war.

Paton and Thomson's December 1914 report on housing came to
the conclusion the council should not respond to the problems they had outlined by building houses [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) pp191-5]. However, they said stipulating a higher standard of improvement, while it would cost ratepayers nothing, would increase the rents of those tenants least able to bear the burden of an increase. (The rents issue was becoming explosive at this time, see chapter 8.) The alternative was to take action under the Housing of the Working Classes Acts to remove buildings, which would be financed by ratepayers and put the city's rates up. Taking this latter course of action would also have meant the council would have to prove there was enough suitable housing to meet the needs of tenants displaced by clearances. The city would have had to build some houses, yet the report said this would not only have put a huge burden on the rates, but the rents would have been out of the reach of the displaced tenants. Thus, Paton and Thomson recommended adopting a higher standard of improvement, that strong action be taken to deal with dirty houses and suggested an investigation be made into congested areas with a view to clearing them [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p195]. In February 1915, Paton and Thomson were thanked, but further consideration was deferred until the end of the war [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) pp265, 306, 417]. Paton and Thomson argued the council could not choose to mark time, because the question would force itself on the community. Referring to their earlier recommendations, they said:

"...while some of them would doubtless be acted upon in any case, they, for the first time, put on definitive record a clear line along which the Committee can go without in any way at present adding to the commitments of the Corporation." [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p419]
Paton and Thomson were attempting to fashion a compromise between the pressing need to do something about the way people were housed, and a recognition the council could not set out on a course of action which would involve borrowing money, at high rates of interest, and increasing the rates during wartime. After some wrangling, councillors remitted the reports back to Paton and Thomson for definitive information on the unsatisfactory nature of small houses in the city, with a sketch plan and estimates of a local scheme [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) pp490-1].

Paton and Thomson must have felt they had reached something of a stalemate. Thomson was putting much of his energy into creating town planning schemes and corresponding with the Local Government Board for Scotland; inspecting slums was not perhaps highest on his list of priorities. However, with no sign of the end of war in sight, the housing and town planning committee agreed to appoint a committee to make visits in January 1916, and asked the sanitary inspector, TK Roddan, to prepare district lists of slums and defective property [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) pp266, 365]. These were to be visited in rotation and reported to the committee each month, when it would be decided what action should be taken. The current monthly visitation committee consisted of five council members (including the convenors of the public health and housing and town planning committees), the medical officer of health Charles Templeman, Thomson, Roddan and Roddan's assistant R Mitchell [DCA TC/EN]. The register of inspections shows it was agreed the lists would divide the
properties into three classes: Class I, where immediate action
should be taken; II, to be transferred to a waiting list to be
dealt with after the war; III, to be reconsidered after the war
[DCA TC/EN]. This was the sort of systematic survey Walsh had
wanted years previously. It was also a way of improving
standards without involving the council in any great expense.

During the municipal year 1915-16, the number of notices
served on proprietors or factors to remove or abate nuisances,
ranged between 27 and 99, and averaged 43 a month [DCA TC Minutes
(1915-16) passim]. In November 1916, following the municipal
elections, 672 notices were served, and the average for 1916-17
was 987 per month. The onslaught against the landlords continued
- in March to May 1918 more than 2,000 notices were served each
month; 2,085 in May 1919; 2109 in September 1920. Diagrams show
how the number of notices served mounted month by month during
1917, stabilised during 1918, but became more erratic in 1919
after the war ended (figures 10:3; 10:4; 10:5). The latter
pattern may be related to the post-war push to build state-funded
housing and the consequent call on the time and efforts of local
officials, especially Thomson. There may be a built-in
distortion in the data when comparing figures prior to November
1916 with those after that. From November 1916, the figures
include verbal as well as written warnings to owners and factors.
It is difficult to tell how much of the increase can be
attributed to this inclusion and it is not known whether verbal
warnings were common practice before then. It is possible the
growing use of the telephone in the business environment

520
Figure 10:3

Notices served to remove nuisances, 1917

Notices served
Figure 10:5

Notices served to remove nuisances, 1919

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Notices Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
contributed to this change. Certainly the sanitary department would have had a huge increase in paperwork to deal with had every single notice been sent by post, many of them to a handful of factors, and much easier to pass on a list of properties to the factors' clerks by telephone. The number of inspections to detect nuisances rose during the First World War, but the pattern neither fits exactly or is as dramatic as that for notices served (figure 10:6). However, it was intended the standards against which properties were measured should be higher and the ratio of notices served to visits made would change as a result. The existence of the new register to record each property concerned confirms there was a definite change of policy, but the effect as reflected in the notices data may be slightly exaggerated.

The 1916 initiative involved delineating an "action area" within the city and targeting districts within it for inspection. The form and progress of the action area crusade can be seen on the map which accompanied the register [DCA TC/EN] (figure 10:7). The solid lines on this map show the city wards, the broken lines the outline of the action area, and the dotted lines the target districts. Each district inspected has a date on it, presumably showing when that district's inspection had been started or completed. The enormity of the task councillors set themselves is apparent when it is realised the action area defined includes almost all of the built-up area of the city and not solely "the worst and lowest localities". In many ways it is more instructive to look at the areas left out of the survey.
In the west, the action area follows the line of division between tenement housing along Perth Road and Hawkhill areas, and the villas beyond in their avenues and crescents. It follows ribbon development along Lochee Road and Logie Street to take in most of Lochee, missing out the villas and semi-detached houses along Ancrum Road and Tullidelph Road. The area flows north to take in the Hilltown and Ann Street, but carefully avoids most of Dudhope, drawing a line exactly where the Constitution Road terraces come back to back with tenements. The line stops short of Smithfield, missing out Coldside and Clepington – areas largely developed after 1900. It turns a corner at the point where Albert Street becomes Forfar Road, leaving out Maryfield's villas and Baxter Park's middle-class tenements. In the east the line skirts around the docks, ending on the shore where the railway yards begin. The inspectorate were effectively being asked to look at every single tenement built before 1900; a damning indictment of mechanism of housing provision.

Assuming the map is an accurate record of the survey's progress, Roddan's team started off in a very small and particular area (14.3.16) between Victoria Road and King Street, bounded on the west by Wellgate. The Wellgate had been long characterised as a low neighbourhood and was one of the areas attacked in the 1874 nasty houses campaign. Given that the Greenmarket and Overgate had received a lot of attention 1908-12, it is not surprising this slum zone should be the first tackled. However, the inspectorate turned from a known blackspot to focus attention on most of ward one, moving north-east in stages during
March, April and May 1916 (20.3.16, 17.4.16, 15.5.16). The timing does not match very well with the record of notices served on proprietors and their agents, which did not rise sharply until November. However, the map was a working document complementing the register. The visitation committee first met and drew up inspection guidelines on March 20, 1916 - the same date shown on the earliest dated district. A first list of properties was submitted by the chief sanitary inspector on that day, but the register shows inspections actually began on March 13. Roddan chose an obvious slum blackspot for his first list of properties on, but it would appear that thereafter the committee asked him to undertake a methodical sweep through the tenements of ward one. The register shows each property was inspected, a report submitted to the sanitary department, this was then reported to the housing and town planning committee, who would then decide on the appropriate course of action. A series of time lags was built in to this procedure, which would have meant weeks and sometimes months elapsing between first inspection and a notice being issued. The structure of the procedure adopted also meant the decision to issue a notice rested with elected members rather than officials, although sanitary officials would still have issued the verbal and written notices. The change in elected personnel at the beginning of November might explain why the housing and town planning committee authorised a significantly greater number of notices in connection with the action area policy from November 1916.

Having covered districts in ward one, Roddan's team moved on
to the Overgate (15.6.16), another known slum blackspot with high density housing. Again the strategy was a systematic one, moving through districts of ward two between June 1916 and February 1917. On February 19, 1917, Roddan submitted a report on the survey to the housing and town planning committee [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) pp362-5]. This describes the action area initiative as a survey of the whole city focusing on slums, defective properties, obstructive buildings and congested areas. Roddan reported 111 properties of 564 houses in wards one and two had been reported to the committee and the committee decided 72% of these houses fell into class I, where action should be taken immediately. Action was deferred to the immediate post-war period on just over 13% of the houses reported and almost 14% were to be reconsidered after the war. However, only 21% of the houses reported were actually considered unfit for human habitation and only eight properties (23 houses) were closed by order, although a further 18 (49 houses) were voluntarily closed by their owners. Four properties were demolished, leading to the loss of six houses, but no demolition order was made by the council. The net result was 97 fewer houses compared to December 1915 [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p364].

What sort of impact would reporting 564 houses in wards one and two have had? There were 7,089 tenancies in wards one and two in 1911-12 and 6,810 in 1919-20 [DCA TC/En/16]. Averaging these gives an estimated 6,949.5 tenancies in 1916. This suggests around eight per cent of all houses in these two wards were reported as being in some way unsatisfactory. The number of
properties visited must have been larger than this and tenants could scarcely have failed to notice inspectors undertaking their duties. However, the onslaught was directed at those who profited from owning and letting houses, not at the tenants themselves. Some tenants would, however, have been hostile to inspection of their homes. In 1908 Walsh pointed out tact towards tenants would be necessary, because inspectors would come into contact with:

"...tenants who actually prefer slum dwellings and who dread the visits of a sanitary inspector quite as much as does the slum landlord, on the ground that better sanitation spells more rent." [DCA TC/SF 200]

The map shows the survey continued in the summer and autumn of 1917 and in February and April 1918, throughout ward six in the heart of the city. It appears to have ended with Armistice, apart from two isolated surveys of the Brook Street triangle next to the Westport in April 1921 and the Douglas area in June 1923. (The Westport, a highly congested and densely populated area, is marked on the map as "H". It was surveyed in two parts during 1916-17, and for some unknown reason it was decided to postpone consideration of the whole area until after the war [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p363].)

The aim of the action area survey was not to clear out slum zones leaving them free for new development, but to raise the overall standard of housing. Issuing so many notices to landlords and factors clearly demonstrates where the housing and town planning committee felt the responsibility for this lay. Councillors were policing private enterprise.
e) Conclusion

The crusades had two major flaws. Action tended to be short term because enthusiasm was difficult to sustain. Secondly, as a means of remedying urban decay, slum crusades implied a piecemeal approach to urban redevelopment, although the 1916 Action Area influenced by town planning ideas begins to tackle urban issues at a different scale.

Slum crusades as a response to housing problems focussed on the secondary consequences of life in the slums, rather than searching in the primary cause of the poverty of those who lived in these districts [Ward (1984) pp299-314]. The consequence was to deflect attention away from the complex social problems the poor faced, to turn instead to the buildings and their owners. Targetting resources at particular areas in the city also gave the social problems of the city a spatial shape, as districts were identified. The scale at which these shapes on the ground were defined varied as the definition of what was socially problematic changed. In 1874 the Dundee Advertiser's nasty houses campaign was directed at specific buildings and their owners. Journalists identified individual aberrations - attacking the worst conditions and implying the responsibility for failure lay with the local authority who had failed to police builders and proprietors properly.

The Walsh crusade and the Greenmarket scheme, although for
different reasons, were both directed at slum blackspots. From 1908 to 1910, key local officials made a concerted effort to close defective houses in concentrated areas of the city. Officials were identifying a social group living in desperate poverty, which were feared by "respectable" social groups because of their associations with crime, disease and vice. Raising housing standards in districts such as Blackscroft and the West Port, meant rents were raised to pay for the improvements and the poorest moved elsewhere taking some of the problems with them.

The central improvement scheme and the clearance of the Greenmarket was a means of revamping the city's image by removing social problems from a key commercial district and raising the social status of the city's shop front. This was not a new initiative. One of the reasons for obtaining the 1871 local Act was to make it easier to demolish and lay out areas to create new streets.

The 1916 Action Area, although employing the language of unique places, effectively defined the spatial dimensions of social problems as encompassing almost all of the city. Against the backdrop of war, the consensus on housing was changing and all political groups recognised the pressing need to do something, even if it was more difficult to get agreement on specific measures. Systematic blanket inspection of almost all working class dwellings was tacit recognition of a widespread structural malfunction in the urban environment; private enterprise had failed to deliver the desired level of housing for
the vast majority of Dundee's citizens.

The changing spatial shape of the slum problem reflected changing perspectives on the nature of urban social problems. Intervention in its different forms was intended to fill the gap between the actual and desired performance of the urban environment. It appears to be a spatial progression from a gap identified in unique places to a whole city problem. If it was a progression it was not a smooth one. The erratic nature of civic enthusiasm and enterprise led to waves of action. Much depended on the enthusiasms of individuals - a crusade needed a crusader, whether a Liberal newspaper editor hoping to influence voting patterns, a minister brim full of socialist and humanitarian convictions or a careerist town planner keen to reshape a city. The 1874 campaign demonstrates the lack of political will to implement the provisions of the 1871 Act fully and points to the failure of officials to translate the Act into deeds. Walsh was a more effective crusader than the Dundee Advertiser because he operated from within the decision-making centre and had the support of key officials, but political prevarication indicates a lack of general support. The Greenmarket scheme was effective because it had the support of business groups in the city, but it was never really about raising housing standards. It was driven not only by the desire of councillors to glorify their city, but by a financial carrot from a commercial leader. The 1916 policy was the result of a compromise arising from the decision that ratepayers could not be expected to pay for slum clearance and housebuilding, but recognised an overall failure. In 1916 the
political will to take action on housing was there. The driving force came from councillors who took greater control over the decision-making process, to the point of deciding the fate of individual properties.

The wider context in which slum crusades took place had a bearing on the form and method of crusade. It is difficult to imagine Walsh's crusades apart from the growing respectability of social science and the widespread acceptance of the findings in the 1905 Dundee Social Union Report. The town planning movement lay behind the central improvement scheme and the compromise decision of 1916 was reached against the background of wartime. However, the form and method of slum crusade depended so much on committed individuals being in certain places at certain times, that the pattern need not have appeared to progress spatially from specific buildings, to blackspots to a whole city approach. Indeed, the activities of sanitary officials demonstrate a willingness to target unsatisfactory properties throughout the period, and the lady health visitors adopted a strategy of targeting districts in their work. The crusades should be seen as waves of action in a sea of controls and checks exercised by local officials intervening to fill the gap between the actual and desired performance of the urban environment.
ii) The road to council housing

It is difficult to pinpoint a date at which councillors began to divorce the housing issue from purely sanitary problems. A separate committee for housing was not formed until 1907. Councillors were aware of the possibilities contained in Part III of the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890 - the town clerk presented detailed reports to the full council in 1891, 1900 and 1901 [DCA TC Minutes (1901-2) pp121-3]. The attitude of many council members is perhaps best summed up by Cllr Alexander Elliot's views. In a paper on the Housing of the Working Classes, March 1901, he devoted ten sections to ashpits, cleansing, dirty tenants and other sanitary themes, and one section to the housing question. He outlined a scheme for systematically visiting the homes of "slovenly tenants", arguing landlords would provide better houses if they were assured the authorities would protect their properties.

"...I feel that such a scheme would in the end improve the homes of all classes of workers, be they high or low paid. If we in Dundee have to provide homes in especial for any class, it is assuredly the low-paid worker; but I am of the opinion that, until we have exhausted the powers possessed in our own Acts... no other... should be adopted." [DCA TC Minutes (1900-01) p545]

Councillors recognised a housing problem existed, but their response to it was to put pressure on landlords, factors and tenants - indirectly influencing the mechanism of supply. The answer to the housing problem then, was to strictly enforce sanitary regulations, and by doing so, to improve the personal standards of tenants. Elliot took the view that the pig makes
the sty. Once landlords had been convinced their properties would be protected from the degenerate behaviour of the slum-maker, they would respond by investing in housing and would be encouraged to improve the quality of their dwellings. If as Elliot presumed, the market had the capability to respond to the housing problem, there was no need for the local authority to get directly involved in providing housing. It was the sort of argument which had been put forward by influential figures, Liberal and Tory, throughout the latter quarter of the nineteenth century.

Yet, at the end of the First World War Dundee was poised to become one of the leading competitors in the race to build the first council houses with state assistance. In a relatively short space of time it seems Dundee's political leaders had shaken off their complacency about the ability of the market to provide houses for citizens. It is pointless to look at this apparent change without reference to a wider British and Scottish political and social context (chapters 3, 9, 11).

The special committee on town planning and housing reform was formed on October 3, 1907, with ten members and the Rev Walter Walsh as convenor. It met for the first time on October 25 and took the decision to present a written report to the town council on housing in the city, which would make recommendations [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) pp1201, 1273]. It was Walsh's brainchild and one which met some resistance because of the implied commitment to town planning and some form of municipal
housing initiative. Walsh had been pressing for the council to adopt the sections of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts 1890 and 1900, which would have allowed the council to build houses. Town clerk William Blyth Martin reported back to the council in July 1907:

"...I am of the opinion now, as I was in December 1905, that our existing Statutes... are, as regards Part II of the Act, as powerful on the points mentioned as the machinery provided by the Housing of the Working Classes Acts; and the same remark applies to Part III of the Act up to expenditure of £12,000." [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) p891 (cf p680)]

If Walsh did not have instant success, councillors' concern about poor housing did lead to consideration of brick and mortar solutions. Two councillors were sent as delegates to an International Housing Congress - Walsh and Bailie Mitchell. The two men spent three days in August 1907 touring housing schemes at Sheffield, Liverpool, Port Sunlight, Birmingham, Bournville, Hammersmith and Richmond. Bailie Mitchell was impressed by the Guinness Trust set-up in Hammersmith, where tenement-block homes of one to four rooms and shared bathrooms gave a return of 3% pa. The delegates' report says they did not feel municipal cottages were relevant to Dundee and stated Sheffield's cottages "could not be built in Dundee for this price".

"Many examples of the class of dwellinghouse provided might be described, but it may be sufficient for the purpose if I state that in my view these buildings are far from being substantial, and are not in any way suited for the requirements of the Scottish people." [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) p1203]

Thus, they proposed experiments should be confined to one to two roomed houses within substantial but plain dwellings. The rents were to be profitable and they recommended money be borrowed from the Treasury at low rates.
"...while there should be no undue haste with large schemes of dwelling houses, the model block already resolved upon should be proceeded with, provided they can be erected at such a price as will permit of the houses being let at sufficiently low rates; and that in the event of the principle of housing being approved of by the Council, a permanent Housing Committee be appointed to deal with the question." [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) p1204]

These modest proposals were a compromise. The model tenement plan was not presented as tangible evidence of a commitment to a municipal housing programme. Like any other housing investment, the municipal block was to be a profitable enterprise, albeit one which would provide for those at the bottom of the housing market and would be an example to private entrepreneurs.

The recommendation the council should only build small houses of one and two room, must have dismayed reformers who wanted to see the general standard of housing raised. This was not just a matter of overcrowding or the threat of disease, but a moral question which many felt threatened the fabric of society. By backing small houses, councillors were apparently happy to allow families to live in conditions where parents and children slept in the same room and boys were not separated from girls. Housing standards was one issue where a growing Labour movement was not prepared to back a compromise. In March 1907 Thomas Bowman wrote to the council on behalf of Dundee's Independent Labour Party protesting against a proposed new public hall and suggesting the money would be better spent on semi-detached houses for working men [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) p465]. The council deferred consideration of this. There would have been little civic glory in putting money into a type of housing which
it was believed could not have been let at economic rents to Dundee's working people. In April, following the decision to build a model tenement, the Labour Representation Committee passed a resolution condemning the proposal to build one-room houses [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) p565]. The council heard a deputation from the LRC which included Agnes Husband, a pioneering socialist, businesswoman and parish councillor, who went on to be granted the freedom of the city in 1926 [DPL Obituary book, 1929]. On this occasion it seems she failed to impress councillors.

Immediately after the new housing committee was formed Walsh and Thomson managed to create interest in garden city ideals. In November 1907, David Erskine, the MP for Linlathen, offered to cooperate with the council in laying out a piece of ground on the north side of the city for "garden cottages". Mr Horsfall, an expert on town planning from Macclesfield, was to be invited to confer with the council [DCA TC Minutes (1907-8) p67]. This garden suburb, east of Old Glamis Road and north of the suburban railway, seems never to have come to fruition. The intention was clear. Thomson, backed by a group of councillors, was set to become actively involved in shaping areas of new privately-developed housing prior to the 1909 town planning Act. Thomson reported on and showed plans of an area of the Craigie estate, owned by a Mr Guthrie, to councillors in December 1907, and a plan to build cottages east of Dalgleish Road was discussed [DCA TC Minutes (1907-8) p139]. Erskine offered to sell 20-60 acres (Balgray and Den of Mains farms) at £250 an acre, but only for
garden city purposes. The housing committee agreed to look into the possibility of purchase in November 1908 and committed itself to a policy of land purchase in December 1908 [DCA TC Minutes (1908-09) pp112, 241]. It is difficult to assess whether Walsh and Thomson ever intended the council should be in any way directly involved with building a garden city suburb on Erskine's land. However, they had been unable to find private developers who wanted to take the project on. Their visits to schemes elsewhere in Britain and the continent perhaps allowed them to think a municipal suburb was possible. It seems more likely they only envisaged the council adopting the role of middleman — an agent controlling development by private enterprise through temporary ownership of the land. A motion to proceed with a housing scheme was defeated in March 1909, seemingly taking with it any notion of a garden suburb [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) p589].

The planning movement and the Liberal victory of 1905 helped to generate The Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909, which was divided into three main sections: I Housing of the Working Classes, II Town Planning and III concerning inspection, public health and housing [BPP Acts 9 Edw.7 c44]. Part II empowered local authorities to prepare, with the Local Government Board's consent, town planning schemes in relation to land in the course of development. This provided a means of regulating new suburban development, private and public. Early textbooks demonstrated the advantages of low-density garden suburb layout under the 1909 Act [Gaskell (1987) p21]. As far as housing was concerned there was little in the 1909 Act that was actually new. The first part
was an amalgamation of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts of 1890-1903, covering acquisition of land, closing and demolition orders, and improvement schemes. Technically local authorities had been able to borrow from the Public Works Loan Commissioners to build houses since 1866, although low interest and extended period loans were not effectively available until the 1885 and 1890 Acts (chapter 4). The 1909 Act was so firmly rooted in previous legislation the LGBS felt it was necessary to give town clerks a potted guide.

"The amendments of previous Housing Acts are so intricate that we propose to issue for the convenience of Local Authorities copies of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1909, and of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, incorporating in the text as notes the great number of amendments introduced by the Acts of 1894, 1896, 1900, 1903, and 1909, in such a form as practically to constitute a consolidation of the law relating to the housing of the working-classes as applicable to Scotland." [BPP (1909) XL Cd5228, plxxi]

Closure and demolition orders could be made under the Public Health Act 1867 or under the four cities' own local acts, and many Scottish authorities continued to use this piecemeal method of getting rid of the worst slums. Excluding those, in the 12 month period May 1911-12, 76 burghal authorities made representations against a total of 1,646 houses under Section 15 of the 1909 Act, which obliged landlords to keep houses of up to £16 per annum valuation fit for occupation during tenancy [BPP (1909) XL Cd5228, plxxi]. Yet out of 303 demolished, only 26 were demolished as a result of a demolition order because the rest had been demolished voluntarily by the owners as a result of the pressure from the local authority. Where houses had been demolished voluntarily there would of course have been no
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obligation for the local authority to rehouse residents. Although previous acts had enabled local authorities to get rid of slum areas, under the 1909 Act they were also to be obliged to rehouse - this statutory housing obligation was actively resisted and in 1913 the Local Government Board for Scotland lamented only one improvement scheme under Part I of the 1909 Act had received their confirmation [BPP (1914) XL C7327, p lxxii]. They commented:

"We recognise that the provision of more houses is the key to the whole position. The powers of the Local Authorities may be ever so ample for the clearing of slums and the closure and demolition of houses, but their action is necessarily restricted unless there is other proper accommodation for the persons displaced. And it usually happens that where the necessity for the extinction of slums is greatest, the supply of working-class houses is most limited." [BPP (1914) XL C7327, p lxxv]

Dundee's central improvement scheme was undertaken under a local Act, but was also subject to the Housing of the Working Classes Act 1903. At a local inquiry in January 1914 Dundee managed to convince an LGBS inspector there were sufficient empty houses to meet the needs of displaced persons. In fact many tenants had been displaced years earlier (see section i). Improvement schemes with rehousing were undertaken prior to 1909 Act; for example in Aberdeen 131 one and two-room dwellings in tenements were built in 1896 and subsidised by the council as rents did not meet costs [Irwin (1918) p37-8]. The LGBS's 1913 report, signed by the Secretary for Scotland, McKinnon Wood, laid the blame for the scarcity of working-class houses throughout Scotland on the rising cost of building materials and the withdrawal of private capital from housing provision, but also blames the reluctance of local authorities to exercise their
powers to meet the demand [BPP (1914) XL C7327, p lxxvi].

The Local Government Board for Scotland (LGBS) became the central authority to execute the housing acts in Scotland. The key to local authority-built housing was the provision to allow them to borrow money, with LGBS consent, for specific housing schemes, to be repaid over a maximum of 80 years for land, and 60 years for houses. The loan could be got from the Public Works Loan Commissioners, providing the loan was made at the minimum rate allowed for loans out of the Local Loans Fund. In November 1912 the minimum rate stood at 3.5 per cent and an annual sum of £6-0s-4d would have repaid a loan of £150 in 60 years [SRO, DD6/653, LGBS housing memo Nov, 1912]. To the LGBS's credit, they disseminated information widely in the form of booklets and memos on the form local authority housing was to take. Houses were to be of substantial construction, and to be capable of being maintained for habitation for 60 years with moderate repair - the period of loan repayment. The houses were to be designed to meet the reasonable needs of the working classes, and it was made plain local authorities should leave the better paid to private enterprise.

"As a general rule experience shows that houses suitable for the accommodation of persons of the better paid working class community (who can afford to pay a rent which will provide a fair return on the capital employed) are more likely to be provided by private enterprise than houses at low rents which are necessary for the accommodation of the poorer classes... the efforts of the local authority will be directed mainly to the provision of houses of the latter class." [SRO, DD6/653, LGBS housing memo Nov, 1912]

The expression "working class" had been carefully defined in the 1903 Act, and this definition was repeated in the 1912 memo. The
"working classes" were those who worked for wages and whose income did not exceed 30 shillings a week. The definition included skilled workers such as mechanics and artisans, as well as labourers, hawkers and craftsmen who did not employ others, but excluded domestic servants who would have been expected to have lodgings with their employer. However, this laudable objective to provide for the poorer classes was always to conflict with the other prime objective of the 1909 Act, which was to raise standards. Houses built by a local authority were expected to be model or standard houses for the working classes which might be built by private enterprise. The objective on standards coupled with guidelines on density, house size and materials, ensured the houses the LGBS were prepared to approve would be well above the standards of the best tenement flats being built in Dundee for the better paid. Local authorities were reminded the LGBS had the power to revoke existing building byelaws they considered would impede the construction of houses built under the 1909 Act. Scottish building byelaws, framed with stone-built tenements in mind, insisted on deep foundations and large high-ceilinged rooms. The power to revoke these is important because experts had calculated that a model cottage costing £260 south of the border, would cost £427 to build in Scotland [DCA TC/SF 128]. Once houses were built, the local authorities had then to administer and manage the houses themselves, taking on the role of proprietor and factor.

"The Board desire to impress upon local authorities the importance and value of effective management of their houses and tenants. Experience shows that this management should be retained in the local authority's own hands, and should be undertaken by a capable officer whose status and powers will secure from the
tenants more regard than is given to private factors."
[SRO, DD6/653, LGBS housing memo Nov, 1912]

The LGBS not only controlled the purse strings, it also had the power to determine the shape, style and layout of future local authority housing - the living space (chapter 11).

Under section 67 of the 1909 Act government loans could also be issued from the Public Works Loans Board to finance housing schemes built by private companies. These houses also had to conform to a "standard of comfort in conformity with modern ideas" [SRO, DD6/653]. In a letter from the assistant secretary of the LGBS to the Secretary for Scotland, McKinnon Wood, in the summer of 1914, the minima for these houses was laid down as: at least two rooms in addition to a kitchen and scullery, no bed recess and a wc with bath where feasible [SRO, DD6/653, letter no 21588/27, June 5, 1914]. The minima for municipal and private schemes were intended to be different.

"Local Authorities may be permitted to erect a smaller house in respect that (1) they exercise a reliable supervision over its occupancy and (2) in certain instances they have to house the very poorest." [SRO, DD6/653, letter no 103812, Aug 31, 1914]

The room and kitchen house was a standard which was not to be applied to private schemes, with which the Office of Works were concerned. The high standards demanded by the LGBS probably account for the fact private companies did not rush to borrow government funds, and for the optimistic few who did apply it was to be a sobering and bureaucratic experience. A minute written by Under Secretary for Scotland PJ Rose on August 31, 1914 - chiefly concerned with proposed schemes at Newton Grange and Linwood - proves revealing. Rose argued the object of good
housing was "getting on the wrong lines" through misapprehensions and the manner in which the Office of Works was handling it. Instead of treating each case on its merits, the LGBS minima was being treated by the Office of Works as a rigid code.

"...Mr Baines, the Principal Architect, who is mainly responsible for these matters ...is most zealous for reform in housing schemes and in particular most determined to level Scotland up towards the English standard. But whether his zeal will achieve the object which we all desire is another question...

...it is one thing for LGB to have such minima as a working basis if they are going to have a voice in applying them: but it is quite a different thing to entrust the application entirely to another Department...

...the scheme would undoubtedly be killed off by the Office of Works on the authority of the LGB without the Board having any knowledge of the matter...

(If some member of their staff could on any pretext meet Mr Baines they would appreciate the position better.)

[SRO, DD6/653, minute Aug 31, 1914]

It appears the pioneering Newton Grange scheme, which Rose claims the LGBS would have approved, was turned down by the Office of Works because the houses were in rows instead of being detached, which the LGBS did not specify, and because the scheme fell short of an ideal scheme on garden-city lines. Experiences like these must have stifled any enthusiasm there might have been among housing entrepreneurs. It is easy to see why private companies in the Dundee area were not interested in borrowing government money. The standards set were very much higher than houses that could be built with money from ordinary investors, and the rents for a three-roomed house and scullery beyond the means of the working classes for whom the government intended the houses. In areas where there were pools of skilled workers able to pay higher rent levels, schemes such as Linwood on the western edge of Paisley could be a profitable proposition. However,
experience showed private companies were to be subject to bureaucratic interference at every stage, regardless of budget constraints. It would not have taken long for the word to spread among the larger private builders that the civil servants they had to deal with were both arrogant and inflexible. As far as stimulating private enterprise was concerned, the well-intentioned provisions in the 1909 Act backfired badly, and it is no wonder PJ Rose wanted a scapegoat and a more liberal interpretation of the minimum standard.

Thomson presented sketch plans of tenements with one and two rooms with modern conveniences to Dundee Town Council's housing committee in February 1909 [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) p370]. However, a motion to proceed with a housing scheme under a provisional order of 1907 was defeated ten votes to eight [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) p582]. Thomson and Walsh's visits to schemes elsewhere in Britain had led them to believe houses could be built at ten to an acre for £200 to £350 each, yet middle-class cottages built along the Broughty Ferry Road (Craigie estate) cost up to £500 [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) pp1190-1; DYB 1908 (1909) p15]. The housing committee was split roughly in half at this point, with the zealous Walsh, supported by Thomson, leading the reformers and a much more cautious opposition fronted by Cllr William Don and Cllr AR Meachan. The latter group would willingly support projects such as slum clearance and had no real objections to Walsh and Thomson undertaking fact-finding missions. When more maverick elements in the council (Stewart, Soutar and Scrymgeour) attempted to prevent the two reformers
attending the National Town Planning Congress in 1909, they were defeated 17 to four [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) p954]. By this time Walsh and Thomson were generating ideas on a wide canvas. They toured France and Germany with the National Housing Reform Council and compared Stuttgart's annexation of smaller towns with Dundee's relationship with Broughty Ferry, Newport and Carnoustie. When Walsh told committee members Dundee must not be said to be behind "our neighbours" in the field of housing, he was thinking of Rheims and Munich, not Glasgow and Liverpool [DCA TC Minutes (1908-9) p1294-5]. Not all of the pair's trips to exhibitions and conferences were equally informative. A report on the Scottish National Housing and Town Planning Conference held in Glasgow, June 1912, serves as a reminder that Walsh and Thomson were leading experts in their day.

"...some of the Delegates displayed a knowledge of the Housing and Town Planning Acts so imperfect as to be an inexcusable waste of time, and trying to the temper." [DCA TC Minutes (1911-12) p1046]

There are indications Thomson worked closely with the LGBS after the passing of the 1909 Act. Another important change, which may have been prompted by the Act, was Dundee corporation's decision to make the housing and town planning committee a standing committee with Walsh as its convenor. This new air of permanence probably had more to do with slum crusade policies than any serious desire to carry out the major provisions of the 1909 Act, but it did acknowledge the long-term nature of any solutions to housing issues. A long-term view also gave Thomson the opportunity to become a town planner as well as city engineer and architect. It is likely advisors to the LGBS spotted
Thomson's potential and breadth of vision. Thomson's work shows he badly wanted to develop a career as a town planner, but most of the ideas he brought together were derived from the creative work of others. Thomson's brilliance was in seeing applications for these ideas in a growing city he knew intimately, not in producing independent planning theories of his own. Thomson was capable of being a vehicle for the civil servants responsible for planning and housing within the LGBS and he seems to have absorbed their advice willingly in order to see his plans materialise in some way in Dundee.

In April 1910 the town council's housing committee agreed to allow the convenor (Walsh) and the city engineer (Thomson) to prepare a statement on the Law Hill and vicinity, with a view to including it in a prima facie case for a town planning scheme under the 1909 Act, with a view to submission to the LGBS [DCA TC Minutes (1909-10) p732]. They also prepared a report on the 1909 Act for the benefit of council members, which members do not appear to have requested [DCA TC Minutes (1909-10) pp1307-11]. With any immediate prospect of a housing scheme dashed, Thomson and Walsh went down a different and more fashionable avenue. In allowing the pair to make a preliminary statement with a view to perhaps submitting a "first sight" case for a scheme, members may not have been aware of taking any sort of radical step and certainly did not take a positive decision to undertake any town planning. The report points out a scheme could be made in respect of land in the course of development, land likely to be used for building and land for open spaces (eg roads and parks).
Town planning was presented as a means of advancing relations between those who owned the land and the local authority, enabling cooperation in the general interest. The authors drew members' attention to an LGBS statement pointing out the heavy burden of ratepayers in remedying the effects of what with town planning they could now prevent (ie the slums) [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) pp1307-11].

Part of the Law Hill area, 19 acres, was already owned by the council - this was the hilltop portion, unsuitable for constructing anything more than a monument on. The remaining 124 acres was agricultural land in the hands of three owners. Thomson's plan proposed adding 26 acres to the local authority's portion to create a larger public park, and showed 98 laid out as cottage and villa housing at eight houses per acre [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p1306]. In practical terms Walsh and Thomson intended the Law Hill scheme to be carried out by private enterprise, with the local authority as an enabling agent, whose only major financial commitment would be to purchase 26 acres of steeply sloping land and create a public park from which the whole creation could be viewed. Presented as a modest measure, rather than a trail-blazing step, housing committee members could have been persuaded to present a *prima facie* case to the LGBS. However, Walsh and Thomson's report also included a breakdown of the housing portion of the 1909 Act. This part dealt with the acquisition of land for building and the terms under which monies could be borrowed. There were also points made in the section on town planning which could have worried more cautious councillors.
It could be seen that many of the decisions would rest with the LGBS and if the local authority was found to be in default, the LGBS could get a court order to require the local authority to carry out the town planning scheme adopted. Truthfully, Walsh and Thomson were only giving a full summary of all the provisions of the Act, but at the end of the report they reveal their ultimate purpose.

"...a plan showing the unbuilt portions of the City is in the course of preparation and will be submitted to this Committee without delay. When this is done, the Committee will be asked to exercise their powers under the Act of 1909, and to give instructions for the preparation of a Town Planning Scheme in connection with any part or parts of land which are available for that purpose." [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p1311]

There is no record of a housing committee discussion on preparing a plan or review of the whole city and no such plan appears to have been formally requested. This statement shows that although Walsh and Thomson intended the Law Hill scheme to be a modest measure, they also intended that it should be the first step in an ambitious town planning programme to be embarked on "without delay". Having ended the report on such a note, it comes as no surprise that on September 27, 1910, the housing committee deferred any decisions on a town planning scheme for the Law Hill area and deferred consideration of the report on town planning procedure [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p1339].

Walsh and Thomson were free to pursue their aim of creating a plan of the whole city in the knowledge a decision on whether or not to submit schemes to the LGBS would only be taken after the 1910 November elections. The timing was significant - the Dundee Year Book reported "disturbing elements" were expelled
from the council in November 1910, replacing discord with harmony [DYB 1910 (1911) p5]. On November 22, Thomson presented plans showing unbuilt land within the city, areas which might be selected under the 1909 Act and land which might be incorporated as open spaces and parks in the future [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p86]. Accompanying these was a forward-looking five point plan of action:

1. Inspection, improvement and clearance of slums;
2. Cottage schemes of working-class housing;
3. Acquisition of land for main arterial thoroughfares;
4. Creation of parks and open spaces;
5. Policy of land purchase within and beyond city.

Tying town planning to the ongoing slum crusade created an integrated programme of long-term measures to deal with housing problems, which gave the appearance of already having been embarked on. Options such as municipal housing would be possible, but there was no commitment to it, only a commitment to encourage private investors to build cottages. In purchasing any land, the council would be free to control the private development of it as a middleman, and not as a developer, although this route could be pursued if the ideological climate changed. The new local political consensus meant when Thomson put plans before the committee for town planning schemes in December 1910, they were approved and forwarded to the LGBS with no apparent dissent [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p193-4]. These schemes were for the Law Hill area and a new area of ground between Broughty Ferry Road, Arbroath Road, Mayfield and Strips of Craigie (known as Craigie or Craigiebank). The LGBS replied in January 1911 recommending minor adjustments and the corporation subsequently approved a motion to take steps to
obtain the LGBS's authority to put the provisions of the 1909 Act into force for the two schemes on February 2, without any apparent discussion [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p300]. Moves were made to acquire 26 acres around the Law above Kinghorne Road [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p415]. The Craigie scheme involved 11 owners and it was estimated 43 acres would be suitable for cottages and villas at eight to the acre (344 houses) [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p545]. A meeting, advertised in the newspapers, was held in July 1911 for owners and interested individuals to voice their opinions on the town planning schemes [DCA TC Minutes (1910-11) p996]. Once Walsh and Thomson had council approval to send plans to the LGBS a procedural chain was set in motion, with the LGBS prodding Dundee Town Council to move onto the next link each time a bureaucratic piece was completed. Orders authorising the local authority to prepare three town planning schemes for the areas defined were received from the LGBS in June 1912 [DCA TC Minutes (1911-12) p914]. The flaw in the chain was the need for private property investors to want to build within the town planning scheme areas and to join the three-way partnership. As discussed, in the years leading up to the First World War this foundered on the rock of a centralised bureaucracy. However, 1911 was not an auspicious year to inaugurate new housebuilding. The problem was not that builders did not want to build cottages and villas to the prescribed pattern, but that no one wanted to invest in any new property.

"The building trade still languishes. Little or nothing in the form of new structures was secured by contractors, hardly a dwelling-house of any size was erected, and even repair work was insignificant in quantity and not very remunerative." [DYB 1911 (1912) p5]
Having gained a mandate for town planning, Thomson was poised to unveil his ambitious plans for the townscape of Dundee. On February 19, 1912, he submitted reports on the Central Improvement Scheme [DCA TC Minutes (1911-12) p412]. The first of these reports is dated August 1910 and the supplementary report, December 1911, although it appears these ideas were not widely circulated and discussed until February 1912. In part this was a slum clearance scheme, opening up congested and unsightly slum areas in the commercial heart of the city - a new shop front to be crowned with a new civic centre (see slum crusades, c the Greenmarket Scheme). A covered market area with a roof garden, new shops and offices were to revitalise the dock area, and a new road bridge was to link the city to Fife over the Tay. The documents were accompanied by "suggestive" artistic illustrations which were published in the press, the Dundee Year Book and later exhibited at Ghent, Belgium [DYB 1912 (1913); DCA TC Minutes (1912-13) p738]. A large town plan of the the unbuilt portions of the city was hung on the committee room wall in March, where council members whose thoughts strayed from less entertaining matters, might at least ponder the great future in store for their city [DCA TC Minutes (1911-12) p551].

Following Walsh's departure for London in December 1912, Thomson was the key figure in housing and town planning. No one replaced Walsh in his evangelistic role at the heart of decision-making. The less charismatic Cllr WH Buist became convenor of
the housing and town planning committee [DCA TC Minutes (1912-13) p203; p304]. He was followed by Cllr AW Paton in November 1914, who came to acquire expertise in town planning matters. Paton had previously been one of Walsh's adversaries and once told the pioneering minister he had never brought anything back from a town planning conference that would help Dundee [DPL PJ March 25, 1911]. He was not an inspirational leader, but he was an intelligent man with administrative skills whose views were respected. Walsh might have been amused that Paton was appointed to chair a committee session at the Scottish National Congress on Housing and Town Planning in December 1916, but it was important that Thomson was able to win over such men [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p176]. Although Dundee was taking a lead in town planning in 1912-13, delegates appointed to attend a Scottish conference on the 1909 Act in April 1913 found more pressing business to deal with at the last minute and two other councillors had to be found [DCA TC Minutes (1912-13) p522,625]. No doubt these men had good intentions and supported planning in principle, but none of them was an expert in the way Walsh was and none was prepared to give the issues involved the same level of commitment. Cllrs Buist, Barnes and Allan, reporting after the conference, put forward the view that "municipal housing does not pay" and said it had been generally agreed whether housing in garden-style suburbs was private or local authority, the houses could only be let at "an economic paying rent" [DCA TC Minutes (1912-13) pp739-40]. There was little likelihood of Dundee's millworkers ever being able to pay economic rents for privately built houses in garden suburbs. This was a gloomy fact even the most enthusiastic reformer could
not ignore. However, Thomson and the LGBS were pressing on, if in a rather bureaucratic fashion, with the town planning schemes. Thomson submitted a report in September 1913, which got to grips with details such as the width of roads, heights of buildings, house densities, open spaces and even the height of the ceilings inside the houses [DCA TC Minutes (1912-13) pp1173-4]. Discussions followed and the three schemes were approved by councillors in February 1914 following visits to the areas. Thomson also won councillors' approval to proceed with a town planning scheme for recently annexed Broughty Ferry. Land around the Law Hill was bought as open space with £1,700 from the common good fund [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) pp319, 367, 415, 459, 927, 954, 1049]. Thomson also got his strategy for creating an integrated transport network going. In March councillors agreed a ring road should be created in the outskirts between the road to Coupar Angus and the road to Broughty Ferry. The council spent over £75,000 acquiring land for trams during 1913, under the Dundee Corporation (Improvement and Tramways) Act 1913 [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) pp581, 242].

At the beginning of 1914, practically on the eve of war, Dundee's councillors saw no need for the local authority to build houses for the working classes. In January 1914 a sub-committee of the improvement committee decided "no housing scheme involving the erection of new dwellings" was required to house those displaced from the Greenmarket and Overgate [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) pp282-4]. But there was growing support for some form of corporation housing in the city. In the 1912 local elections,
trades unionist Nicholas Marra unsuccessfully stood for the 8th ward (to the west of city centre, sandwiched between Hawkhill tenements, west-end villas and Lochee). He argued for municipalisation of the milk supply, coal supply and housing. 

"...the most pressing need was municipal housing. They would get better houses from the municipality for the rent they were paying at present and the same houses for less rent. In less than 80 years the houses would all be the property of the citizens. In fact the period of repayment could be extended to 120 years."

[PJ 1912, Oct 19]

There was growing national concern about housing in Scotland. The Scottish Secretary McKinnon Wood appointed a Royal Commission in October 1912 to enquire into the housing of the industrial population [SRO DD6/172]. It took evidence in Dundee in June 1914 from local pressure groups including the social union, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and the trades and labour council, as well as municipal representatives including Thomson, medical officer Charles Templeman and the lady health visitors. As well as bringing together a descriptive body of evidence revealing many facets of the social and economic condition of the city, the minutes of evidence also serve as a pre-war snapshot of the views of influential figures as to how to tackle the housing problem. Templeman, in a prepared statement, told the commission:

"If the problem of housing the working classes is to be solved on proper lines, it seems to me that suitable houses can only be provided by the Local Authority, and that they could only face this problem were substantial grants obtained from the Imperial Exchequer... I believe that Local Authorities, with their powers of obtaining money at a comparatively low rate of interest, could... erect houses for the working classes which could be let at an economic rent." [BPP (1917-18) XIV Cd8731, minutes p1550]

Templeman, as medical officer of health, was a key local
authority official, but one with far more independence than Thomson because of his association with private bodies such as the Royal Infirmary and his direct link with the LGBS.

Predictably Dundee United Trades and Labour Council came out most strongly in favour of the corporation building and letting houses - these were to be one and two-roomed flats at rents to cover costs only. Dundee Social Union wanted the council to build cottages on the outskirts of the city. Architect John Maclaren predicted modern houses would be built when rents had materially increased, but added the tenement would be replaced by two-storey cottages. He saw a role for the council in obtaining the land, with housing associations undertaking the building for small returns [BPP (1917-18) XIV Cd8731, minutes, pp1537, 1525, 1533].

The town council had support among the witnesses for its slum improvement schemes, but housing reformers wanted it to go further. Robert Stirton and Richard Lyon, of the trades and labour council, told the commissioners a special city department dealing with housing and town planning directly responsible to the LGBS would be required.

"It would seem that the Local Authority cannot or will not overcome the difficulties in their way... it does not seem possible to get a Town Council made up of men who are not interested in property..." [BPP (1917-18) XIV Cd8731, minutes, p1538]

Far from being leaders in the field of town planning, the labour movement saw town councillors as a self-interested group of property owners who could never take the decision to build and manage housing for the welfare of the whole community. At the Sweated Industries Exhibition in November 1913, an embarrassed Bailie Paton had been obliged to officially accept the gift of a
model slum dwelling from Women Workers on behalf of the city [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) p37].

James Thomson's evidence to the Royal Commission on Housing gives some indication of his own point of view, but it must be remembered he was invited to do so as a city official and the statement he handed in was written on the corporation's behalf [BPP (1917-18) XIV Cd8731, minutes p1542-7]. The only point at which he expressed a personal opinion in the statement was to praise the 1909 town planning Act. What emerges is that Thomson was "planning the whole of Dundee" and had mapped areas suitable for tenement development outside of the town planning schemes. Although he wanted the town council to buy land for building, he did not believe in the municipality taking the place of the landlord. Thomson told the commissioners such experiments in other cities had failed financially.

"...we cannot build a decent house at a rent these poor folk could pay... my Corporation would not face the loss." [BPP (1917-18) XIV Cd8731, minutes p1547]

Instead Thomson suggested local authorities could buy agricultural land and sell it to building societies, artisans and shopkeepers to build on. This does not seem to have been a very well thought-out idea, but essentially Thomson wanted to get rid of speculation, take houses out of the hands of the traditional proprietors and encourage a particular social group to become owner-occupiers through self-help schemes. Such a project would do little to improve the lot of the mass of Dundee's citizens, which Thomson referred to as "the poor", except through filtering up. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, apart from
slum crusade measures, at this point Thomson was not particularly interested in housing "the poor".

In September 1914 the question of local authority housing appeared to come to a head in Dundee. The trades and labour council passed a resolution calling on the council to put the housing act into force (the 1909 Act). The secretary of the LGBS passed on a complaint from the city's branch of the Independent Labour Party regarding the scarcity of working class dwellings. Letters also arrived from the Dundee Housing Reform joint committee [DCA TC Minutes (1913-14) p1389]. Cllr Robertson moved that plans of working-class cottages and tenements be prepared, but he could not even find a seconder for his motion. Instead the housing committee agreed to hang up plans prepared in 1907 and 1909 in the committee room, and asked Thomson to produce a non-binding report on the housing situation in Dundee. Here then was a group of men who knew there was a growing problem of supply, who knew private investors were not willing to put their money into bricks and mortar because of the poor level of return, yet were afraid to take a long-term decision which would weigh heavily on the municipal purse at a time when the nation had just declared war. The public interest demanded something be seen to be done, so committee members asked Thomson for yet another report, and must have hoped market forces would push rents up to a level where money might again flow into private house property. The outbreak of war with Germany on August 4, 1914, meant this was a vain hope.
In December 1914 Thomson presented the report, which was also signed by Cllr AW Paton who had been recently elected as housing convenor [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) pp190-5]. Using death rate statistics and figures on insanitary dwellings, Thomson attempted to show both that current slum crusade policies were working and that much more needed to be done outside the city centre. He was careful to draw a distinction between the housing needed for the poor and dwellings required for artisans, namely tenements and cottages. He drew attention to the fact that anti-slum policies demanding higher standards, which cost ratepayers little, put a burden on tenants whose rents were raised by landlords to meet improvement costs. The report stated new dwellings of the types required rarely came before the works committee and private enterprise had ceased to build small houses. Rents were identified as the crux of the problem; tenants paid between 1s 6d and 3s per week for a one roomed house and up to 4s 6d for two rooms.

"Houses of proper design... could not be provided under approximately 3s 6d for the former, and 5s for the latter, without taking into account the cost to the ratepayers of acquiring old properties for demolition; and it would be unreasonable to expect, under present economic conditions, that these heavy increases in rent could be paid by any large proportion of the poorer class of our population." [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p193]

However, when it came to cottage schemes for artisans, there would be no necessity to let the houses at less than the cost price. Thomson suggested the council could assist by obtaining suburban land at a moderate price and obtaining money at a low rate of interest. In time Thomson said these social groups could become owner-occupiers at an outlay within their reach. What
Thomson was saying in this report was that his town planning schemes would benefit a specific social group, the artisans, whose skills could command a level of earnings above those of the majority of Dundee's workers. When it came to the families who earned mill wages, the figures did not add up.

"Having regard to all the circumstances we cannot at present recommend the Council to enter upon any scheme for the erection of dwelling-houses." [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p194]

The report did recommend adopting more stringent standards of improvement under the 1882 Act and action to deal with dirty houses under the Public Health Act 1897, but Thomson was also to report on land suitable for cottages. This did not meet with councillors' approval on December 15 [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p190].

In January it was agreed Thomson and Paton should prepare a supplementary report with a view to considering housing for the working classes [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p306]. This was submitted in mid-February [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) pp418-9]. Thomson avoided giving the costs of any housing scheme, citing fluctuating values of labour and materials. He promised figures once prices returned to normal. The tone of this report was harsher and called on the council to commit itself to "drastic proposals" and Parliamentary action. It was argued powers should be sought by Scottish cities to deal with unclean occupants and that investigation of congested properties by the medical officer of health would not immediately inflate the value of these properties. The purchase and feuing of suburban land by the council, it was again stated, would encourage cottage
development. This was Thomson fielding his critics. He recognised this was not the time to expect a council commitment to housing provision, but told the council they had responsibilities as "trustees for posterity". He repeated his previous recommendations.

"...while some of them would doubtless be acted upon in any case, they, for the first time, put on definitive record a clear line of effort along which the Committee can go without in any way at present adding to the commitments of the Corporation." [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) p419]

Taken together, it is reasonable to assume Thomson saw the plan of action he laid down for councillors in the two reports as the very least they could opt to do. The housing and town planning committee thanked Thomson and Paton, but deferred further consideration until the close of war. But there were councillors, mainly drawn from the labour movement, who were not happy to wait until a return to normality. At a full corporation meeting on March 4, 1915, Edwin Scrymgeour and George Robertson moved that the reports be remitted back to the committee for a survey of the deficiencies of small houses and plans and estimates of a local housing scheme [DCA TC Minutes (1914-15) pp490-1]. The motion was easily defeated, but it is significant that eight councillors were willing to support a council-built housing scheme.

The next initiative councillors took was the decision to prepare lists of defective property and visit them in rotation, taken in February 1916 - the Action Area policy (see i, slum crusades) [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) p365]. The pressure to do more than stringently enforce sanitary regulations came from
outside the council chambers. Thomson and Paton attended the National Housing and Town Planning Council congress, London, in May 1916 [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) pp713-6]. Their report on the discussions shows delegates were not talking about if houses should be built by the state, but how it could be achieved. Delegates wanted central state action to secure proper housing conditions for every family, through wage rises and local authority subsidised housing. At the end of this report Thomson again asked the council to authorise an enquiry into cheap land for working class housing. It was decided the convenor could represent the corporation in support of congress resolution 1, while reserving an opinion on the rest of the report. This resolution urged the government to set aside £20 million to make advances to local authorities and other bodies to provide houses at reasonable rents. At a full council meeting, Bailies Forwell and Barnes unsuccessfully tried to get this minute disapproved [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) p764]. There were Scottish councillors who were alarmed by what they saw as a "dangerous socialist undercurrent" at this conference and who later called for a new association to push for housing schemes on the private ownership principle. Dundee's councillors were not prepared to back such an association [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p175]. Thomson did not get support for the particular activities he wanted to undertake in Dundee, but councillors were ready to accept that at the end of the war the corporation might take an active role in providing houses and would require money from central government to do it. As Thomson and Paton stated:

"In view of the certain shortage of Housing in our city, unless building operations are greatly
accelerated after the war, of which we can hold out little hope, this is a question which will have to be considered by the then Town Council, and it would be well that we should if possible by reasonable foresight be prepared to take advantage of whatever financial facilities are offered by the Government." [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) p716]

In June councillors held an evening meeting with Dundee Labour Housing Council to discuss the housing question [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) pp812,873]. In July Cllr Fletcher put forward a motion calling on the council to petition government for a grant of £100,000 "to launch healthful dwellings" [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) p898]. These were inconclusive moves, but they demonstrate a willingness among a group of council members to provide a brick and mortar solution to the housing question - a group who did not see such an initiative as dangerous socialism.

An important factor was the recognition in central government that a scheme of reconstruction would be required when the war ended. Government agencies built homes for key workers near key installations in areas where there was an acute housing shortage. During 1917 the Admiralty and the Ministry of Munitions built 4,276 houses in Scotland at a cost of £1,278,000 [BPP (1918) XI Cd9020, 505, p xx]. In September 1916 a circular was sent by the under-secretary for Scotland to all local authorities asking for particulars of the public works which would be necessary at the end of the war. Although Thomson had been unwilling to give his own councillors wartime estimates, he told the LGBS £4,000 would be needed to build roads and £40,000 for housing schemes [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) p1160]. At the end
of September a delegation from Dundee, headed by Thomson and Paton which included trades union and building trades representatives, visited the LGBS to discuss housing for the working classes after the war [DCA TC Minutes (1915-16) p1250-5].

What is clear in the six months following Dundee's municipal elections in November 1916 is a change of tempo and a more general acceptance of the need to build local authority housing. Yet the war cabinet did not issue their decisive circular until August 1917. The change of mood owed much to the activities of the civil servants involved, particularly those at the Local Government Boards. Commenting on the August circular the LGBS stated:

"...we had come to the conclusion that for the years following the war it would be necessary to rely far more than in the past upon local authorities to provide the houses required." [BPP (1918) XI Cd9020, 505, pxxi]

The LGBS had been hard at work persuading local authorities like Dundee Corporation that in the short term it would have to build. Thomson had close links with LGBS officials and was rewarded for his cooperation with a place on the committee appointed to select designs of housing for the working classes appointed in August 1918 [SRO DD6/661]. In June 1917 Dundee's housing and town planning committee decided in principle the municipality could build houses, subject to adequate assistance from national funds. Councillors would not have come to such a conclusion if they had not had some assurances, however informal, that funds could be forthcoming. However, when the full council ratified this decision, although it had the overwhelming backing of members, it was not done in a very positive manner.

"In regard to Article II of said Minute of 18th June
The National Housing and Town Planning Council provided an important talking shop for the exchange of ideas between officials, councillors, professionals and interested organisations. Following its example, a Scottish National Housing Committee was formed in December 1916 and called on the Scottish Secretary to develop a scheme to provide healthy homes, so local authorities could take immediate action as soon as central funds became available [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p176-8]. The Oxford NHTPC conference held in April 1917, was described by Thomson as valuable in shaping a policy to meet the post-war situation [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p684]. It called on government to announce housing loans and grants, to get estimates of the shortfall and to spend £150,000 securing suitable house designs. The records show the LGBS paid careful attention to the activities of these two bodies and kept their resolutions on file [SRO DD6/787,790].

It is no coincidence that Thomson, who had been against the idea of municipal housing in 1914, presented detailed proposals for three housing schemes, providing 965 homes, to meet post-war needs in March 1917 [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) pp515-34]. This was in line with the resolutions passed by the SNHC in December and gave Thomson something to discuss in Oxford the following month. Three districts were proposed: Stirling Park, Springhill and
Logie. Not only did Thomson provide sketch plans of the layout and interiors, but he laid out the costs of borrowing, building and the rents the council could expect. If the government provided £20 million, the figure the NHTPC suggested in May 1916, Thomson said Dundee could expect to get £101,851, but added that on the basis of a £255 contribution the 965 houses he proposed would require a grant of only £84,000. For each of the three schemes he showed annual revenue would exceed expenditure. It was these schemes Dundee's councillors had in mind when the principle of municipal housing was approved in July 1917.

However, Dundee's councillors were not pursuing a socialist dream. Cllr AW Paton, the housing convenor, read a paper on state subsidies to the Scottish Sanitary Association Conference in September 1917, which makes it clear he viewed the measure as a temporary one to assist the return of private enterprise to the housing market [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) pp1144-7]. The problem, Paton said, had not arisen out of the war, but was accentuated by it. He pinpointed fair wages as the post-war mechanism by which a worker would be able to afford a comfortable home for his family.

"The State, through the Local Authorities, however, would then only step in where such a shortage in the supply exists as endangers the health of the citizens and raises public health evils - tuberculosis, infantile mortality, and overcrowding with its inevitable sex problems." [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p1145]

Paton saw this temporary measure as an extension of the city's activities in the field of public health and sanitary regulation; a pragmatic solution to a practical problem. It was, he said,
the clear duty of the Government to give local authorities assurances subsidies would be available. If houses cost £250 in 1914 and would cost £350 at the end of the war, Paton argued the Government ought to pay a proportion of the costs equal to the excess as part of the costs of the war.

The reasons why central government decided to finance the provision of state-built housing are complex. By the outbreak of war private enterprise was no longer building houses the working classes could afford [Cramond (1966) p10]. Philanthropic self-help schemes and local authority initiatives had failed to create conditions of supply to which the market would respond [Checkland (1985) p243]. Government intervention in rent and mortgage controls in 1915 had pegged rents at an unprofitable level. Daunton argues state housing was intended to ease the adjustment of rents to a market level and the private landlord was considered to be politically expendable [Daunton (1983) pp295, 298]. The Government recognised it would face two main problems at the end of the war, firstly how to bridge the gap between pre- and post-war rent levels and secondly how to remove rent controls while the housing shortage persisted. Only massive housebuilding would allow rent control to be dropped [Orbach (1977) p8]. On the 10th August 1917 a War Cabinet circular stated:

"...the Government recognises that it will be necessary to afford substantial financial assistance from public funds to Local Authorities who are prepared to carry through, without delay, at the conclusion of the war, a programme of housing for the working classes approved by the Local Government Board." [BPP (1918) XI Cd9020, p1].

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It was made quite clear this was to be for a limited period, until private building recovered. Little concern was expressed in Parliament over the principles the legislation endorsed when it was passed in 1919, and the newspapers did not comment [Orbach (1977) pp76-82].

"All the legislation provided for was that any loss incurred by the Local Authorities, as a result of carrying out the Regulations, would fall as a charge upon the Exchequer." [Orbach (1977) p82]

The Regulations referred to were set by the Local Government Boards. Orbach believes the government took action for reasons of expediency. Soldiers returning from the war would expect a different and more equitable society at home. A limited span housing programme would not be detrimental to the interests of private enterprise and it would rivet the attention of the industrial population on something which could be remedied [Orbach (1977) pp68,71-2]. According to Swenarton the measure, intended to be a short-term land to produce state-built houses at strictly economic rents, was an ad hoc response to a political crisis [Swenarton (1981)]. Between the 1890s and the end of the war housing politics was a matter of responding to grass-roots issues and state-funded housing was an insurance policy against revolution - a weapon in the battle of opinion [Swenarton (1981) p31, passim]. Without organised resistance against the private landlord in the rent strikes of 1915, rents would not have been pegged and there would have been no 1919 Act [Melling (1983) p114; Damer (1980) p103]. The struggle between working class tenants and their landlords, transformed by the war and culminating in wartime rents agitation, was followed by the collapse of the private rented property market [Englander (1983)
pp298-300; see Chapters 8 and 11]. Whether Government policy was simply a means of easing the adjustment of rents to a market level or designed to prevent revolution, the initial reason for the circular in 1917 and the legislation of 1919, was that rents had been frozen during the war and only widespread subsidised housebuilding would allow rent control to be dropped.

In September 1917 the LGBS canvassed local authorities to estimate the extent of the expected shortfall in housing supply at the end of the war; they had been authorised to say Government would provide funds for a limited period. Out of 310 local authorities, 295 returned the schedules and the shortage was put at 108,707, 66,852 in the seven largest burghs [BPP (1918) XI Cd9020, 505, pxxi]. This was felt to be an underestimate – the Royal Commission figure was 121,430. Dundee replied saying 6,000 additional houses were required and it planned to build 500 houses a year, with state assistance, until this total was met [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) pp1221-7]. In submitting the schedule, the town council endorsed Thomson's long-held view that housing needed to be tackled in different ways for different social groups.

"It is the view of the Local Authority that, if the Housing problem is to be effectively dealt with, a commencement should be made in providing houses simultaneously for persons of the poorer working classes and for those of the artisan class: that is, in providing houses of a size of three rooms and under and cottages of four rooms and over." [DCA TC Minutes (1916-17) p1225]

Logie, the first of three schemes, was to provide 314 small houses, costing £350 each, Stirling Park another 172. The third
scheme, Craigiebank, replaced Springhill and was to be a cottage development of 900 houses. Overall, a quarter of the 6,000 planned houses were intended for "the artisan class", costing £450 each. The most striking thing about Dundee's schedule is the detailed nature of the replies. Thomson gave accurate answers and under the heading "general observations" costed out the three schemes - Logie in detail. In November 1917 the LGBS approved the feuing of Craigiebank and the purchase of ground at Logie. The LGBS requested detailed plans for Logie [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) p52]. Negotiations on Stirling Park began in December [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) p156]. The housing committee approved the erection of tenement blocks at Stirling Park and Logie, subject to aid, in January 1918 [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) pp256-7]. By May 1918 Thomson was holding discussions with local architects on house designs for these schemes [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) p643]. Under town planning procedures, the LGBS approved the layouts for Logie, Stirling Park and Craigiebank in July 1918 [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) p882].

In May 1918, an LGBS circular emphasised the "exceptional circumstances" of the "national emergency", promised finance, making clear municipal homes were to be around 12 houses to the acre of at least three apartments. However, this circular did not commend itself in its entirety to local authorities, and the LGBS complained authorities desired to see the terms embodied in an Act of Parliament before proceeding [BPP (1920) XXI Cmd824]. Thomson was among those disappointed,

"...the proposed financial assistance was not in accordance with what the Committee had anticipated, as
they had expected that the Government would contribute, by capital payment, the difference between pre-war and the present cost of building houses." [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) p643]

State assistance was to take the form of a grant of a proportion of the loan charges sufficient to relieve the local authority of 75% of the estimated actual deficit as approved by the LGBS. Loans were to be at market rates of interest (around 5½%) [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) pp644-8]. The word "estimated" worried Thomson. Labour and material costs were unpredictable and he wanted the grants to be adjusted to meet each year's actual costs. He also acknowledged Dundee would have to be treated as a special case if it was to be allowed to build tenement blocks. Building was to begin within two months of LGBS consent to a loan - Thomson felt this was too short a time. Dundee was not alone. Representatives from Scottish local authorities met in Edinburgh in June 1918 and requested the terms be reviewed. In particular they wanted local authority contributions limited to a penny per £1 on the rates and government to come up with the initial capital expenditure.

"Considerable dubiety exists as to the exact meaning of certain of the Government proposals, and as regards others it is suggested there are good grounds for Local Authorities urging for a modification and amendment of same." [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) p783]

In February 1919 the LGBS issued a circular limiting local authority liability to a penny in a £1 rate, but local authorities were to exhaust this before receiving state aid; by this stage the Scottish local authorities wanted around 75% of the cost from central government [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) pp508-9]. Councillors had a reasonable excuse not to make a start on local authority housing.
Dundee, however, did proceed actively with the Logie scheme, claiming it to be the first in Scotland to be proceeded with by a local authority in partnership with the state. Again it was not a question of councillors sitting down and deciding to build despite the uncertain financial position, so much as a failure to stop a process Thomson was carefully keeping in motion behind the scenes. In November 1918, a week after the German Armistice was signed, the housing committee resolved to get full LGBS approval for the Logie and Stirling Park town planning schemes under the 1909 Act [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) p54]. By Christmas the LGBS had asked for details. Thomson had the information necessary prepared; all councillors had to consider on Boxing Day, was the financial question [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) pp204, 211]. Despite escalating costs, the rents Thomson proposed were no different to those he put forward in 1917. It is important to realise this was an interim period and the structure within which Thomson worked was still evolving. The housing and town planning legislation was being amended, as were the financial provisions and the term "working classes" was officially redefined (from £2 in wages a week to £3). The LGBS wanted Dundee's Logie scheme ready for tenants by May 1920 [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) p847]. During the spring and summer of 1918 Thomson was kept busy getting tenders ready. It was a careful balancing act - Thomson had to avoid a stalemate arising between the council and the LGBS. His success indicates informal links with both parties, especially the board. In June 1919 the LGBS insisted on economies. A communication from them acknowledges the existence
of a mechanism for discussion and informal approval between the board and Thomson, through which deals could be hammered out.

"It is understood that... Mr Thomson will go over the schedules and make necessary modifications in order to effect the above reductions, and that when he has done so, he will arrange a meeting with the Board's officials in order that, before the contracts are finally accepted, the Board may be able to indicate approval of the cost involved." [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) p848]

Once he had informal approval of a deal, Thomson could go to councillors and ask them to rubber stamp it and send it to the board for formal approval. In fact by the time councillors discussed this letter, Thomson had "made arrangements" to reduce the costs by £10,000.

There were councillors who fought the proposals every step of the way, but for rather perverse reasons. Cllr Edwin Scrymgeour was the unofficial leader of a group, with at least five core members, on Dundee Town Council who opposed collusion between local authorities to bargain with the Government for concessions in 1918. Scrymgeour and Cllr Fletcher wanted nothing less than cottages built by the council and paid for in full by the Exchequer [DCA TC Minutes (1917-18) pp333, 746]. A Scrymgeour gang of seven tried to prevent the balance sheet for Logie being approved by the full council early in 1919 (ie Scrymgeour, Forwell, Macdonald, Archer, Nicoll, Robertson and Fletcher) [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) p218]. Not all of these may have had full sympathy with Scrymgeour, who supported local authority housing in principle but wanted it on the cheap for both the city's ratepayers and future tenants. Forwell objected on the grounds the proposed scheme at Logie would not help the
right people. He argued only the better class of tenant would be able to get them and the others, who he said the council should be helping, would be worse off than ever [DPL cuttings book, Jan 7 1919]. There were other councillors who agreed with Forwell on this point, but who also recognised there would be no new housing at all if the council did not fall in with the LGBS requirements. Others who chose to vote with the Scrymgeour group were against the idea of local authority housing altogether. This essential lack of cohesion among the opposition is probably one of the reasons why Thomson was able to guide the housing schemes through, stage by stage.

An important factor in the speed at which Dundee's councillors tackled housing in the immediate post-war period was the level of public interest in the project. In July 1918 Dundee Women Citizens' Association held a meeting on housing which brought together the social union, the Labour Housing Council and the Women's Labour League. The delegates, male and female, were not satisfied with Bailie Buist's boasts and he found himself cornered on the subject of rents [DPL cuttings book, July 9 1918]. The discussions continued at second meeting in October, which Thomson and at least two house factors also attended [DPL cuttings book, Oct 23 1918]. In February 1919 the Dundee Advertiser estimated the city was losing a million pounds a year in wages because it could not house its industrial workforce adequately [DA February 20, 1919]. The municipal elections of November 1919 indirectly reflected the strength of feeling on the housing issue as Labour captured eight seats [DPL cuttings book,
Apart from the two Broughty Ferry wards, every single ward in the city had at least one Labour councillor. A Labour councillor, John Reid, was elected convenor of the housing and town planning committee.

After the war years, during which councillors did much paper-shuffling and used the war as the excuse for delaying action, there was a sense of urgency to meet people's demands. The time had come to fulfil the promises. One member of Dundee's housing committee even went as far as to claim there would be a rising if people did not get housing [DPL PJ March 8, 1919]. The desire to actually provide homes to meet the overwhelming post-war demand, especially homes for emotive groups such as returning servicemen and their brides, led councillors to agree to buy Army huts which could be converted into family homes although no financial assistance could be got for the project. The sites for these were approved by the housing committee in April 1919 and it was agreed tenants should be carefully selected to favour ex-servicemen and war widows [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) pp538,652-3]. The corporation purchased ten huts from the American Red Cross to convert into 80 two-roomed houses at a rent of 5s a week and estimated the loss to the council would be around £220 each spread over six years [DPL cuttings book, February 24, 1919]. By June the estimated loss had been revised to £3,600 over ten years, or £360 per hut [DPL cuttings book, June 6 1919]. The Women's Freedom League condemned the huts as ugly and an insult to those expected to inhabit them. The Independent Labour Party said they were unsuitable for human habitation [DCA TC Minutes
Nine huts had been put up by October. The housing convenor reported that,

"...owing to the derision and contumely that had been heaped upon those houses, they thought it better to hold their hands, and see how the houses would take."

[DPL cuttings book, October 29 1919]

The purchase of the huts was well intentioned but ill-fated. Nevertheless 36 out of a total of 76 "temporary" timber houses were still occupied in 1937 [DCA GD/X73/2].

Much of the friction surrounding the implementation of post-war housing policy arose not from tensions within the council, but from tensions between the different public agencies involved at different levels. There were complaints that the Scottish Local Government Board could not get on with its job because of interference from Whitehall and control should be decentralised to Scottish level. The People's Journal commented:

"Government departments appear to pop up whenever an effort is made to set the machine in motion and try to insert a sprag [sic] in the wheel. The best thing to do, I think, is simply to go ahead and let the Government go hang." [DPL PJ March 8, 1919]

There were practical problems in getting a dormant construction industry geared up to meet an abnormal level of demand. A scarcity of bricks delayed the start of building at Logie - Thomson could not order these himself but had to get a government official to go over the brickfields and make the arrangements [DPL cuttings book, April 5 1919]. The traditional building material had been stone, so there was also a shortage of bricklayers. The trades unions of traditional craftsmen, such as stone masons, squealed loudly about the inappropriate use of bricks and factory manufactured standardised fitments (eg doors)
which kept their members out of work [DPL cuttings book, Sept 1919]. Had there not been tight government controls on the prices of basic building materials, prices would have risen to prohibitive levels.

Logie was a potent symbol, the physical embodiment of an ideal. For a moment Dundee was in the limelight. The vice-president of the board, Sir George McCrae cut the first sod on July 4, 1919 and the Dundee press proudly proclaimed the city had won the municipal derby [DPL cuttings book, July 5 1919]. The souvenir brochure of the opening of the scheme in May 1920, encapsulated the aspirations of the town council:

"...when the eye comes to rest on the Logie scheme, the defects of the tenement system stand out in sharper prominence. The Logie scheme indeed marks a revolution in housing conditions in Dundee..." [DCA, GD/X73/1]

As far as Thomson was concerned Logie was not an end result so much as part of a beginning. A modest venture and one of a number of projects in a wide-ranging plan of development for post-war Dundee which Thomson had put before the council in January 1919 [DCA TC Minutes (1918-1919) report facing p224]. The schemes were devised to be carried out gradually and in sections over a long period, to reduce the burden on ratepayers at any one time to a sustainable level. In doing so Thomson was encouraging Dundee as a local authority to assume a proactive role rather than a reactive one; to be a guiding hand in the long-term economic future of the city and to take responsibility for the physical form it would take.

"Fifty years hence it is confidently anticipated, if the
Council authorize and abide by a comprehensive plan, criticism by citizens of the scheme of expansion will be favourable rather than adverse." [DCA TC Minutes (1918-1919) report facing p224, p4]

The objectives of this plan included increasing the earning capacity of citizens through industrial growth and steadying property values, probably with the intention of creating ideal circumstances for market forces to supply good quality homes at economic and affordable rents. Thomson predicted a rise in motor traffic and proposed new routes, in particular an outer ring road and a Tay road bridge, to serve twentieth century needs. He proposed a cheap and rapid transport network involving tramways and motor buses to link new housing and industrial enterprises on the outskirts with a revamped commercial centre. An acre of parkland was to be provided for every 150 citizens and each housing development have a neighbourhood centre including shops and public buildings. Thomson forecast a doubling of the city’s population and the extension of its boundaries to include Monifieth and Tayport, Newport and Wormit in Fife.

"There can be no possible doubt the transformation would revolutionize the social and economic conditions of the working classes, be an incentive towards improvement in home surroundings, inspire a deeper interest in Civic aesthetics, and proffer opportunities for recreation and mode of living without parallel in the experience of the Community." [DCA TC Minutes (1918-1919) report facing p224, p35]

Thomson had trailed a lot of these ideas in previous reports, but in 1919 he drew them together to form a master plan for the decades ahead. Building Logie was a small part, and as far as Thomson was concerned the council would be working in partnership with the state in all projects on undeveloped land which involved large sums of money, private and public.

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Under the 1919 Act Dundee built 886 houses, 262 of them at Logie. By 1937 6,909 council houses had been built and another 3,551 were planned, most of them under the 1930 Act [DCA GD/X73/2]. Logie was an important precedent and paved the way towards the socialist city of the 1960s and 1970s in which council-built and council-owned housing became the dominant mechanism of supply. But although the first council scheme proved to be an important landmark in the history of housing provision, few councillors holding office before the 1919 municipal elections envisaged that the city would provide the vast majority of the houses to meet the 6,000 shortfall Thomson had estimated. There was a fundamental belief among many of the councillors who supported the Logie scheme that private enterprise would somehow recover and that privately rented housing would once again be a profitable and safe investment.

The reason why it is difficult to pinpoint a date at which councillors succeeded in divorcing the provision of housing from sanitary issues, is because many of them never did. Paton, the housing convenor during the war years, linked municipal housing closely with the battle against public health evils. The council's response in 1918 was not so greatly different from 1901, except in degree. Pressure was still being put on landlords, factors and tenants through sanitary regulation. This was significantly stepped up in 1916 with the introduction of the Action Area scheme. The weapon of closing orders was acknowledged by Thomson to have flaws, but the war on the slums
went on - over 2,000 notices were served against landlords in September 1919. Even Logie was seen as a public health measure, setting new housing standards in the city in a fight against disease and domestic illiteracy. The strongest, if not the only, support from within the local authority for grants from the Exchequer in 1914 came from the medical officer of health, Charles Templeman. He made the suggestion to the Royal Commission purely on health grounds.

Public officials and civil servants took centre stage. Without someone like Thomson it is difficult to imagine Dundee would have been in the running in the so-called municipal derby. Cllr Walsh was important too, but in a different way. Walsh was fervent and passionate and a good publicist, but he was not good at striking a compromise, seems to have made enemies and was inclined to make hotheaded gestures such as threatening to resign. Thomson also had the support of the medical officer Templeman, and after Kinnear's demise, the sanitary inspector TK Roddan. But Dundee never set out to employ a town planner - they happened to have one. In 1918 we start to get a real idea of the breadth of Thomson's vision, but he was skilled enough to work within the political framework to achieve the possible. He used each small achievement to pave the way for the next. He also made good use of his contacts with the civil servants at the LGBS. Thomson was a great administrator, able to adapt to the requirements of a growing centralised bureaucracy and to use this embryonic Scottish powerbase to advantage in his dealings with Dundee's councillors. It must also be acknowledged the civil
servants at the LGBS had a willing vehicle for their plans in Thomson and recognised it. The road to council housing may have been hesitant and the destination dictated by things happening outside the local arena, but during the journey Dundee's city fathers came to rely more and more on the experts for the direction the city should take. Experts employed by the city itself and the experts at the LGBS.
Chapter 11: Living space

The home has an important role as the nexus between individuals and society, and is the site of the household. To state the obvious, the home is the space within which people live: a place to eat, sleep and bring up children – particularly the latter since we tend to think of homes as places where family groups live. Most households in Scottish cities in the nineteenth and twentieth century were constituted on the basis of marriage; a marriage bond between two individuals which subordinated women within a family unit. This marriage union provided the basis for raising a large family, as reflected in the Census figures. According to the 1901 Census, which enumerated families rather than households, only 8% of families in towns were single person and 61% of families had two to five members; in Dundee the figures were 9% and 64% [Census 1901, XVI]. At the turn of the century, at least a quarter of all families in Dundee appear to have had more than five members living together. Closely linked to the status of being a wife and mother was the female’s responsibility for domestic labour and child care. Women whose husbands could afford to employ servants to cook, clean and nanny, were still supposed to put the family home at the centre of their existence by taking on the role of household manager. Ideally ordinary women were expected to be housewives.

"The synthesis of house and wife in a single term establishes the connections between womanhood, marriage and the dwelling place of family groups." [Oakley (1974) p1]
The household is where the private and public realms come together, a dualist construction of reality which feminists have argued is of profound significance to women because of the pressures exerted on women to restrict themselves to the domestic, and thus private, aspects of urban life. McDowell has pointed out that a number of studies from different disciplines show men and women's conception, experience and use of space is different, and she goes on to argue gender divisions are an important structuring element of urban space and urban processes [McDowell (1983) p59]. As MATRIX, a feminist designers collective, have put it,

"Our built or created environment is made in accordance with a set of ideas about how society works, who does what and who goes where." [MATRIX (1984) p1]

At the end of World War One, when local authorities were first able to build public housing with central state subsidy, decisions were taken about how houses were to be designed. Guidelines were laid down about the standard of accommodation people should be provided with, the arrangement of buildings to one another, to transport routes, to public spaces and workplaces. A number of assumptions were made about how society worked, who did what and who went where. Essentially this was a man-made environment, in that from policy-maker to architect to planner to bricklayer women had almost no part to play. Yet it is also true women were judged by the quality of environment they made - an ideology of domesticity existed. Commenting on working mothers and the need for cottage dwellings, the Dundee social reformer Mary Lily Walker, a relatively enlightened figure, wrote in spring 1913:
"The mothers, if not too burdened by their double share of work, are particular about the window curtains and the polished brasses. The craving for pretty things sometimes asserts itself unexpectedly...

[The local authority should insist on] ...cottages of three or four rooms outside the slums, with a piece of ground where the husband could garden or carry on any other hobby, where little children could safely play, where the girls, as they grew to womanhood, could have a little privacy—a room of their own to develop the house love whose absence we deplore at a later stage." [BPP 1917-18 Cd8731 XIV 345, minutes of evidence 1914, p1524]

This chapter will consider gender in relation to home and household and attitudes towards the domestic role of women. Then the work of early town planners and the design of the new state-built houses, popularly known as "Homes fit for Heroes" will be discussed. Throughout early twentieth century Dundee will be used as an example.
i) Women and the home

It has often been assumed home life and working life in industrial societies are separated, in that a separation exists between the production of commodities on the one hand, and the neighbourhood, home and family life on the other. Yet the home has played a crucial part in the maintenance of industrial societies, as the place where workers were emotionally and physically maintained, where children were created and grew up to be efficient workers [Mackenzie and Rose (1983) p157]. Essential to the renewal of the capacity to work within the ideal single family home, was the unpaid domestic labour of women. Whilst the home would be the haven from the workplace for the male worker, it was at the same time the place of work for the wife.

Yet in early twentieth-century Scotland many women were involved directly in the production of commodities, having a dual role as unpaid domestic labourers and as wage earners (figure 11:1). It is clear from the 1911 Census women in Dundee were more likely to be a part of the formal economy than women living in other major Scottish cities. Although the Census underestimates the numbers of women earning by almost certainly excluding those in irregular casual or seasonal employment, the figures are a good indication of the relative numbers of women in regular and permanent employment outside the home. From Census data it is clear marriage altered the socio-economic context of women's lives. The shift in primary allegiance from the parental family household to the husband, for most women meant giving up formal paid employment. In Scotland as a whole only 31.4%
### Females employed in Scottish cities, 1911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Females (over 10 years)</th>
<th>Females employed</th>
<th>% of females in employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>1,931,620</td>
<td>593,210</td>
<td>30.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>318,384</td>
<td>111,603</td>
<td>35.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>147,782</td>
<td>55,128</td>
<td>37.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundee</td>
<td>74,712</td>
<td>36,836</td>
<td>49.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>70,567</td>
<td>22,860</td>
<td>32.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Married females</th>
<th>Married females in employment</th>
<th>% of married females in employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>762,835</td>
<td>31,406</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>128,146</td>
<td>7,047</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edinburgh</td>
<td>51,316</td>
<td>2,623</td>
<td>5.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dundee</td>
<td>27,506</td>
<td>6,444</td>
<td>23.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>27,045</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>3.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census 1911.
married women had paid regular employment (1.6% of all women over 10 years old), but women were more likely to do so in an industrial and urban context, as 52% of those women lived and worked in one of the four major cities. Even then, on average, fewer than one in ten of married women in cities took a paid occupation. However, this is not true for Dundee where nearly a quarter of all married women were breadwinners and almost five times as many married women worked as in Glasgow.

Diana Gittens has shown how paid work, unpaid domestic work and marriage were three interrelated and often overlapping occupational spheres for women, which can be conceived of in terms of strategies for survival [Gittens (1986)]. Women's perceived primary responsibility as carers for others, ensures the strategies women adopt are for the household generally, rather than for the benefit of themselves as individual women. The large proportion of married working women in Dundee can be interpreted as a strategy for survival, attributable to the economic insecurity of many working-class households in Dundee.

Where did these women work? Women in the major cities were by and large employed in the industries which dominated those cities, although in Edinburgh, the centre of the financial and legal professions, large numbers of women were domestic servants (figure 11:2). In 1911 commercial employment had yet to offer women clerical opportunities. Relatively few Dundee women worked in the traditional area of domestic service and the vast majority took jobs in industry, mainly factory-based textile
Female Occupational Structure, 1911

Source: Census 1911.
spinning and weaving - 66% of Dundee's working women (24,304) had jobs in hemp and jute [Census 1911]. Of married working women 89% were employed in textiles (5,744) and 73% of them were aged between 20 and 44 years (5,611), the period when women give birth to and raise their children. There is nothing particularly special about 1911. In 1881 40% of Dundee's women worked, 71% (24,241) of them in textiles and of 10,699 female jute workers, 56% were aged 20 to 44 [Census 1881]. In 1891 43% worked, 85% in industry [Census 1891]. In 1901, 17.8% of Scottish women had jobs in industry, but in Dundee the figure was 44.9% and out of 27,635 women employed in textiles 54.7% were aged 20 to 44 [Census 1901]. Nor did things change in Dundee in the immediate post-war period, for 51.4% of females aged over 12 worked in 1921, 62% of them in textiles. Despite more women in the cities getting a taste of the workplace during the First World War, the relative situation of married women reverted to its previous state, with fewer than 6% in employment in the major cities, excepting Dundee where 24% of married women had paid occupations [Census 1921]. Within the Dundee textile industry it was the women who were the skilled operatives, the spinners and weavers. Younger women in the phase between childhood and marriage were usually spinners, less well-paid than the weavers on piece-work - married women with a greater commitment to home and family, who were accorded some respect. Wages may have been poor but the independence they afforded to the spinners, whose boyfriends were without regular work, created what William Walker terms a millgirl sub-culture who adopted the behaviour and rough manner of working-class men.
"The revulsion which the millgirl could engender in critics was strongly connected with a mill patois incomprehensible except in the swear words, her infuriating hilarity, and her pretence in matters of dress. The language of the mill offended in the streets." [Walker (1979) p18]

Excepting the gaffers, men who could get work in the mills generally had low prestige jobs as labourers, floor-sweepers, lift attendants, oilers, or as hands in the low-mill preparing the dusty and dirty raw jute [Walker (1979) p21]. Another very obvious feature of the textile industry in Dundee was its employment of children. The 1901 Census shows 17.72% of boys aged 10 and under 14 in Dundee had paid work, whereas in Glasgow the figure was 5.52% and in Edinburgh 2.74%. The situation for girls of the same age was little different, 16.36% in Dundee, 3.54% in Glasgow, 2.10% in Edinburgh. After 1876 children had to receive some education up to 13, but in a city where money was scarce certificates allowing children to leave school and earn a wage were valuable and the half-time system lingered in Dundee when employers elsewhere stopped using it.

"Half-timers were employed in the mills for either ten hours every alternate day, in which case the next day was spent in the mill school, or from 5am until 11am at work with the period after mid-day dinner until 6 o'clock in school. They were most usually employed as shifters, under the direction of a mistress shifter with whistle and tawse hanging from her belt." [Lenman et al (1969) p59]

(The tawse was a leather strap split into two or three thongs at the end, used to punish children in Scottish schools until the mid 1980s.) Shifters replaced full bobbins on the spinning machines with empty ones, an unrelenting task for small hands in a dusty and dangerous environment, but one which could earn 4s a week in 1906. Part of the tragedy of the jute industry was while
girls could stay on in the mills, lads once they reached adulthood were largely dispensed with and had no trade. Certificates of age to permit half-time work (in 1891 raised from 10 to 11), were designed to prevent under-age children from being employed, and were intended to be given only in necessitous circumstances. In reality the School Board gave all certificates requested and were not always careful about proof of the age of the child concerned. Half-time schools in textile works gradually closed down between 1890-1900, creating an accommodation crisis in board schools to the extent that pupils were turned away [Lenman et al (1969) pp60-1]. The Education Act of 1901 raised the age of half-timers to 12 and the half-time system had disappeared by the outbreak of the First World War. Instead children were employed out of school as messengers or paper sellers, of which medical officers were just as critical.

"The hearty co-operation of all employers of child-labour would very materially assist in preventing a state of matters coming to pass, more vicious in its influence than the old half-time system." [Dundee School Board (1913-14) Medical Inspection of School Children Fourth annual report, p27]

The Dundee Social Union Report of 1905 blamed women's employment on the requirement for cheap labour in the jute works, suggesting the substitution of males for females would mitigate grave social evils, not least high infant mortality.

"The married woman is often the principal, sometimes the sole, wage-earner, and in many works she is preferred for her experience and steadiness. The obligation to support a family and also to bring it up is an unnatural condition of life, which leads to the usual consequences - broken-down mothers in early life, and ill-nourished, rickety children, who develop into weedy, unhealthy men and women." [DSU Report (1905) pxii.]
It was also suggested by Mary Walker of the Social Union over-employment of women had led to an abnormal proportion of the sexes, and accounted in part for high levels of illegitimacy. She attributed the frequency of irregular unions to economic reasons, the woman alleging she might have to keep the man altogether if she married him [Letter, The Times, March 20 1911].

Lennox produces figures showing illegitimate births accounting for 9.8% of all births in Dundee between 1880-1900, compared to an average of 7.29% in Scottish towns as a whole [Lennox (1928) p133]. He claimed Dundee had a shameful reputation for illegitimacy and wagged a finger at the survival of the old rural practice of handfasting - which he describes as being antenuptial connections - where pregnancy is a preliminary to wedlock, and cited the case of St Mary's Parish in 1902 where 8.1% of births were within six months of marriage. This suggests 16.5% of all births in 1902 were conceived outside of marriage [Lennox (1928) pp136-8]. Henry Williamson, Unitarian minister and president of the Mill and Factory Operatives' Union, spoke to the 1903 Royal Commission on Physical Training in Scotland, of children and wives deserted by their menfolk, of a large number of widows with children, high illegitimacy and morality of serious character, but admitted whilst sad stories were told it was difficult to get facts about this neglected class [BPP (1903) XXX Cd1508, p304]. Such views expressed by middle class social reformers, who had been inside factories and workers' homes, influenced the opinions of those who knew less, and added fuel to the argument that married women doing paid labour outside the home threatened the fabric of society as a whole.
"...the city was of a character which reflected the substantial reversal of male and female economic functions: a city where men were frequently dependent upon the earnings of mothers, sisters or daughters; and a city where women indulged behaviour which closely resembled that of working-class men." [Walker (1979) p40]

While a set of social norms about reproduction - that birth takes place within marriage and women have a primary responsibility as child carers - was publicly accepted, at the same time national statistics showed a declining birth rate and suggested privately greater control was being exercised by individuals over reproduction [Brookes (1986) p149]. Decline occurred first among the upper and middle classes, and to eugenists the differential birth rate between classes was contributing to national degeneration. Historians have found the phenomenon of a declining birth-rate hard to explain, but it does seem women did seek to control their own fertility, and where middle-class women might turn to the Malthusian League or Marie Stopes' rubber devices, working-class women had an oral tradition based around abortifacient measures [Brookes (1986)]. Within Dundee's tenement flats it would have been remarkable if children did not acquire some sexual knowledge, and what young people didn't know before they soon found out from their peers in the mills or school yard. Knowledge about means of contraception or abortion was probably gained in an equally informal if more secretive way. Writing around 1904-5, Lennox acknowledged the existence and dangers of such a female information network.

"The use of means to secure artificial sterility in married women is on the increase and these restrictions are equally practised by all classes of society. Many married women seem to be unconscious of the immorality
or illegality of some of the means employed. To limit the size of a family too prolonged lactation is a nostrum in popular repute especially amongst working class women, of which the most certain effects are injury to the mother's health and malnutrition of the child." [Lennox (1928) p134]

There is certainly nothing to suggest middle-class reformers, such as those in Dundee Social Union, sought to promote artificial contraception while disseminating other medical advice to working-class women, although it must have been painfully obvious limiting family size would increase quality of life.

Negative attitudes towards female employment were coloured by a whole series of beliefs, assumptions and demands. Supporters of national efficiency demanded increased respect for science and industry. Social imperialists argued for social reform in order to generate a disciplined and regimented society. Others feared the consequences of differential class fertility, arguing the unfit were multiplying while superior stocks were dying out. For many Boer War experiences had demonstrated the priceless resource of a nation's population had been squandered through indifference. Prospective recruits had been unfit, and the army had blundered from a lack of scientific method [Searle (1971)]. Against this background, Dr David Lennox, a recruiting medical officer, presented unquestionable evidence around 1904 in support of his Darwinian-type theories, that a large proportion of Dundee's populace was of poor physical development [Lennox (1928) p94]. Some 76.6% of Dundee recruits for army, militia and volunteers were under the average height of the general population of GB; 61.1% were under the average height of town populations. Yet once factory hands joined the militia - they
were below the standard for regular forces - their average gain was 7½lbs weight and one inch in height [Lennox (1928) pp65,71]. Lennox described male mill workers as mere pygmies, equally blaming working conditions and economic questions affecting home life [Lennox (1928) pp80,65]. A diet of hot strong tea and soft white bread was particularly criticised.

The response to evident poor standards in the health and welfare of Dundee's citizens took several forms, but can be divided into two main areas, investigation of social circumstances to discover the truth and practical steps to alleviate the worst problems. In all of this it was the woman's role as child carer which came in for the most scrutiny and she who received the most advice and direct help. Dundee Social Union, the medical officer of health, the municipality and national government all undertook surveys of one sort or another, but the pragmatic response adopted to child welfare arose at local level. A conference on child life in Dundee, organised by the social union, highlighted a wide range of problems [DPL People's Journal Nov 11, 1911]. Pupils attending the city's schools were often dirty and verminous, making it difficult for other parents to protect their children. Those left to their own devices between the close of school at 4.30pm and the end of the mill day between 6.30-7pm, got into mischief - at times ending up in Court. Sometimes children failed to cope with schoolwork because they had not been properly fed.

"The question of sufficient and suitable food was complicated by the fact that in Dundee - a city of working mothers - the dinner-hour of the mill was from two to three, and of the school from one to two. The
child's dinner too often in these circumstances resolved itself into a piece." [DPL People's Journal Nov 11, 1911]

But it was the infant's start in life which worried these organisations most. Voluntary agencies, in particular the social union, tackled the issues in a very professional way and where they led the municipality followed. The practical solutions offered were not unique, but the particular combination of sterilised milk depots, restaurants for nursing mothers, health visitors and classes in housewifery for girls, set out to tackle the consequences of Dundee's married women working and sought to educate women as to the importance of the personal care of infants.

Infant mortality was undoubtedly a problem. In 1906 infant deaths per thousand live births amounted to 168.51 in Dundee yet only 98.57 in Perth and 130.17 in Glasgow. However, figures from Greenock, where the average was 125.93 infant deaths in 1906, show the uneven incidence of these deaths according to house-size, with 234.76 in one apartment homes and 108.91 in three-room households [BPP (1908) XXX Cd4679, pp138-40]. In its survey, Dundee Social Union devoted a section to infant mortality, and visited mothers whose infants had died before their first birthday, in a six-month period between July and December 1904 [DSU Report (1905) pp65-81]. They found large numbers died in the first few weeks of birth, which they attributed to a combination of immaturity (ie. premature birth), over-exertion late in pregnancy and gastric conditions due to improper feeding. Out of 364 infant mortality cases, 79% of mothers worked in the
textile industry, and 57% were employed "a short period" before the birth. The evidence the social union presents suggests at least a quarter of pregnant women whose child subsequently died continued to work within the month prior to giving birth, and 65% of those returning to work after the birth did so within two months. Social union investigators, with firmly middle-class values, probably treated a woman's confinement within their own families as an illness. They point the finger of blame at married women's work, while accepting women only did so to survive, and linked the causes of infant death to circumstances arising out of female employment. In 1904 as a whole, 788 babies died under a year old; 15% were premature and 21% died from gastro-intestinal diseases, both of which could easily arise from the mother working. Bronchitis killed another 23.5% and 11.6% died from infectious diseases, as a result of the conditions people lived in [DSU Report (1905) p81]. Controversy has arisen over the proportion which died as a result of suffocation, (4.69% in 1904). Evidence in the social union's report does suggest parents were not always loving and caring. In an age in which hitting a child as a punishment was widely accepted as a caring parental act, cruel treatment probably exceeded a beating. During 1904, 1537 strayed children were taken to police stations and there were 93 cases of cruel or unnatural treatment to children [DSU Report (1905) p79]. As always, the darker side of family life cannot be accurately reflected in any official statistics, because by nature child abuse is hidden from view and authorities have not always been consistent in their approach to it. It is not difficult to imagine a depressed mother smothering
her baby in distressing social and economic circumstances, nor is it difficult to imagine an infant being smothered as a result of sharing a bed with parents or siblings. The phrase which came into use for suffocation was "overlaying" and little distinction was made between accidental and deliberate acts; in 1904 37 infant deaths resulted from overlaying, one more than from whooping cough. Recently it has been suggested these infants died from nothing more sinister than what we now know as "cot death" or Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, a view repudiated by William Walker.

"...suffocation in Dundee was not a myth but a grim reality. There is no reason to suppose that what Dundee attributed to suffocation was SIDS in disguise, not even when allowance is made for the myriad aetiological hypotheses and elastic epidemiological characteristics associated with SIDS." [Walker (1988) p57]

Walker's approach is to take what statistics there are, and calculate and compare suffocation rates, employing "reasonable inference" to conclude there were extreme variations in the distribution of incidence. The fact Dundee recorded 1,012 infant deaths from suffocation between 1881 and 1910, whereas Glasgow only registered 928, may indicate differences in attitude or approach to infant death by medical practitioners in Scottish cities [Walker (1988) pp58-9]. Overlaying or suffocation meant what doctors chose it to mean - it was not a precise medical diagnosis. I do not think it necessarily follows that four times as many babies were suffocated in bed in Dundee as in Glasgow (Dundee - 7.328 per 1,000 births 1891-1900; Glasgow - 1.766). Walker tells us parents were quite willing to register dead babies as "overlaying not certified", and perhaps the fact they
openly did so and did not bother with a doctor's certificate, was because they knew there was no question of being prosecuted in Dundee [Walker (1988) p70]. Medical Officer of Health Charles Templeman recorded 258 infant deaths from suffocation between 1882-1891, of which 32% were illegitimate babies and 46% occurred between Saturday night and Sunday morning. Dr Lennox took the view most of these fatalities were accidental, connected to drunkeness and overcrowding rather than criminal intent or insurance [Lennox (1928) pp123-4]. It is probably true some mothers in Dundee committed infanticide; it is probably true illegitimate babies were more likely to suffocate; it is probably true some babies died a cot death; it is probably true some were physically overlain. However, while Walker's argument is persuasive, the statistical evidence cannot be completely convincing. Because of the nature of child abuse the truth will never be known, but it is clear even these apparently large figures still only accounted for less than five per cent of all infant deaths in the city.

Whilst Dundee reformers may have felt married women working was the real cause of infant mortality, artificial feeding was identified by them as the largest single factor in the deaths of children under two years of age from gastric complaints. In response to this Dundee, in common with other towns, opened a depot for sterilised humanised milk in 1904, an idea copied from France. Dr Charles Templeman, the medical officer of health, commented:

"In dealing with certain classes of the community one finds a most appalling ignorance both of the nature and
quantity of food an infant is capable of digesting and assimilating." [BPP (1905) XXIV Cd2514, p141].

The depot was to supply low-cost sterilised milk in bottles to mothers who were unable to suckle their babies. The cost for infants up to six months was to be 3d a day, and 2s a week for older children— not cheap when jute workers earned less than a pound a week and many women took home about 12-13s. The effect was intended to be both short and long term, by reducing diarrhoeal diseases and improving the physique of surviving infants, thus arresting "the physical degeneration of the race". Under the scheme mothers who were able to breastfeed were not to be encouraged to switch to artificial means in order to free themselves for work. While the thinking was to discourage women from returning to the mill too soon after giving birth, the consequence was depots could not help the infants who needed clean milk most.

In households where there was no other regular income, women could not afford the luxury of staying at home, much as they may have appreciated middle class arguments why they should.

"It is usual for a woman to leave work in the mills about two or three months before the confinement. If the husband, as often happens, is out of work, her case is deplorable. Many of these women were found in a half-starving condition, everything, even the bed, having been sold for food." [BPP (1910) XL Cd5228, p115]

Women who worked and could not leave the child with grannie, usually put their babies out to what Dundee Social Union euphemistically term a nurse, in reality a neighbourhood baby farmer, who would look after and feed a number of infants. The fee was said to be about 4s a week out of 12s earnings, another
3-4s of which would be spent on food for the rest of the household [DSU Report (1905) p31].

"Where a child is put out to nurse it is not only deprived of maternal care, but the chance is that it will be improperly fed. The woman to whom it is entrusted has no special qualifications, and is in the majority of cases, old and past work." [DSU Report (1905) p69]

Another alternative was to take the child to a creche. There were three of these in Dundee and one in Lochee; the latter was said to be overcrowded and insanitary. In part these were charitable organisations, although it is not clear who ran them and the staff were not hospital trained. Social union investigators criticised them for using long tubed bottles which were difficult to clean, and implied criticism of the diet offered to children; the creche did breakfast, dinner and tea for about 1½d, while the poorhouse estimated the cost of feeding a child at 2½d [DSU Report (1905) p71]. It was the custom for mothers to begin breastfeeding, even if they intended to go back to work before the end of weaning. Sometimes the child was bottle-fed cows' milk during the day - bottles which were unsterilised and passed from child to child. More often bread meat or bread berry, boiling water poured over bread with milk and sugar added, was given to the baby until the mother returned to nurse it [DSU Report (1905) pp74-5]. Working mothers had no alternative strategy for family survival.

"If our impression is correct that married women seldom work except from pressure of poverty, their daily earnings, however small, are a matter of vital importance; and it is not difficult to understand that manufacturers find them more regular in working the full number of hours per week." [DSU Report (1905) p71]
In 1902 it was recognised by the Dundee Town Council that female sanitary inspectors would be:

"...invaluable in dealing with careless mothers with dirty homes..." [DCA TC minutes, May 1902, p708].

This was part of a growing trend in urban areas. Scottish Office statistics for 1904 show the major cities (except Edinburgh), and three burghs, Greenock, Leith and Paisley, had female sanitary inspectors or assistant inspectors, paid annual salaries of between £52 and £80. Eight of the 14 women were employed in Glasgow, Dundee had two and the others employed one [BPP (1905) LXVIII Cd342 603]. Female inspectors were expected to confine their activities to the domestic sphere - the same return shows there were no female inspectors of workshops, although public servants drew a column in the table for them. Perhaps to avoid confusion with other sanitary officers, the women were known as lady health visitors. In 1908 the Scottish Secretary, Lord Pentland of Lyth, wrote:

"In most cases the Local Authority have appointed one or more Lady Health Visitors, whose duty it is, under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, to visit mothers and give advice as to the rearing and nurture of children, the sanitary condition of the home, etc." [BPP (1909) XXX Cd4679 433, plxvi]

From January 1903 Dundee's Lady Health Visitors ventured together into the darkest dens of the Hilltown, Blackness and Overgate, the council insuring their lives for £150 each [TC minutes, March 1903, p538]. Each month Jessie A Swanson and Miss Whyte visited and revisited homes in a specific locality, and reported to the town council on the numbers found dirty and the improvements resulting from the advice they had dispensed (in June 1905 Nellie Andrew replaced Miss Whyte). When at the end of 1907 a request
was made to publish details of family structure, income and rents alongside the women's data, the council decided to cease publication of the reports altogether, although the women appeared to continue their work. During the period for which there are figures, they made between 528 and 1171 visits a month (excepting June 1903, July and October 1904, for which there are no figures - as this possibly results from an inaccurate record on the town council's part, rather than that no visits took place, June, July and October averages over the whole period have been used in the graph) (figure 11:3). Between February and May 1905, only one visitor was in action "JAS alone", and there is a consequent downturn in the number of visits. Monthly variations in the number of visits made are probably a consequence of targeting different areas each month. There is no evidence to suggest patterns of visits made relate to incidence of childhood diseases, such as whooping cough or measles. However troughs consistently occur in February and more especially August, for which there is no stated reason in the record. This may be a simple consequence of holiday periods for either inspectors or families, or that inspectors were not following their normal routines because they had additional duties at those times of year. A rough calculation suggests the women between them were visiting 200-250 homes a week, making somewhere between 40 and 50 calls a day. Even if the women made their calls independently, they could not have been spending more than 10-15 minutes on each call, and in many cases could only have talked to the housewives for a few minutes. In many cases the inspectors were probably not made particularly welcome in their target areas
Figure 11:3

Lady Health Visitors’ Visits
Dundee, 1903–7

The problem which particularly concerned the Lady Health

Visitors has been to teach the women to observe the virtues of cleanliness, thrift, dependability and the necessity of good ventilation. (SPF 1923) 483R 1264, p. 187

"Our object has been chiefly to teach the women to observe the virtues of cleanliness, thrift, dependability and the necessity of good ventilation."

Despite these efforts, it is clear that the visitors were not able to convey all their messages in their short visits.
and they must have included homes where they were turned away in their total number of visits. It is also possible they used unpaid volunteer assistants, although there is no record of this, and any volunteers would not have been insured by the council. However, the impact of visiting over ten thousand homes in their first year, and revisiting over a tenth of them, should not be underestimated. Although personal contact was their main weapon, some of the visitors' advice took the form of leaflets from the Medical Officer of Health on whooping cough and measles. The health visitors could not impose any penalties themselves, beyond moral sanctions and persuasion. However, they did report nuisances to the sanitary inspector, who had legal powers to deal with sanitary offences (chapter 9), and may have notified the Medical Officer of Health, the School Board truancy officer and welfare agencies in the voluntary sector, although there is no direct evidence they had contact with the latter two.

The women chose areas of tenements known for multiple-deprivation, "one and two-roomed houses in poorer quarters" as they put it, such as: Lochee, Overgate, Scouringburn, Hawkhill, Seagate, Hilltown, Foundry Lane. Concentrating on particular areas was one way of using time effectively, and it must have resulted in a great deal of stairhead discussion of their message, although it is difficult to imagine the inspectors were able to convey all they intended to in their short visits.

"Our object has chiefly been to teach the women in charge the virtues of cleanliness, thrift, decency, and the necessity of good ventilation." [BPP (1905) XXXIV Cd2514, p157.]

The problems which particularly concerned the Lady Health
Visitors were cleanliness and child care (figure 11:4). While the numbers of houses found dirty clearly bears a direct relationship to the number of houses visited, there would appear to have been little real variation between areas visited in the proportion of dirty houses the women found; on average less than a quarter of those visited. We are given a fairly graphic account of what was considered dirty.

"On examining the interior of the dwellings our attention was directed to the dirty walls, filthy bedding, and personal appearance of the mother. At times we found the kitchen clean and tidy, but in the room a different state of matters was presented. the walls were often covered with cobwebs and spittum, giving an offensive odour. The bed sometimes consisted of an old iron bedstead with the dirty tick or straw mattress hanging through it, with filthy rags for covering; and frequently there were two or three pails of filth standing in the room." [BPP (1905) XXIV Cd 2154, pp157-8]

As sanitary inspectors they did report actual nuisances, get rubbish removed and stairs cleaned. Regularly they found old women or girls of nine or ten who were left with three or four infants to care for, and it was a daily occurrence to find six or seven unattended children under the bed, having mistaken the women for School Board Officers. This made a big impact on the visitors' imagination amounting, in the eyes of these women with middle-class values, to a serious neglect.

"We often found the eldest, who is left in charge, playing in the passage, while the infant is sitting on the cold stair. The food of their infants, which often consists of soaked bread, is prepared by the mother in the morning before leaving for her work." [BPP (1905) XXXIV Cd2514, p158]

In fact, remembering the women visited only poorer areas, the statistics show the occasions on which children were found in charge were actually quite small in relation to the number of
Lady Health Visitors' Visits, 1903 – 7

Houses found dirty and children in charge

dirty

children in charge
calls made - below 3%, varying between four and 31 households a month (figure 11:4). (No indication is given of how the women chose to define children. At that time young people had to receive some education up to age 13, but they could be employed under the half-time system from 12. The statistics probably refer to the under 12s.)

Visits could not make much impact unless there was the threat of a revisit, and revisiting also gave the women an opportunity to assess their own educational effectiveness (figure 11:5). The health visitors seem to have revisited the homes they found to be dirty, although it is not clear what period of time they allowed to elapse between the initial visit and a revisit, or if there were homes they revisited for a third or fourth time. From November 1906 until the figures cease, the number of homes found dirty averaged 256.15 a month, and those revisited 255.92 a month. This suggests the visitors made an effort to revisit all of the dirty homes they had discovered once. Although the graph shows a high number of dirty homes in one month generally led to a high level of revisits in the next, the pattern is not a precise echo, perhaps indicating the period which elapsed between visits was not a precise one (figure 11:5). In most cases the inspectors discerned an improvement in conditions and only in a handful of cases was there no improvement at all (not graphed). Tenants were more likely to have moved house or to have been out, than to have been found making only a slight or no improvement to their living circumstances. Removals in the poorer areas among what is often
Lady Health Visitors' Visits 1906 - 7

Revisits and improvements

- Revisited
- Improved
- Removed
- Dirty
- Slight improvement

Figures for each month from Nov 1906 to Nov 1907.
termed by contemporaries as the "shifting population", were frequently stated as being high, and it seems unlikely the women's visits in themselves precipitated a change of address.

"In many cases the walls and ceilings of the dirty houses have been thoroughly cleansed, and the windows more frequently opened. During our visitation we have been struck with the apparent lack of knowledge the women have regarding the cooking of a wholesome diet and the way to feed their infants." [DCA TC minutes (1902-3) p487]

On the surface the inspectors seem to have been highly effective in eradicating dirty homes, except that the proportion improved is an unerring image of the houses revisited and the subjective assessment was carried out by the inspectors themselves. Between 67.2% and 80% of the homes they revisited were found to be improved; an almost constant three-quarters. A problem arises because there is little doubt some members of the town council did not approve of these women inspectors and their educative crusade. This is precisely why when the Lady Health Visitors requested publication of complementary social details in their reports at the end of 1907, not only was it turned down, but they had the public platform for their work - publication in the town council minutes - removed from them altogether. In the light of their need to justify their utility in the eyes of their political employers, the women inspectors' assessment of their own effectiveness must be taken with a pinch of salt.

From November 1906 to November 1907 the health visitors also recorded reasons for unsatisfactorily dirty homes, chiefly either indifference on the part of the mother, or intemperance on the part of either parent (figure 11:6). As the health visitors
Lady Health Visitors' Visits 1906 - 7

Reasons for dirty houses

- Indifference
- Intemperance
- Dirty

Nov 1906 Jan 1907 Mar 1907 May 1907 Jul 1907 Sep 1907 Nov 1907
proceeded they came to realise the need to point out the causes behind unhealthy living situations. Drunkeness and mothers who did not seem to care were relatively easy to identify and frequently households were castigated for both faults. Indifference accounted for 34.2% of dirty homes visited in this period and intemperance for 31.2%, although there is a greater variation between months, and thus target areas, in the number of homes where drink was perceived as a problem. It is not difficult to imagine why women often appeared indifferent - the visitors were after all interfering busybodies, and we know from oral evidence female textile workers could be rough with their tongues. Social commentators regarded drink as a great evil among the urban poor and many respectable presbyterians saw it as the chief cause of poverty in the first place. The popularity of the temperance movement and its increasing power base in church and local government, would have made it very odd if the visitors had not looked for signs of intemperance. (Dundee had strong supporters of prohibition and in 1922 Edwin Scrymgeour, previously a town councillor, defeated Winston Churchill and became the first Prohibition Party MP [Smout (1986) p147]). However the inspectors recognised a combination of factors were at work, including ill-health and basic poverty, but it was much more difficult to single these out at household level and note them in a register. They decided to choose family structure, income and rents to record beside their other observations, because their own observations and experience told them there was a link. In desiring to publish this link, the Lady Health Visitors found themselves without a voice.
Well-meaning women in voluntary agencies or religious organisations had always visited poor or sick people. In response to Dundee's high levels of infant mortality committees of Dundee ladies visited poor mothers in Lochee under the People's Journal newspaper Bounty for Babies' scheme. Visiting opened the eyes of better-off women to the circumstances of the poor. They soon recognised there had to be a means of providing food or there was little point in telling mothers to stay away from work while their babies were young.

"It was felt it that it was little short of a mockery to advise mothers to suckle their infants when they themselves were practically starving for want of food, and at a meeting of the Public Health Committee, held on 9th June [1909], Councillor Reid proposed that a Sub-Committee be appointed to consider the advisability of providing restaurants for nursing mothers on the lines of those in Temple Lane and Carnegie Street, so successfully carried on under the auspices of the Social Union." [BPP (1910) XL Cd5228, p113]

The restaurants for nursing mothers were set up along the lines of Madame Coullet's work in Paris, and aimed to encourage breast feeding, discourage married women's work and provide an educational centre amongst mothers [BPP (1910) XL Cd5228, p113]. Like most Dundee Social Union schemes, the initiative was taken by Mary Lily Walker and she was behind the professional but pragmatic approach to the problem.

"...before setting her scheme on foot she went to Paris where a similar enterprise had been in operation for some time, and made herself fully acquainted with the methods adopted there." [Paterson (1936) p21]

The first restaurant was opened by the social union in May 1906 at the Westport, and in order to obtain cheap or free breakfasts and dinners mothers had to nurse the baby themselves, could not
return to work and had to allow the baby to be weighed - a task undertaken by a nurse from Dundee Royal Infirmary and an act considered unlucky by many mothers. On average the infants made a weekly gain of five ounces. Breast feeding was cheap and popular, the real problems arose when mothers returned to work and feeding became "indiscriminate".

"The mother would hardly forego the 10s or 11s she could earn in the mills for the sake of the cost of a week's dinners (1s 3d), unless she realised that an early return to work would inflict injury on the baby." [BPP (1910) XL Cd5228, p114]

The basic family diet was one of tea and bread; the basic meal the restaurants provided was soup and pudding - not a meat-based main course. However, since the River Plate Meat Co. supplied restaurants gratis for three months, it can be assumed the broth was nourishingly meaty. The mothers had to come to the restaurants, otherwise it was felt the family would share the meal and the incentive to make themselves and baby tidy would be lost. The fund for free meals came under intense pressure in autumn 1908, described as a period of hardship, when free meals were reduced to cover the first three months of a baby's life. In September 1908 the town council public health committee approved a sub-committee's recommendation £250 be spent on providing two municipal restaurants independent of the two already existing [DCA TC minutes (1907-8) p1258]. By December 1909 there were a further two municipal restaurants in Lochee and Blackscroft, where a good dinner was provided for 2d - in some cases free.

The conception of women as wives and mothers foremost was reinforced by developments in formal education. Upper-class and
middle-class women made successful efforts to gain educational opportunities which were equal to their brothers. At the same time a body of opinion came to consider the Board School Curriculum, with its emphasis on intellectual attainment, or book learning, was inappropriate to children from lower orders [Dyhouse (1976) p16]. Delamont points out pioneering bluestockings could only overcome the distrust of the intellectual woman by continuing to glorify the Victorian domestic ideal, and by leaving the nuclear family unchallenged. In doing so they left less-able and working class women confined by domesticity, and contributed to the evolution of highly sex-specific instruction [Delamont (1978)]. In Scotland the Education Department's policy resulted in traditional academic courses for the better-off and more able, while raising the school leaving age in 1902 made it possible to develop a different secondary bit for working-class children [Paterson (1983) p206]. Supplementary courses beyond the elementary standard for girls meant housewifery and domestic economy, whilst boys followed commercial and industrial courses [Finn (1983) pp183-4]. Domestic economy had featured as a specific subject before 1903, but after that date cookery classes where a teacher demonstrated a dish to a class of sixty or more, were replaced by smaller groups and actual cooking [Educational News (1906) XXI pp399-400]. Menu planning, the chemistry of food, starching laundry and plain needlework all contributed to the education of good wives and little mothers. Mrs Lawrie, of Glasgow Education Authority, wrote a text on Housewifery which made certain running a home could be little other than a full-time job. Her list of
daily tasks included washing floors, turning mattresses and polishing brasses [Lawrie (c.1910) pp15-16]. Girls were to be left in little doubt how the home ought to be and ought to look.

"As the vast majority of them will one day have to cook, wash, clean a house, mind babies, mend clothes for themselves or for other people, let us lay hold of them at the only time we are sure of catching them, and teach them how to make broth, and how to darn stockings." [Bannatyne (1912) p55].

This task was also taken up by voluntary agencies. In Dundee in 1909 over 2000 young women attended domestic classes of some sort after working hours, run principally by the YWCA, church missions and the Curr organisation [DYB (1909) pp76-9].

Nationally, anxiety about domestic standards was stimulated by two parliamentary reports: the 1903 Royal Commission on Physical Training in Scotland [BPP (1903) XXX Cd1507, Cd1508], and the 1901 Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration [BPP (1901) XXXII Cd2175]. Witnesses to both argued the decline in national physique could be attributed to the ignorance of women, their disinclination towards domestic duties and low standards of child care. Much of the discussion was couched in the terminology of national efficiency and social progress. As Dyhouse has shown,

"...Social-Darwinistic ways of thinking lent a moral force to traditional arguments by emphasizing the role of women as 'guardians of the race', responsible for the quality of the generations of the future." [Dyhouse (1976) p55]

There were strong political pressures on women to physically restrict themselves to the domestic aspects of urban life in a patriarchal society. Not only does this mean married women, as wives and mothers, were expected to invest their efforts in
caring for husbands and children, but the paid employment of married women was a problem which needed to be eradicated to achieve social progress. In these terms Dundee was a degenerate city, with its economy dominated by a female workforce.

Yet the solutions Dundee adopted to the problems associated with its unusual employment structure often lay outside the home environment. Reformers pointed to the employment structure of the city and the basic poverty, and while they suggested it would be better if married women and children did not work, they did not seriously seek to prevent employers from taking on married women or petition them to pay substantially higher wages. It would have been very surprising if they had. Instead reformers sought to tackle individual behaviour with a range of outside help for women combining the role of housewife and mother with paid work. Initiatives by voluntary agencies were adopted by the local state, so that by 1914 Dundee Town Council by providing sterilised milk, health visitors and restaurants for nursing mothers, had adopted a strategy of supporting mothers in caring for future generations at the child's most vulnerable stage of life. At the same time changes outwith the city ensured child labour in the form of half-timers was phased out, and the education service was actively preparing young women for a life in the home. The glorious new age in which the sore of married women's employment would be eradicated had yet to come. In Dundee reformers and the municipality tackled the problems at a more practical level. In part this was motivated by a desire for human decency and in part it was a matter of civic pride. Dundee
could not be allowed to remain a socially sick city, as the increasing number of published statistics were seen to demonstrate. Dundee's civic leaders would not readily have admitted the city was an economic failure and they wanted to improve the city's social rating. Schemes which would reduce infant mortality and correct individual failings would get enough political support, those which sought to gather information linking social problems with the established economic structure failed to get going.
ii) Planning homes in the early-twentieth century

a) The background

As urban administrations broadened their purpose and accumulated power during the nineteenth-century, the local state came to be seen as a creative and moral agency. Social imperialists believed social reform would be achieved through the efficient use of resources and the opening of careers to talent [Chapter 3]. Town councils employed a greater number of professional officials and saw themselves as initiators having a role in shaping the future of their city. After 1900 councillors increasingly became planners and employed their own city engineers and architects to devise ideal places [Chapter 9].

The Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909, Part II empowered local authorities to prepare, with the Local Government Board's consent, town planning schemes in relation to land in the course of development [BPP Acts 9 Edw.7 c44]. This provided a means of regulating new suburban development, private and public. Early textbooks on planning used illustrations like this one, showing alternative approaches to estate development, by demonstrating the advantages of low-density layout under the 1909 Act (figure 11:7). The top plan shows 25 acres laid out according to Liverpool Corporation's Acts, with 41 houses per acre. The alternative garden suburb was 11 houses to the acre [Gaskell (1981) p21]. Despite the intention of the Act, town planning schemes did not spring up all over Scottish cities and towns. Dundee's town clerk William Blyth Martin, addressing the
Alternative approaches to estate development under the 1909 Act

Source: Gaskell (1981) p21 [from Culpin's 1914 Garden City text]
National Housing and Town Planning Council's Scottish advisory committee in 1911, described it as an English Act applied to Scotland and warned the Act had to be studied along with the Local Government Board for Scotland's regulations.

"The general result of this form of legislation is that the making of a town planning scheme is made as difficult as possible." [DCA TC/SF 172]

As far as housing was concerned there was little in the 1909 Act that was actually new. The first part was an amalgamation of the Housing of the Working Classes Acts of 1890-1903, covering acquisition of land, closing and demolition orders, and improvement schemes [Chapter 10]. However the 1909 Act is important because local authorities were being expected to take an active rôle in the shape and design of future urban environments, when throughout the nineteenth century their rôle had been demonstrably to control and contain urban development within defined limits, largely for health reasons. Placing the town planning scheme on the statute book gave the LGBS a great deal of power through its handbook of regulations and bureaucratic mechanism of implementation. Through these provisions the 1909 Act provided an unforseen structure for the housing construction programme which followed the First World War.

Planning legislation grew out of the concern about social conditions and the content of the 1909 Act was particularly influenced by garden city ideas. Amongst those who discussed "the social question" and who looked forward to a higher stage of social organisation in the early 1900s, was an obscure inventor, Ebeneezer Howard [Fishman (1977) pp24-30]. Howard began to devise
a model community in which social problems would be amenable to cooperative solutions. His Garden Cities of To-morrow, were to be small communities embedded in a decentralised society, which would have all the benefits of town and country without the vices [Fishman (1977) pp37-9]. The basic unit of this new society was to be the family in its own home with a garden. Howard added a new element to human rights - the right to space, by arguing for low density housing, tree-lined avenues and gardens, in order to create a healthier environment. The spatial reorganisation of society was Howard's fundamental demand [Fishman (1977) p45, p51].

The architect Raymond Unwin also argued well-planned physical conditions promoted social welfare [Day (1981) p157]. A Fabian socialist, Unwin was concerned to design homes for families. Unwin and his partner Barry Parker, who had been an arts and crafts textile designer, derived their vision from the mediaeval village, preferring organic unity and traditional architecture to calculated prettiness [Fishman (1977) pp66-8]. In 1903 they were chosen by the First Garden City Ltd to be the planners of Letchworth. Howard continued to preach the Garden City gospel, but Letchworth became a solid business venture backed by the paternalistic capitalists Rowntree and Lever. Overseer of the project was lawyer Ralph Neville, who moulded the Garden City movement into a planning movement, rather than a social reform movement. From these beginnings town planning emerged as a recognised profession [Hawtree (1981)].

"This new professional input into reform was accelerated by the involvement of the public"
authorities, which were in some cases able to set up technical offices with a greater quantity and continuity of workload than the private societies." [Read (1981) p75]

Both Unwin and Parker followed Patrick Geddes' formula of "survey, analysis and plan". Geddes put forward a socio-biological approach to social problems in the 1880s and '90s. He argued a complete social, cultural, historical and environmental survey was an essential prerequisite to town planning - diagnosis before treatment. He tested this in practice with civic surveys of Edinburgh in 1900 and Dunfermline in 1904 [Breheny & Batey (1981) pp111-2]. Geddes considered how plans ought to be made. The survey would be regional because city and region were interdependent (place, work and folk) - he put forward the city-region as an analytical unit [Batey & Breheny (1982)]. Geddes' ideas had wide exposure through lectures and exhibitions, and he published "Cities in Evolution: an introduction to the town planning movement and to the study of civics," in 1915.

Town planning was the backdrop to the creation of the homes themselves. Unwin regarded the chief purposes of a house as shelter, comfort and privacy - ideally a cottage and garden for every family. Recognising this ideal was beyond the reach of municipalities, in Cottage Plans and Common Sense he suggested Oxbridge-type quadrangles of small tenements, with trees and gardens at their heart [Unwin (1908) 1st 1902, Fabian Tract 109]. Harking back to pre-industrial cottages, Unwin designed dwellings which he felt fitted the lives of the occupants - a family life centred around the hearth (figure 11:8).
Figure 11:8
Raymond Unwin: Family life around the hearth, 1902

Source: R Unwin (1902) *Cottage Plans and Common Sense*
"In the vast majority of cases the housewife has neither time nor energy to keep more than one room in constant use,... This living-room then, will be the most thoroughly used and in all ways the chief room of the house; here the bulk of the domestic work will be done, meals will be prepared and eaten, and children will play, while the whole family will often spend long evenings there together." [Unwin (1908) p11]

Unwin argued against the tendency to ape the middle-class house, by sacrificing space for a needless parlour or a useless passage. He also suggested the proliferation of washhouses and sculleries was unnecessary. Quadrangles lent themselves to co-operative efforts, including laundries, play areas and reading rooms. It could be possible to lay on a hot water supply to each house from the centralised laundry and baths.

"...as experience taught the tenants the advantage of association in domestic work; the common-room to supply somewhat the place of the individual parlor, the bakehouse, and even the common kitchen would be matters only of time..." [Unwin (1908) p15.]

A co-operative home, Homesgarth, was built at the first garden city at Letchworth and opened in 1909. It had 16 houses in a quadrangle, with a common dining room and other facilities. Tenants' rents included heating and rates, and they all had shares in the management company. However, the experiment failed to make ordinary domestic life more economic and its no-child policy made it suitable only for single people and couples [Pearson (1985) p63]. Other developments such as Waterlow Court in Hampstead, 1909, were more like halls of residence or women's private clubs than a serious challenge to the middle-class ideal house.

Planning involved the creation of ideal homes within an ideal city, with particular consequences for domestic labour.
If, from a contemporary perspective, under ideal conditions women's work was to be isolated in the home, what was the ideal home to be? Women could logically claim the right to a central position in the debate. The idea of centralising domestic labour, for example, was not new. It was suggested in 1847 and a cooperative house for several families was described by Marie Morfit to the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science in 1876 [Pearson (1985) p62]. At an International Congress of Women held in London in 1899, chaired by the Countess of Aberdeen, papers were delivered on: People's Kitchens, Unitary Homes and the Unpaid Services of the Housewife [ICW (1900)]. The delegates wanted to check the waste of power and wealth in small households by providing cheap and superior meals in centralised dining rooms, by creating a new system based on cooperation in household labour and by recognising the social value of the housewife's work [ICW (1900) pp98, 104, 191]. However, communal living was to be more of a talking point than a practical proposition and Pearson suggests the economic benefits failed to outweigh the (primarily male) fear of loss of privacy [Pearson (1985) p64].

In the immediate post-war era there was recognition women who were fit to vote must also be fit to take part in certain aspects of policy-making in which they could be said to have expertise. The Ministry of Reconstruction sought advice from women by setting up a Women's Housing Sub-Committee which reported in 1918 and 1919 [BPP (1918) X Cd9166; BPP (1919) X Cd9232]. The Local Government Board for Scotland also appointed
a Women's House-Planning Committee in June 1918. This committee's report, although published by HMSO, is not listed and held along with other British Parliamentary Papers [Brit Lib Lending Div Wf1 7931].

The Ministry of Reconstruction's committee supported the removal of cooking from the living room and encouraged communal laundries [(1919) pp6-7]. But while regarding communal living, including communal cooking, with favour, they reported working-class women in general seemed against it [(1919) pp12,14]. Cooperative housekeeping sounded too much like queueing for soup at soup kitchens. The ladies also argued for the parlour, stating an extra room for entertaining visitors would also be useful as a quiet room for nursing the sick, where children could do homework and adults could withdraw from the hurly-burly. Putting baths in sculleries was condemned because complete privacy could not then be provided [(1918) p5].

The Ministry's report made no particular references to Scotland, perhaps because housing design north of the border was seen to be firmly in LGBS hands. President Robert Munro, the Scottish Secretary, made it clear the women appointed were to visit housing schemes chosen by the LGBS, namely those built to house munitions workers and by the Admiralty during the war, and "...to report their views from the housewife's standpoint on the planning and the arrangements of the houses." [BLLD Wf1 7931, p3]

They were invited to submit general recommendations on the planning and arrangements of houses for the working classes. It
is clear the women were not being invited to take part in a conceptual process - to work with planners to design new homes. In fact the LGBS concurrently ran an architects' competition to be judged in October and the women were deliberately asked to have their report in by the middle of September. The women were to work in isolation from the architects, and the women's report would be considered by the LGBS, who in turn might act on the women's comments when considering plans. The women, (and to some extent the architects), were being asked to help refine an existing standard. The houses visited were built to an LGBS pattern and the women were being asked to accept the basic assumptions already made about how people should live. Nor were they to involve themselves in the wider issues of funding and cost restraints. The women were to confine themselves to cupboard space, sculleries and cooking. It is to their credit they did not do so. The report's conclusion laments the restrictions placed on the committee, particularly the time available to them, and makes it clear they would have liked to consult women more widely and to have visited more schemes. However, at least two of the women appointed had a wide knowledge on housing matters. Helen L Kerr, appointed to chair the committee, was a leading member of Edinburgh Social Union, Edinburgh Charity Organisation Society and on the management board of Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. In 1912 she published The Path of Social Progress: a discussion of old and new ideas in social reform, which was based on lectures delivered in Edinburgh. At that time she took the view municipalities should not provide, own and manage house property, but should supervise
the operations of private bodies - philanthropic and profit-making - regulating in the public interest through byelaws.

"The mistake of this kind of municipal work is the endeavour to do the thing in the mass, whereas each family must be treated by itself; and each must learn for itself that, while landlords have awakened to a new sense of their duties and responsibilities, tenants on their side have very distinct duties and responsibilities as citizens which they must also realise and perform." [Kerr (1912) pp74-5]

As we will see, by the end of the war Helen Kerr believed the only way to make an impact on the housing problem was to build in the mass. However, her book demonstrates a wide knowledge of people's real social circumstances, and a warts and all understanding of the kinds of solutions being employed. Mrs Kerr was also a member of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Industrial Population in Scotland which reported in 1917 [BPP (1917-18) XIV Cd8731, p345]. In June 1914 Helen Kerr was one of those who took evidence from Maida Barbour, of Grey Lodge, Dundee, who superseded Mary Walker as superintendent of Dundee Social Union. Miss C M Barbour was a member of Mrs Kerr's committee. The list also includes a nurse and four others who may also have had wider contact with the housing problems people faced than the visits the committee undertook exposed them to.

The women were not just interested in looking at the houses, but also in talking to the tenants.

"During our visits we made a point of interviewing as many of the tenants as possible, and of discussing with them the merits and demerits of the various types from the tenant's point of view, particularly regarding adequacy of accommodation and arrangement of rooms." [BLLD Wf1 7931, pp3-4]

Generally the committee welcomed the improved standard of houses
provided for munitions and military workers, although they urged better welfare provision on the estates, suggesting a crèche or clinic, social centres and play-spaces. As expected of them, they suggested minor improvements for good home management: the size of washtubs; types of cooker (gas in sculleries, ranges in living rooms); position of shelves. However the report also stated the houses lacked essentials throughout. There were objections to bathrooms opening from the scullery, and the tiny size of the bath and the room. Restrictions on floor space came in for most of the criticism. The houses were adequate for couples with up to two children, but the rooms were cramped for anything more than this. None of the houses could provide accommodation for large families with five to eight children. Comfort in the bedrooms had been sacrificed for the sake of external appearances. They added the desire among tenants for a parlour was universal and described this sitting room for best as essential.

Overall the criticisms made by the Women's House-Planning Committee suggest the standard set by the LGBS during the war was not high enough. It must be remembered the women were not asked to visit any private-sector rented housing, even the best sort, and were not able to make comparisons between them. By measuring them against an imaginary ideal, they sub-consciously measured them against middle-class standards - the kinds of houses they themselves lived in. The scope of their remit confined the women to commenting on internal shortcomings without any consideration of the social and financial context, or any opportunity to make a
positive contribution by being involved in designing the new homes. As Helen Kerr put it in a reservation attached to the report:

"In signing the foregoing Report I desire to explain that while I am in general agreement with the recommendations contained therein, the Report in its present form does not adequately express my views, as I consider that the immediate provision of a large number of healthy houses of various sizes is the matter of the first importance in any housing policy, and consequently I deprecate anything in the nature of elaborate fittings which will tend to restrict the supply of houses. I have, however, signed the Report in order that the Committee might present a unanimous finding within the time desired by the Board." [BLLD Wf1 7931, p14]

The report appeared in a form the LGBS wanted partly because the women appointed did not want to betray their sex by appearing to be unable produce a report, and partly because a career-minded civil servant, Miss E M McMichael, was determined it should [BLLD Wf1 7931, p13]. However, the LGBS must have been embarrassed not only by the eminent Mrs Kerr's reservation, but also by the addendum five other members of the seven-strong committee signed.

"...before any real Housing Reform can be assured, it is imperative that the State should accept the principle that a proper standard of housing for the people is a national charge and a national concern. If this is not assured we feel that all efforts towards improving the housing conditions of the people, rural and urban alike, will go for very little." [BLLD Wf1 7931, p14]

These women were clearly unhappy about having their views on the future housing of the population confined to that of a housewife in the scullery. Given that this report is particularly difficult to trace, it seems the LGBS was also unhappy about disseminating the report widely.

These two Government initiated reports by groups of women
did not put forward specific housing designs. However, Margaret Irwin, of the Scottish Council for Women's Trades, wrote a pamphlet on Industrial Housing from the Housewife's point of view, published in 1918 which included designs. It is a forward-looking and pragmatic document, which includes a 20 page appendix of experiments in industrial housing in Scotland, demonstrating a wide knowledge of current thinking. Irwin argued small houses were appropriate for particular social groups, particularly single working women, who she predicted would have increased economic importance in the future, and elderly couples [Irwin (1918) p14]. She saw a future for the Scottish tenement, if in a different form, and was against a multiplicity of small cramped rooms, preferring a few large airy ones, sufficient in number for decency. Initially she designed a one-room apartment, for the use of one or two single women, in which curtains were substituted for partition walls, to create the illusion of three apartments. The design was enlarged to form a two-room dwelling with bathroom, which was built as a model and exhibited in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee [Irwin (1918) p49]. It featured a large number of built-in fitments and was reminiscent of Unwin's hearth-orientated house (figure 11:9). It was also little different from existing tenement flats, except that it was sliced from the block and placed on the ground. But it was Irwin's vision of the context within which working-class homes could be set that made her proposals radical. Unlike supporters of the Garden City movement, she did not think well-being rested on having a cabbage patch and a rose garden. Instead of privatised garden space, she envisaged open air spaces and playgrounds in
Margaret Irwin: Model artisan dwelling for the Scottish Cooperative Wholesale Society, 1918

Source: Irwin M H (1918) Industrial Housing from the Housewife's point of view Scottish Council for Women's Trades pamphlet.
the care of the municipality and borrowing from Octavia Hill, she thought female caretakers were necessary to teach people to live decently.

"Great discrimination ought to be exercised in selecting the right person, who must possess firmness, tact, judgement, and sympathy. If the right type of person is secured, she should be endowed with a certain amount of authority over the tenants, and her own house in its construction, fittings and standard of order and cleanliness, should serve as an object lesson to them." [Irwin (1918) p21]

While Irwin supported communal kitchens, and the provision of day nurseries, she accepted opinion, not least among those groups for whom centralised facilities were intended, was divided. Some also argued these would encourage idleness, but Irwin pointed out the middle-class home was not thought to be imperilled because servants undertook household tasks and could not understand why family life was thought to rest on a purely culinary basis [Irwin (1918) pp18, 24].

"It is a little difficult to see how the sanctity of the home should be inextricably bound up with the preparation of a frequently badly cooked and non-nutritious meal." [Irwin (1918) p24]

However, while applauding the communal or National Kitchen, fixed and travelling, she said the concept was so new opinion as to its utility and popularity must be speculative. Margaret Irwin acknowledged the debt the "New School of Women Housing Reformers", to which she belonged, owed to their experiences in wartime and the movement to politically enfranchise women. Here was an independent, educated single woman who looked forward to the post-war world as one in which women would have a wider role to play outside the home. Here was someone who wanted to relieve women of unnecessary drudgery through the provision of municipal
and communal services and by a better designed home environment.
Yet, for married women it is a citizenship which is to be bound
up with their rôle as good mothers and good housewives. Married
women were to be freed from drudgery to devote more attention to
bringing up their children, but not to be freed to take up formal
employment.

"I cannot state too emphatically that no plea is being
put forward here for the home being relegated to a
secondary place in the woman's life. The home and the
family should always have the first claim on her
attention..." [Irwin (1918) p26]

The Local Government Board for Scotland (LGBS) became the
central authority to execute the housing acts in Scotland
[Chapter 10]. Local authorities could borrow and build, with
LGBS consent, approved housing schemes. The LGBS was a kind of
central clearing house for town planning schemes. LGBS officials
saw the legislation was implemented and worked directly both with
the planners employed by local authorities and the elected
members of the councils. As a Scottish arm of the Westminster-
based Government, the president of the LGBS (the Scottish
Secretary) could set up committees, such as the Women's House-
Planning Committee, to give advice. To the LGBS's credit, they
disseminated information widely in the form of booklets and memos
on the form local authority housing was to take. One example,
from 1912, clearly discriminated against the traditional tenement
dwelling.

"The types of houses that may perhaps be regarded as
suitable in ordinary circumstances for buildings on new
sites are (1) cottages whether semi-detached or in
rows, and (2) two-storey houses, whether semi-detached
or in rows, with separate dwellings on each floor."
[SRO, DD6/653, LGBS housing memo Nov, 1912]
Houses were to be of substantial construction, and to be capable of being maintained for habitation for 60 years with moderate repair - the period of loan repayment. The houses were to be designed to meet the reasonable needs of the working classes - local authorities were intended to leave the better paid to private enterprise [Chapter 10]. But, providing for the poor was always to conflict with the other main objective of the 1909 Act, to raise housing standards. Council-built homes were expected to be a model for working classes which might be built by private enterprise. These high standards together with the guidelines on density, house size and materials, made certain the houses the LGBS were prepared to approve would be above the standards of the best tenement flats being built in Scottish cities for the most skilled wage-earners. A semi-detached cottage home with a large garden within an urban area would justifiably have been a complete fantasy to the vast majority of Dundee's city dwellers. While this eventual target was encouraged by the memo, the minimum laid down was a kitchen (main living room), a bedroom, a scullery, a larder press (built-in cupboard), a water closet and a coal cellar. The entrance to the wc was to be inside the house, and where practical was to include a bath. This was at a time when many of Dundee's tenement dwellers in "good houses" shared lavatories in the stairwells with neighbours, (although house proprietors were adding individualwcs to their blocks because these houses were in demand and could command a higher rent). The new LGBS approved flats, to be built in blocks no more than two stories high, were recommended to be entered from a balcony and could not form long rows. The LGBS had the
power to revoke the building byelaws and regulations in local Acts which had forced builders to construct certain forms of tenement. The LGBS controlled the purse strings and therefore had the power to determine the shape, style and layout of future local authority housing - the living space.

Under section 67 of the 1909 Act government loans could also be issued from the Public Works Loans Board to finance housing schemes built by private companies. These houses also had to conform to a "standard of comfort in conformity with modern ideas" [SRO, DD6/653]. In a letter from the assistant secretary of the LGBS to the Secretary of State for Scotland, McKinnon Wood, in the summer of 1914, the minima for these houses was laid down as: at least two rooms in addition to a kitchen and scullery, no bed recess and a wc with bath where feasible [SRO, DD6/653, letter no 21588/27, June 5, 1914]. The minima for municipal and private schemes were intended to be different.

"Local Authorities may be permitted to erect a smaller house in respect that (1) they exercise a reliable supervision over its occupancy and (2) in certain instances they have to house the very poorest." [SRO, DD6/653, letter no 103812, Aug 31, 1914]

The room and kitchen house was a standard which was not to be applied to private schemes, with which the Office of Works were concerned. The high standards demanded by the LGBS probably account for the fact private companies did not rush to borrow government funds, and for the optimistic few who did apply it was to be a sobering and bureaucratic experience [Chapter 10].

In August 1917 the War Cabinet took the decision to give
central government funds to local authorities prepared to carry out a programme of housing for the working classes, approved by the Local Government Board, at the end of the war [BPP (1918) XI Cd9020, p1] [Chapter 10]. The LGBS was instrumental in laying down guidelines on the shape these post-war houses were to take.

In December 1917 an architect's competition was launched to design housing and layout plans for the working classes. The committee of selection appointed by the LGBS included three architects chosen from a list submitted by the Institute of Scottish Architects, and two people with special experience in town planning, Prof SD Adshead and James Thomson [SRO, DD6/661, LGBS]. The competition was organised into two sections for urban areas, the first for two storey three bedrooomed cottages in pairs or blocks of up to eight, or two-storey two/three bedrooomed flats in four house blocks, and secondly for three storey flatted tenement blocks of up to 12 two or three bedrooomed houses. Plans for the latter were to include washhouses, drying greens and children's playgrounds, and each stair was to serve no more than two homes on each floor. Internally all of these houses were to include a living room and a scullery, a larder, coal store, cupboards, hot and cold water and a fixed bath and wc - the bath to be accommodated in a separate apartment accessed from a passage or landing. Some of the cottages were to include a downstairs parlour. The density per acre for cottages was to be ten, flats 14, tenement houses 24. Effectively the LGBS was again laying down the criteria which were to be interpreted as minimum standards. Again small two/three apartment houses were to be discouraged and basic amenities were to be removed from
The most significant report regarding house design was commissioned by the Local Government Board on Building Construction produced in 1918, more commonly referred to as the Tudor-Walters Report [BPP (1918) VII Cd9191]. Unwin, as chief planning inspector for the Local Government Board, was on this committee, and Dundee's James Thomson was amongst those who gave evidence. Tudor Walters was the precursor of the 1919 Local Government Board (England and Wales) Housing Manual - the design guide and pattern book for state housing between the wars. The models for the designs in the Tudor-Walters Report were the munitions villages and estates brought about by the pressure for good housing for key skilled workers in wartime.

"It can be argued the munitions villages... were the immediate forebears of the local authority cottage estate... and that the Tudor-Walters Report merely put into formal, published form what had already become accepted wisdom." [Darnley (1979) p15]

While in favour of self-contained two storey cottages with parlours, bathrooms and a minimum of three bedrooms, the report said different standards would have to apply in Scotland, allowing for fewer rooms and reformed tenement flats.

"The house with two bedrooms is such an improvement on the accommodation which is available for a very large number of the inhabitants of Scotland at the present time, that it would represent in Scotland an advance in conditions more marked than would be represented by the three-bedroomed cottage in England." [BPP (1918) VII Cd9191, p26.]

Alternative model plans for Scotland had been published in 1917, and were prepared by architect John Wilson. He produced both cottage and double-flatted designs [BPP (1917) XIV Cd8760]. This
semi-detached cottage design with three bedrooms upstairs, and a bathroom owed a great deal to previous utopian experiments in England (figure 11:10). The interior plan bears a striking resemblance to cottages built for Rowntree's workers at Earswick (figure 11:11). This design for double-flatted houses in shortened tenement blocks, was similar to those planned by Thomson for the Logie scheme in Dundee. However, Wilson while confining dirty domestic work to the scullery, placed the cooking range in the living room, on the grounds Scottish housewives would not keep two fires burning [BPP (1917) XIV Cd8760, p4]. Bathrooms, while separated, led off the scullery. Parlours, because of the need for economy, could be dispensed with. These plans by John Wilson provided the LGBS with a blueprint for the post-First World War local authority house.
Figure 11:10

John Wilson: Model homes 1917, elevation, plans

Source: BPP (1917) XIV Cd 8760.
Figure 11:11

Rowntree: Cottages at Earswick, York

Source: Gaskell (1981).

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b) The Dundee scene

What sort of homes were Dundee's people living in? In 1911 the vast majority lived in two rooms or less, although the universally condemned one-room house, or single-end, was less common than in Glasgow (figure 11:12). Only 3% of all households were owner-occupied in 1911, with even the better-off choosing to rent flats in tenement blocks in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Many of the most affluent chose to live out of town altogether in seaside resorts like Broughty Ferry or Carnoustie within easy reach of the golf links, but connected to the congested city by rail. However, there were fashionable areas within the city boundary, with concentrations of elegant villas (chapter 6, owner-occupation). In 1881, a modest villa in Douglas Terrace, just such a fashionable area, was owned and occupied by a jute-merchant's widow, three other adults, three young children, a domestic servant and a nurse [Census 1881]. Internally it demonstrates the highly sophisticated division of space within upper-middle-class homes (figure 11:13). Eating is formally separated from the two sitting rooms; the servants are largely confined to one wing of the house; child care is separated from the activities of the rest of the household, and there is a further general division between day and night. Externally the house is an isolated property with garden boundaries clearly defined and its architectural appearance, although solid and functional, clearly states the occupants have wealth and are of importance. The arrangement echoes large country houses of the period.
Figure 11:12

Percentage living in one and two rooms, Scottish cities 1911

Aberdeen
Dundee
Glasgow
Edinburgh

% two rooms
% one room

Source: Census 1911.
Villa, Douglas Terrace, Dundee
1873

Source: Dundee Police Commissioners' Plans [NMRS, AND/621].
Contrasting the villa with two different tenements it becomes obvious space was used in a very different way by the majority of Dundee's citizens. At Peddie Street, blocks of eight flats were inhabited in 1881 by small businessmen, clerks, mill overseers, shop assistants and artisans [Census 1881]. A small minority of households included boarders, but few contained more than four or five people, and one couple were able to afford a kitchen girl. At 5 Laurence Street, a fourteen-flatted tenement had households ranging from a single spinster, to families of eight or nine people (figure 11:14). Most were juteweavers or millworkers; many of the women had paid occupations, most households included children, some had lodgers and three households were headed by women. At the rear the Laurence Street houses opened onto platforms or pletties, connected by a stairwell, which incorporated a wc for each level. Specific areas did have specialised uses, but tenement living involved using space in a communal way. The inhabitants shared entrances and stairs with their neighbours. They looked out of their windows onto shared wash-houses and drying greens. They even went to the same lavatory. With so many people quite literally living on top of each other and having to share basic facilities it would have been impossible not to have known your neighbours very well. Communal space needed communal care. Co-operative systems existed, with rotas to use the wash-houses, to wash the stairs and no doubt much stairhead gossip about the failings of individual tenants - the respectability of particular addresses could well have related to the effectiveness of such systems, some of them enforced by the factor. Indeed stair-washing rotas,
Laurence Street tenements, Dundee 1873
(elevation to Milnbank Road)

Source: Dundee Police Commissioners' Plans [NMRS, AND/628]
because they were a sanitary measure, could be upheld by law - although cases were rare.

"One householder for refusing to sweep and wash the stairs leading to her house in turn was tried in the Police Court, and fined 1/- or 12 hours in prison."
[DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) p591]

Within these tenement homes space was at an obvious premium and rooms had to have several functions (figure 11:15). In Peddie Street, the middle-class division between sitting and eating is repeated, although in common with most working-class homes there is a bed recess in the kitchen. At Laurence Street all of the flats were room and kitchen, the only specific area being the entrance hall, allowing callers to be met without inviting them into the living areas. There could be no separation between daytime activities and sleeping. Space within the home had to be multi-purpose and be adapted to every purpose, although some activities, such as clothes washing, personal bathing and going to the lavatory, could be devolved to specialised places outside the house. Most things which happened within the home could be witnessed by all - a curtain across a bed-recess afforded scant privacy. Day-to-day activities were unseparated and there was no room to spare for domestic crises. Children suffered illnesses in the same room as their parents cooked and ate. Babies were brought into the world in the kitchen, and there was nowhere to shut the dead away.

Middle-class visitors to small houses regularly condemned the lack of amenity and privacy, especially where sanitation was concerned.
Figure 11: Tenement plans, Dundee

**Peddie Street, 1867**

- Pantry
- Kitchen
- Bedroom
- WC
- Staircase
- Passage
- Closet
- Parlour
- Bed Closet
- Dining room

**Laurence Street: 1873**

- Lobby
- Kitchen
- Room
- Grate

*Sketch plans - not to scale*

Source: Dundee Police Commissioners' Plans [NMRS AND/120 and AND/628]
"...the pail stands in a corner of the living room or behind the door, is used by adults and children, and the contents afterwards thrown into a common ashpit in the adjoining yard. ...Indeed it must surprise one that the women brought up in these tenement houses are not more degraded than they are." [Wilson DYB (1901) p211.]

The communality of tenement life was a complete anathema to upper and middle-class social reformers whose own lives were constrained by the rigid moral code of respectability. Mona Wilson, who made this pointed moral observation about female degradation, made a career out of being a social reformer. A friend of Mary Lily Walker, she was highly influential within Dundee Social Union, but she had no known family connection with the Dundee area. It is presumed Miss Walker invited her to the city, and later she became superintendent of the social union's enquiry, training assistants to undertake it. Mona Wilson had experience in social enquiry work in London and "elsewhere". From the Social Union Report it is clear she was familiar with Charles Booth's work in London, Rowntree's in York and the work of the Citizens' Association in Manchester. Mona Wilson saw her role as superintendent as not to prescribe remedies themselves, but to describe "certain social evils as a disgrace and national peril."

"...it is better that the larger reforms required should spring from a public enlightened by data gathered from many enquiries prosecuted along similar lines." [DSU Report (1905) preface, pvii]

Mona Wilson's essay on the social condition of mill and factory workers, published in the Dundee Year Book of 1901, homed in on deplorable dwellings and physical degeneracy.

"The writer, who has lived for several years in English manufacturing towns, has seen nothing across the border to approach the disgusting and saddening spectacles
constantly obtruding themselves on him [sic] here. Drunk men are bad enough, but a helpless, besotted woman or young girl is infinitely worse; and ...so common as to cause little comment." [Wilson (1901) DYB p204]

Ordinary Dundonians' social habits not only offended, "degeneracy" also threatened middle-class values and put the nation at peril. Mona Wilson was a seasoned campaigner describing social evils for a purpose. Together she and Mary Lily Walker, both trained professionals, hoped the Social Union Report would put pressure on the municipality and philanthropists, public and private enterprise. It was a two-pronged attack against housing conditions and married women's work. There was nothing particularly new about attacks on the poor state of the city's housing and its connection with social evil - deputations complained of the same thing to the town council's sanitary committee in September 1871.

"...Mr Morison, on behalf of the deputations, pointed out the filthy and disgraceful state of various parts of town, which, in his view, and after personal examination, were hotbeds of disease and pauperism." [DCA TC Minutes (Police Board Minutes), 1870-72, p350]

The municipality did undertake periodic crusades against the worst properties [Chapter 10]. What had changed by the first decade of the twentieth century was the scope of local government and the national ideological context within which social reformers operated [Chapter 3]. People like Mona Wilson and Mary Lily Walker, Medical Officer of Health Charles Templeman and James Thomson brought ideas in from outside. They saw themselves as qualified experts and collected information in a way which made the facts they collected difficult to challenge. By 1907 concern about poor housing had led to brick and mortar solutions,
and two Dundee councillors were sent as delegates to an
International Housing Congress. Combating degeneracy and social
evil had become a matter of reorganising living space.

What did women themselves envisage? It is impossible to
know, but the question was posed at the time. In 1911 a Dundee
popular weekly, the People's Journal, ran a competition on its
women's page, Aunt Kate's Gossip, titled "If I were an architect"
[PJ, Sept 16, 1911]. Readers were asked to submit suggestions for
the ideal home for the working man's wife and family. The second
prize winner, a woman from Lochee, submitted the most revealing
entry. Her ideal home was a three-roomed tenement flat with a
scullery. The bed recess in the best room was to be curtained
off to give the appearance of a sitting-room. The bedroom would
have a dainty sanitary sink - suitable for a lodger. She wanted
a bath in her scullery so she could do her washing in it. But
most of all she'd like a pulley fixed to a window, with ropes to
the ground.

"We could fix ash pan, slop pail, and mats on this,
lower to the ground, run downstairs empty-handed (what
a relief), empty pan and pail, shake mats, fix the
rope, pull and, hurrah!, half our labour over."
[PJ Oct 14, 1911]

It is surprising Mrs Davidson did not consider her ideal home
might have been a roomy cottage built entirely at ground level.
Her perception of the possibilities, even under ideal conditions,
was limited by her knowledge that everyone in Dundee lived in a
tenement and a three-roomed flat was a good house.

In Dundee women's organisations did seek to be directly
involved in the provision of council homes in the post-war period, and their demands demonstrate wide discussion of what women wanted. Deputations from the Women's Citizens' Association, led by Miss Kynock, and the Scottish Council for Women's Trades, led by Mrs JT Thomson, presented lists of recommendations to the housing and town planning committee in March 1919 [DCA TC minutes (1918-19), p423-4]. Miss Kynoch was also joint-secretary of the Union of Women Workers and a member of the War Relief Committee; these committees, with representatives for each ward, must have brought groups of better-off women together to face the city's social problems in a way they had not done before. Miss Kynoch's father was probably Dr Campbell Kynoch, professor of obstetrics [D Dir (1918-19)]. The evidence suggests Miss Kynoch, despite her union work, was a middle-class blue-stocking rather than a working-class women's leader. Few well-known Dundee women, whatever their background, merited column inches on their death. One exception is Agnes Husband, a Murraygate dressmaker, who was vice-president of the Women's Citizens' Association in 1918 [D Dir (1918-19)]. This extraordinary businesswoman stood as a socialist candidate for school board elections in the 1890s and was involved in the 1905 Social Union report. Her achievements as a parish councillor and education authority member were recognised officially in March 1926 when she was given the freedom of the city.

"Miss Husband was not only a pioneer in asserting the claims of women and their competence to participate in the administration of public affairs; she was a pioneer in the work of introducing ever more humane methods in the treatment of the poor and in the care and education of children." [DPL Obituary books II, May 1929]

Like Miss Kynoch, another prominent member of the WCA, Agnes 655
Mitchell, served on the War Relief Committee. She became a parish councillor in 1914 - the only administrative public position women could then seek to be elected to. With naturally political animals like Agnes Husband and Agnes Mitchell in the WCA it is not surprising they headed their list of recommendations with the demand three women be co-opted onto the housing committee [DCA TC Minutes (1918-19) p423]. Advocating rents set at one-eighth of weekly incomes, cheap compulsory purchase of land and tenant inspections, it was not a programme constructed by the faint-hearted. When it came to space, they wanted the committee to recognise one-roomed houses with a scullery were a necessity in Dundee for single women, but argued four-roomed houses were needed for families - in order to separate sleeping from eating, parents from children and boys from girls. Mrs JT Thomson, representing the Scottish Council of Women Trades, was much more concerned with details: the provision of cupboards, the ratio of tenants to washhouses, public cleansing of stairs and the position of coal bunkers and slot gas meters. The SCWT demands were those of people with experience of living in tenements. The effectiveness of the two delegations must have been eroded by counter-suggestions. Both wanted playgrounds, baths and central heating, but the SCWT wanted a minimum two-apartment house and they made contrary proposals on items like permanent fitments. Some members listened less than politely - by March 1919 the housing committee was not in a position to take on board new suggestions unless they fitted in with LGBS requirements. While Mr Barnes, the housing convenor, is credited with thanking the ladies and says the suggestions are carefully
noted, the Dundee Advertiser reported the women were given a critical reception. Cllr Robertson, city treasurer, wanted to know if they had been paying any attention to what the council had been doing.

"The plans of their Engineer [James Thomson] gave effect to a vast number of the suggestions they had heard. It was cauld kail het again." [DPL DA March 4, 1919]

In Dundee’s popular press, the women’s suggestions and the fact they suggested them, were held up to ridicule in the Bellman’s Budget column.

"The woman has to live in the house, they argued, but in these modern days they might have added 'when she’s not at the pictures.' Their ideal, however, came as near to pressing a button and the house would clean itself as one could well imagine.

... There is only one thing in the way of all the domestic reforms so far - we don’t have the houses to apply them to." [DPL PJ March 3, 1919]

Dundee’s town planner James Thomson is described in his obituary as a native of Edinburgh [DPL Obituary Book II, Nov 11, 1927]. At the time of the city’s 1871 Improvement Act he was on the staff of the burgh surveyor and the Act is described as being "under his personal supervision". This seems unlikely since Thomson was only 19 and it is more plausible the young James was under personal supervision himself, although he may well have worked on the Act. He later became city architect and in 1906, aged 54, also took on the post of city engineer. At some point in his career he held the position of President of the Institute of Municipal and County Engineers. He was also one of two Institute of Scottish Architecture nominees on a 1917-18 selection committee to choose designs for post-war houses for the
working classes [SRO, DD6/661]. He is known to have travelled extensively to exhibitions and conferences on town planning. There is no evidence Dundee Town Council actively sought to employ a town planner in the early twentieth century, but rather that they happened to have one, and he chose to exploit the opportunities available to him to put forward ideas on town planning. As we will see, Thomson clearly applied garden city ideas in creating a vision of a new Dundee. As a surveyor cum engineer cum architect, he was in a position to shape a new rôle for himself as a planner, and his changing title was to some extent a belated response to his changing function and interests. In 1922 the town council separated the offices of architect and engineer, and Thomson became city architect and housing director - a reflection of his part in creating local authority housing in Dundee, but a role he had probably been fulfilling since Armistice 1918. In May 1924, in his early seventies, he retired from public office, although retained in a consultant capacity. James Thomson died of heart failure in November 1927, in the corridors of the Caird Hall, a building he had seen through from its initial conception.

"He had the outlook of an idealist and a visionary, and planned not only for the present but for the future." [DPL Obituary Book II, Nov 11, 1927]

James Thomson devoted his working life to Dundee and, as one of the first professional town planners, his ideas shaped the whole development of the city at the beginning of the twentieth century.

In reality most planners could not work on a clean sheet.
but had to start with what was already there. Thomson's vision of a new Dundee was firmly based on the old one. For example, although his Scheme of Central Improvement (1910-12) was considered radical and designed to meet "modern requirements," the plan clearly follows the existing street pattern and intended to incorporate existing buildings, while opening up and improving congested areas [DCA, TC Minutes 1911-12 passim: Appendix]. Thomson's plans for the docks were similarly intended to rationalise the use of space to reduce waste and improve the appearance of an economically run-down area. The apparent extravagance of such plans was attacked at the time, but they were not flights of fancy soaring heavenwards in the face of economic realities. When it came to designing ideal homes for ordinary people in Dundee, the rents they could realistically pay and the need to provide as many better-quality homes for them as possible came into Thomson's equation. As a town official he was working for the town council's Housing and Town Planning Committee - a pragmatic group of men who favoured practical solutions; men who started from where they were at and did not seek Utopia. But Thomson was also in a position to exploit the possibilities offered to him by the planning powers invested in the LGBS. His abilities as an administrator meant he was able to exploit his relationship with the LGBS to guide his plans for Logie from paper to the ground [Chapter 10].

An enlightened public servant like Thomson needed the support of councillors if his ideas were to be translated into reality. Nor could councillors put expensive schemes into action
without the support of their electorate. In 1905 Dundee Social Union published its report, bringing housing conditions to the fore of local political debate. It was against the background of a maturing Labour movement and rising social concern that Dundee's town councillors formed a special housing committee [chapter 9]. Thomson's relationship with the Rev Walter Walsh, an enthusiastic slum crusader and Dundee's first housing convenor was important, because Walsh's character and fervour made sure the planning gospel was spread [chapters 9 & 10]. Walsh was also instrumental in getting the council to accept the need for a specialist housing committee and the need to acquire expertise in housing matters. Walsh and Thomson had to tread a path between what would be seen as a legitimate response to real social problems and the promotion of Utopian solutions which could immediately be dismissed as impractical. One of the best ways of doing so was to involve other councillors not known as housing reformers. Walsh and Bailie Mitchell spent part of August 1907 touring housing schemes in England [see page 537]. Their report dismissed municipal cottages as expensive, irrelevant to Dundee and not substantial enough to suit the Scottish people [DCA TC Minutes (1906-7) p1203]. The objections were not only financial - cottage-type dwellings were not part of the Scottish urban tradition, and it seems Dundee's councillors preferred to stick with that tradition.

The changing political face of Dundee Town Council and
growing real concern about housing issues allowed Thomson to travel extensively in Britain and on the continent, at the corporation's expense, visiting model schemes and attending conferences. He was sometimes accompanied by Walsh, who put forward the view in 1908:

"Building in detail, without sufficient perspective and foresight, will give us little other than a fortuitous jumble of stone and lime. The remedy is the preparation of a Town Plan, such as those now being worked out by German Municipalities, and as those to be seen in actual existence in our own country..."

[TC/SF/200, DCA, Housing Report 1908.]

When the 1909 Act received the Royal Assent, Thomson was in a position to try to put it into practice straight away. In 1910 he prepared his first town planning scheme, which was submitted to the LGBS in January 1911. It covered three areas in the city, two areas scheduled for protection which the council expected to be developed by private enterprise (the suburban area to Broughty Ferry and Dundee Law) and an improvement scheme for the centre of the city [BPP (1912-13) XXXVII Cd6192, plxii-lxiv]. These schemes were part of James Thomson's ideal Dundee, a larger plan which involved city centre slum clearance, massive investment in civic facilities and the creation of landscaped areas [BPP (1912-13) XXXVII Cd6192, plxiv].

Thomson first produced plans of model tenements for Dundee in 1909, with homes of one and two rooms with modern internal conveniences. In the great debate of cottage versus tenement, it was considered that a system of cottage dwellings for workers was an impossibility in Dundee.

"...unless some drastic unforseen sociological change takes place enabling and inducing our working men to
pay higher rents than they do at present in Dundee, it seems futile to discuss the subject so far as we in Dundee are concerned." [TC Minutes 1910-11, p796]

In his 1917 proposals Thomson envisaged three house-types:

A, for one or two single women, or a widow with no family;

B, for a married couple with a small family;

C, for a married couple with a large family (figure 11:16).

These were to be in short-length tenement blocks of two storeys, 16 houses to the acre. Dirty domestic work was removed from the living room, although curiously the larder remained. The main room would be used for sleeping in. There were to be no outhouses, but instead a centralised unit of washhouses and baths which would pipe hot water to taps and radiators in every home. Significantly a day nursery was incorporated, recognising the special needs of Dundee's working mothers. Overall the influence of Unwin is obvious.

When, in 1917, the Government announced its intention to support local authority house-building as part of post-war reconstruction, Thomson dusted off his earlier plans, which had been approved in outline in 1911, and presented them as the basis for municipal housing schemes (figure 11:17). Each of the three schemes was to be:

i) close to a centre of industry;

ii) in an open and healthy locality;

iii) close to a tramway route;

iv) close to a public park.

For example Logie, which was originally planned as a series of Unwin and Parker style culs-de-sac (figure 11:18). At each stage
Figure 11: 16

James Thomson: Suggested types of houses, 1917

Source: DCA, (1916-17) TC Minutes, appendix.
Figure 11:17

James Thomson: Housing schemes for Dundee Town Council, 1917

Source: DCA (1916-17) TC Minutes, appendix.
Figure 11:18

James Thomson: Logie Scheme, 1917

Source: DCA, (1916-17) TC Minutes, appendix.
LGBS approval was required - a bureaucratic process which tended to slow progress down. The town clerk of Dundee found it "almost amusing" that the LGBS had offered to explain any specific point of difficulty regarding its complex regulations on town planning [TC/SF/128, City Archives].

c) The outcome – Logie

In May 1918, an LGBS circular emphasised the "exceptional circumstances" of the "national emergency", promised finance, making clear municipal homes were to be around 12 houses to the acre of at least three apartments. However, this circular did not commend itself in its entirety to local authorities, and the LGBS complained authorities desired to see the terms embodied in an Act of Parliament before proceeding [BPP (1920) XXI Cmd824] (chapter 10). Nonetheless, a week after Armistice Dundee Town Council's housing and town planning committee resolved to put the 1909 Act in force by submitting housing schemes at Logie (20.2 acres) and Stirling Park (10.9 acres) to the LGBS for approval. At 16 houses to the acre, the schemes were to provide just under 500 new tenement homes.

Despite the financial uncertainty Dundee went ahead with the Logie scheme, claiming it to be the first in Scotland to be proceeded with by a local authority in partnership with the state. Thomson was overseer in chief of the scheme, and although the houses were drawn up by five firms of local architects, it is clear they were built to the exact specifications Thomson, the
controlling architect, and the LGBS hammered out. Logie was a physical symbol. An ideal in three dimensions and a stark contrast to the city's tenements. The houses were in double-flatted blocks of four dwellings. Architecturally they owed more to an English rural tradition, than a Scottish urban one. The blocks swept round in open-ended curved avenues, such as Ashbank Road, Lime Street and Sycamore Avenue, instead of closed culs-de-sac.

Unlike Wilson's plans, at Logie cooking was removed from the main family room, and the bathroom was entirely independent of the scullery (figure 11:19). The LGBS forced the decentralisation of communal baths, but the central heating unit was retained, supplying taps and radiators with hot water. Each house was equipped in a way which would allow clothes washing to be done at home, but a small-scale laundry with electric machines was installed at the north-east corner of the site. The day nursery was abandoned, along with small homes for single mothers. Instead of a number of spatially central facilities, which could act as gathering and mixing points for the community, as far as possible households in the community were to be self-contained. Technological limitations meant heavy laundry could still be done outside the home, but this solitary service was located on the edge of the scheme and the new technology used, with its service wash, robbed the laundry of the communal social experience characteristic of the steamies.
James Thomson: Four-apartment designs, 1917 and 1920

DUNDEE: 4-APARTMENT DESIGNS

Source: DCA (1916-17) TC Minutes, appendix: GD/X73/1.

668
The rents set for the new houses at Logie priced the majority jute-mill based workforce out of the running. A three-apartment house with bathroom (bedroom, living room and scullery-cum-kitchen), cost £16 18s a year, or 6s 6d a week plus 2s a week for hot water and heating in May 1920. The four-apartment (two bedroom) houses were £22 2s a year, 8s 6d a week, plus 2s 6d. Despite the relatively high rents, ten applications were made for every house at Logie. In its selection of tenants, the council confirmed the underlying intention of its "real homes with happy firesides" policy to provide for family households with a male breadwinner. It chose to give preferential treatment to men who had served in the forces and who were married [GD/X73/1, p26].

It was with some pride that the souvenir brochure stated:

"The aim of the Town Council has been to provide a type of house which a working man might well aspire to occupy... Common stairs and common passages form no part of the scheme's anatomy, a separate entrance being provided for every dwelling." [GD/X73/1, p16, my emphasis]

Logie was all about defining and delimiting space, and physically embodies a whole series of ideas about how society worked, who did what and who went where. In a city where women's earnings were often central to a family's survival and where children were often cared for by others, no provision was to be made which might make working mothers' lives easier. In a city where tenement dwellers shared an entry and staircase and had their own neighbourhood support network to deal with the crises of birth, illness and death, tenants were to be isolated within their community by means of a front door abutting to the elements and a garden gate. Despite the reality of social life in Dundee,
the houses built were intended for families with a male breadwinner and a wife at home.

Conclusion

Although a scheme like Logie could not by any means solve the housing problems of Dundee, it must be recognised as a landmark. The Royal Commission estimated the shortfall in houses in 1911 at 235,990. Between 1919 and the outbreak of the Second World War 328,815 houses had been built in Scotland, 264,519 with state assistance and 221,369 of them by local authorities [Whyte (1942) pp4-5]. Two-thirds of all houses built in Scotland between the wars were built by local councils. Just over 73% of all new houses built in Dundee in the period 1919-39 were for the local authority [Pocock in Jones (1968) p304]. Logie was the beginning of a realistic solution to the magnitude of the housing problem, in addition to making a significant contribution to raising expectations of housing standards.

In the first part of this chapter the relationship between women and the home in Dundee was explored and it was found many Dundee women's expected domestic role had been transformed by the financial necessity for a high proportion of them to be involved in the formal labour force. Working women were not only making a contribution to a family wage, but were often the chief breadwinners. Welfare agencies focussed on what they interpreted as a consequential failure to be good mothers, but also recognised it resulted in part from implementing a strategy for
family survival and in part from poor housing conditions. In a political climate in which Government was very reluctant to interfere with the labour market (except to make limited provision for unemployment), the idea of somehow forcing Dundee's jute-based economy to give up its reliance on female labour was never really considered, yet there were many who were ready to brand it a "social evil". If female labour could not realistically be eradicated, could the conflict between working and being a mother identified by welfare workers be reconciled by providing services to meet their needs? To some extent this did happen. Restaurants for nursing mothers encouraged working women to stay out of the mills in the period immediately following childbirth and to breastfeed their babies at the stage in infancy during which deaths were highest. Although of poor quality, there were créches and babyminders. Clean milk depots provided a nutritious, if not cheap, alternative to the indiscriminate feeding medical officials identified as a major cause of the gastric upsets which killed many babies. Campaigns to educate women how to be better wives and mothers took different forms, from widespread visiting by officials of working-class homes to training in domestic skills for schoolgirls.

Garden City pioneers aimed to combat degeneracy by spatially re-organising society. Women working was perceived as a social evil contributing to social degeneracy. Voluntary and municipal agencies providing these specialist services did so indirectly in response to the needs of working women. By doing so they did not intend to make it easier for mothers to go out to work, and were
sensitive to such accusations made against the restaurants and the clean milk depot. Underlying all their worthy efforts was the clear assumption wives and mothers belonged in the home caring for their husbands and children.

In Dundee's circumstances planners could have chosen to organise domestic living space differently to meet the needs of working-class families where mothers worked. Unwin was among those who suggested rents could be kept low through the use of centralised, communal facilities which would also have given working mothers considerable support in their domestic role. James Thomson had started to do this by planning for a crèche, communal laundry, centralised baths. It would have been possible to argue for this sort of solution in a city with Dundee's employment structure. The LGBS had said plans could be altered to meet specific social circumstances. Dundee's councillors regarded English cottage-style housing as unattainable and undesirable, preferring to stick with a tenement tradition. They might have been open to the sort of housing Margaret Irwin suggested, high-amenity blocks with centralised facilities and surrounded by communal open space rather than cottage gardens.

In reality the LGBS was not flexible when it came to meeting localised needs. Its role in setting a house design pattern and laying down minimum standards is the key to the form living space took in the first state-built houses. The LGBS took its cue from English Garden City experiments, placing the emphasis on low-rise development and English rural architecture. As a Government
department it could not afford to rock the boat by approving plans which implied any radical departure from the consensus view that a woman's place was in the home. Discouraging small two-apartment dwellings and insisting on the private provision of amenities within the home certainly raised standards, but it also reduced the likelihood of being able to provide houses to meet the reasonable needs of Scotland's urban population at rents they could afford. The pace of implementation was dictated by the course of the war and the goals of national politicians. The provision of municipal housing was no longer a local initiative but a national strategy. Local authorities who wanted to build houses with state finance had little choice but to conform to the LGBS's set pattern. The alternative was to get knotted in red tape.

Women did attempt to be - and were - consulted about house design. Much of the serious discussion took place among small groups of highly motivated women on the fringe of the formal political stage. But it was also a topic of popular interest, which a downmarket weekly newspaper could put on its women's page rubbing shoulders with the knitting patterns and tips on stain removal. However, at a local political level in Dundee women's views were either not taken seriously or at worst ridiculed. They failed to wield influence as experts on the home through a combination of political naivety and poor timing. Meanwhile those women appointed to the LGBS's special house-planning committee had effectively been shunted aside from the central arena of policy-making - where they felt they had something to
say - to making pronouncements as housewives. Yet, women with sufficient social standing to be appointed to a Government advisory committee would hardly have had much experience of housework! Little wonder they resented their brief and measured the munitions estates against middle-class standards. Apart from Margaret Irwin, a successful publicist, Scottish women were unable to get more than token recognition for their views on the environment a male-dominated society expected them to confine themselves to.

A lot of the debate on space within homes centred around two issues. Whether or not to provide a parlour and where cooking should take place. Having a room to set aside as best, where visitors could be received away from mainstream family activity, was a clear indication of the social standing of the household. It aped the more sophisticated division of space in upper-class homes. Even in three-roomed tenement flats tenants with social aspirations would refer to one of the bedrooms as the parlour, screening the box bed with curtains. The need for economy in the face of post-war financial pressures and political expediency, meant the parlour was dispensed with. But serious consideration of a best room not in general family use, is a distinct indication of a deliberate move towards privatising living space - a desire to break down activities within the home and confine them to specific areas. Unwin's hearth-orientated house, where family activity was concentrated in one main room, smacked too much of the multi-functional rooms in tenement homes which social reformers regarded as encouraging moral depravity. The LGBS
demanded high-amenity homes where laundering clothes, personal bathing and child care could take place unseen and privately. Unwin envisaged the main living room as the place where both cooking and eating took place. It was essentially impractical to put a coal-fired range in any other room of small houses, and the stove heated the room as well as providing an oven and hotplate. However, domestic technology had moved on and the introduction of municipal gas supplies and compact gas cookers on a wide scale meant architects could choose to remove cooking to the scullery. This separated cooking from eating, taking a large part of a housewife's daily activity and placing it on the spatial margins of family life. The woman's place was in the home, but within her house the housewife's work was to be largely confined to a small backroom previously only associated with dirty household tasks.

The blueprints for living space in the early twentieth century reemphasised the importance of family-based households where the wife and mother was responsible for domestic labour and child care. Government agencies were instrumental in structuring the built environment in a way which made the home the place of work for women in a city where female labour was an essential part of the formal economy.
III: CONCLUSION
Chapter 12: Conclusion

Housing was central to how people lived out their lives. Houses should not be regarded as inorganic things of stone, brick or mortar, because they were homes not simple shelters. The form the houses took, their means of finance and allocation all embodied the dominant ideology of society and reflected the organisation of society. Differences existed between people in their means of consuming all of the necessities of life, but the indispensable nature of a place to live and the durable nature of housing, made the way in which housing was consumed of particular importance to the consumers themselves. This thesis has been unashamedly concerned with the way most people were housed in Dundee, an unfashionable Scottish city whose past has been largely neglected by academics. It has been an overwhelmingly empirical investigation because of the paucity of good material which has been written on the city. As much as anything else this chapter signposts where further work on Dundee in particular could be profitable. Dundonians themselves have become more interested in their city's past during the 1980s, and it is a pity such interest has been rewarded more by artists and dramatists than the community of academic historians. Good empirical work is needed if Dundee's past is to be rescued from myth and anecdote.

The focus has been deliberately shifted away from an analysis of economic investment patterns or an evaluation of housing standards, in order to look at the organisation of the
consumption of housing and the experiences and actions of residents. In his introduction to *House and Home in the Victorian City*, M J Daunton pointed out the history of working-class housing in Britain had not been neglected, but had suffered from an inadequacy of approach.

"The bulk of the literature has considered policy rather than actuality; it has concentrated on the pathological rather than the typical; and it has paid more attention to the minority philanthropic activity than it has to the private sector which accommodated the vast majority of the population." [Daunton (1983) p1]

The result, he said, was that very little was known about the manner in which most people were housed. The reasons why are not hard to understand. Policy was the product of intellectual argument; its evolution can be followed in the records of government debates, the columns of newspaper print, in pamphlets and journals. The debate on what shape housing policy should take goes on. Uncovering what actually happened for most people in the past can be a far more tedious affair. The ordinary or typical was accepted and rarely described or discussed. Sources such as the Census and valuation rolls are bulky all-encompassing records of every single home and household, which require a different set of skills in order to analyse them. The activities of philanthropic agencies are intrinsically interesting, and the manuscripts they left behind are usually both detailed and fascinating; by comparison local authority departments left behind cumbersome, bureaucratic and deadpan volumes, and the private sector had no need to leave a record at all. However policy shaped actuality, definitions of "disease" reflected what was considered "healthy" and minority benevolent groups set out
to change attitudes and opinions. The pursuit of a history based on actuality without policy, the typical without the pathological, majority activities without those of minorities, is to actively create the body of a past without adding the features with which we can recognise it.

If this is a thesis about how most people were housed in Dundee between 1868 and 1919, why begin with the process of urbanisation in the nineteenth century? At different geographical scales the patterns, and the processes which formed those patterns, look different. A changing landscape created by social activity, in which an individual city is an integral part.

"...space is created by social activity and that as such it has no separate existence apart from that activity. Space is seen not merely as a 'reflection' or 'effect' of social process, but an integral part of a social whole, of a totality which is at once social and economic and political." [Doherty (1983) p240]

The relatively simple overview of the pattern of population movement in Scotland during the nineteenth century reveals the face of what Weber described in 1899 as "a remarkable social phenomenon" - the urbanisation of a nation. The concentration of population varied enormously between regions, with the Scottish central belt becoming heavily urbanised at the expense of the Borders, the Highlands and the far north. There were distinct regional patterns and within those regions four major cities grew, each with distinct things going on. The urban places, which became the home of the majority of Scots, developed physical transport links across space, but were also linked by less obvious interconnections forming urban systems across space - regions increasingly bound to an urban growth pole. A
landscape in which the economic expansion of an individual place was influenced by events in other towns and cities. The competitive positions of individual urban places were also geared to the fortunes of particular functions. Dundee specialised more than most, and the former linen-market town and whaling port tied its fortunes to jute. Jute became Dundee's engine of economic growth. One of the reasons Dundee has been relatively ignored by economic historians is that they have chosen to concentrate on what have been seen as the leading industrial sectors of the Scottish economy - the heavy industries of shipbuilding and engineering linked to the development of steel and coal [eg Campbell (1980) and (1985)]. These industries were concentrated in the west of Scotland. The structural changes which took place have been revealed in a more meaningful and less spatially skewed fashion by Lee, who chose instead to examine employment patterns [Lee (1979)]. He has demonstrated that although textiles lost ground throughout the nineteenth century, it remained a very important industry for the Scottish economy as a whole, and that Tayside was heavily dependent on textiles. Dundee needs to be seen not only as the capital of jute, but as the capital of a textile region where around three-quarters of the factory workforce at the end of the century worked with flax, hemp or jute. The spatial pattern of industrial employment was also reflected in the earnings of the factory workers. The rewards of capitalism were grossly uneven, socially and spatially. Textile industries were associated with low real wages and the concentration of them in Tayside meant the regional economy was unable to generate the kind of consumer demand which could
sustain growth. Moreover in jute in particular, the predominance of female and child labour meant households in Dundee had to plan their budgets around very low amounts of regular income. The prominent economic rôle of women certainly differentiates Dundee from other Scottish cities. These economic and social features associated with Dundee and its hinterland had an enormous importance for the way in which most people in Dundee could consume housing. The other side of this coin was the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few. Despite being a low-wage economy, after 1870 Dundee also became the investment trust capital of Scotland, a channel for the millions invested in projects overseas like cattle ranching in Texas and railways in Oregon. The mansions known locally as "jute palaces" might be more accurately described as the investment trust palaces, if only that rolled more easily off the tongue.

The argument for placing Dundee and its regional hinterland within a Scottish context is ultimately a nationalist one. Scotland in the nineteenth century was much more than an "interesting region". As a nation it shared the twin experiences of industrialisation and urbanisation with the rest of Britain. However, the outcome for Scottish people could not be a typically British experience while the nation's institutions were so distinct from those of England, Wales and Ireland - the church, the banks, the legal system and the education system. In Scotland a kind of devolved centralisation emerged in response to the need to strike a balance between social tradition and legal reality. The formation of a distinct institution of government,
the Local Government Board for Scotland (forerunner of the Scottish Office), had great importance for Scottish housing policy. The rising challenge from middle and working classes for greater electoral control of the state, the pattern of immigration, the influence of the churches on social behaviour, the notion of respectability, the growth of football as a spectator sport, drunkeness, party political support, philanthropy - all of these had a Scottish dimension.

Comparative studies should not try to pose the question why Scotland was not like England when it comes to housing and in particular tenure. In England most working-class households rented from private landlords on weekly terms and their homes were likely to be part of two-storey terraced houses, although there were other regionally distinctive house forms. The tenements of Scottish cities, with their flats let yearly and managed by factors, were similar to those found throughout Europe [Daunton (1983)]. The question which should perhaps be posed is why a different system evolved in urban England. However, comparative studies have rarely been made and it is not difficult to see why. Marian Bowley, charged with considering a uniform system of housing subsidies throughout Great Britain wrote:

"...I was startled by the striking differences between housing conditions north and south of the Border. ...To mix up discussion of Scottish questions with those of England and Wales would not only have necessitated cumbersome statistical explanations, but would have obscured the differences in the problems themselves." [Bowley (1945) pvii]

The historical legacy of different institutions of law, government and education, perhaps combined with a modicum of
national pride on the part of the Scots, has structured the way in which research into housing issues has been undertaken and researchers have to a greater or lesser extent allowed their horizons to be confined.

The numerical concentration of people was perceived as a threat to social elements such as the family, morality, social conduct and religious belief. Throughout the nineteenth century what influential groups in society perceived as socially problematic changed. Local institutions, in particular local government, came to terms with the problems of urbanisation in a painful and sorry way. Yet it was to the institutions of local government that public pressure made its demands known. Much of the infrastructure necessary for large numbers of people to live together in a confined spatial zone, only came about in response to the very real threat to health the living conditions posed. Disease and poverty had specifically urban dimensions, and housing formed a central issue in discussions of the nature of disease and poverty. Civic enthusiasm and enterprise was erratic. The reliance on private Acts in the major urban centres in Scotland throughout the second half of the nineteenth century meant there was no clear central Scottish line for urban centres to toe and action came in fits and starts. Much depended on the dedication of pioneering individuals, both among elected representatives and paid civic officials. The institutions of government changed in response to meet these needs and by 1900 a specifically Scottish centralised institution provided a guiding hand.
In Dundee around 1911, the sample year, the way in which housing was consumed was important to the consumer's self-identity and to an individual's perceived status in society. For most housing was generally rented from landlords rather than bought. Even among social groups who clearly could afford to purchase homes outright, renting was common. In such a situation social distinctions existed in relation to how often rent was paid and whether or not it was paid in advance. The length of the lease, the tenant's security of tenure, who was responsible for decoration and repairs, were all negotiable within a framework defined by law and common custom. Housing tenure could have an important influence on social relations on the economic, social or political attitudes and aspirations, and actions and behaviour of those who live in a particular tenure. The practice of short-letting was widespread in Dundee in 1911, involving approximately one third of the housing stock (13,193 tenancies or 32.29%), casting doubt on the view expressed by Englander that about 80% of all working-class housing in Scotland was let yearly in the period prior to the First World War [Englander (1981) p10]. The proportion of houses let yearly in Dundee in 1911 was about 58%. While owner-occupiers constituted a small proportion of Dundee's citizens in 1911, as the twentieth century progressed it became an increasingly popular mode of tenure. Only 3.06% of all houses in Dundee were owner-occupied in 1911. The spatial concentration of owner-occupation reflected the greater desirability of certain areas: a pattern of desirability which once set persisted throughout the twentieth century. Conversely
houses which could not be let were undesirable. These may have been in bad areas, of an unpopular type, or substandard, but equally could have been overpriced or otherwise beyond the means of prospective tenants. "Good houses" may not have been let because a house factor was not approached by sufficiently respectable tenants. The non-consumption of certain houses may have reflected aspects of self-identity and social status.

A few of Dundee's house proprietors owned large numbers of houses in 1911. The top eight owned eight per cent of all the houses available for rent, amounting to over 3,000 houses or £20,663 valuation. This is not as impressive as it seems, since the top two factors together managed over 4,500 houses. In these terms house factors had far greater opportunities to influence the housing market than individual proprietors. A mixture of trusts, businessmen, house factors and companies were among the top proprietors who owned more than 150 houses. Although the portrait of 1911 is a discrete time-slice, the image revealed reflects accumulated investment decisions over a long period of time, stretching back at least to the 1880s. This study supports Elliott and McCrone's conclusion that housing in the nineteenth century was created largely as a form of investment income for what they have chosen to term a local "petite bourgeoisie" - merchants, retailers, craftsmen and small businessmen. A group seeking to provide a modest, steady income for themselves or for their families [Elliott and McCrone (1980)]. In Dundee in 1911, 90.41% of all potential tenancies were owned by small investors, and trusts set up by small investors to provide for dependents.
especially wives and daughters who for reasons of social status could not be expected to actively earn a living, in stark contrast to their working-class sisters in the same city. These small investors looked for security rather than capital gains and a high rate of return. The real owners of these properties were the bondholders, but the creditors who provided most of the capital are hidden from view. The high proportion of capital which came from bondholders ensured there was a strong relationship between interest rates and the profitability of rented housing, but it was one factor among many, of which trends in real wages were of fundamental importance. Working-class housing was very dependent on local money and sensitive to changes in the local economic climate. Housing in Dundee, like Glasgow and Edinburgh, was owned by small investors from the middle class, predominately shopkeepers and small businessmen. The amounts of property they owned were quite small. In Dundee in 1911 only 8.05% of all proprietors owned more than 200 tenancies, the largest owner 1.05% of house property by annual value, and the largest five owners 3.95% by annual value. Property investment companies - where investors bought shares in a company which invested in housing - were not particularly significant owning only 3.29% of all tenancies. Employers, or other companies, were not involved in providing housing, except on a very small and limited scale. For large-scale local capital in Dundee there were alternative investment opportunities in the jute industry itself and through overseas investment trusts. There may be sociological reasons why small investors were unable or unwilling to choose these other routes to invest, but given
the number of family trusts which owned house property professionals, such as solicitors, probably had a guiding hand in directing legacies towards "safe" investment in housing. However, this pattern of housing ownership may have differed between the towns surrounding a large city and in the city itself. There are broad similarities between the house ownership pattern in the largest Scottish cities at the beginning of the twentieth century, but in smaller satellite urban centres the pattern may have been completely different, especially where the local economy was dominated by one or two large employers who built housing to attract or retain skilled workers. The valuation rolls offer the possibility of exploring this avenue and perhaps offering some insight into the relationships between urban centres as well as the differences between them.

Landlords could not just sit back and wait for the interest on their investment. There were responsibilities connected with owning houses and collecting rents. The house agent, in return for a percentage, took over these managerial responsibilities, distancing the landlord from his or her tenants. The professional agent, or house factor, was much more significant in Scottish cities than in English ones. The factor collected rents, undertook repairs and handled rates and insurance, decided rent levels, when to allow arrears and when to evict. The town council addressed any matters concerning the house properties, including the rates demand, to the agent. In 1907, it was claimed in evidence to Hunter that 80% of working class house property in Glasgow was in the hands of house factors. In Dundee
in 1911 the figure lay somewhere between 58% and 66%, depending on which definition of professional house management is preferred. The impression from contemporary evidence is that a far larger percentage than this was professionally factored, but the reality was that individual factors had far more clout and influence than any individual proprietor. The top factor managed 2,596 tenancies or 6.24% of the house property by annual value in Dundee in 1911; the five largest owners had only 3.95%. The five largest factors controlled 23.63% of tenancies. In the local landlords' and house factors' association, it was the large factors who effectively ran the show. Members of the association aimed to standardise procedures for dealing with tenants in order to "raise" tenant behaviour. Factors wanted to encourage tenants to pay their rent in full on time, take their turn to wash the stairs and not to abuse communal amenities or fixed fittings. The principal instrument devised by the factors to achieve better standards was the factor's line introduced in Dundee in the early 1880s. Without a piece of paper in the recognised format, prospective tenants found it difficult to get a decent house. It was a form of discrimination which would have operated successfully when the demand for better houses exceeded the supply of them. It probably also served to drive less reputable tenants together into areas dominated by low-value property already in poor condition. However factors were probably forced to accept some tenants without lines to remain competitive. The factors emerge as a potentially powerful group interposed between landlord and tenant. The factor was an adjudicator in the process of allocating houses, weighing the empty houses on the
firm's books against the quality of the prospective tenant in the context of the rented market. An applicant could not become a yearly tenant unless the factor decided the requirements of respectability and payment would be fulfilled. The factor acted as a sort of filter through which tenants were channelled into particular houses and associated tenure forms. However, a house agent had to compete with other agents and with proprietors who chose to manage their own properties. A factor who turned too many prospective tenants away, would have had higher levels of empties than competitors and lower rates of return, leading eventually to clients taking their business to more efficient managers. The factors, in the years between the end of the nineteenth century and the outbreak of the First World War, were able to agree uniform strategies on the compounding of rent and rates and rent rises, and fully expected their decisions to carry the day. The association was able to strive for rents to the limits the local housing market could bear. The association, led by the house agents, did not expect to negotiate these matters with tenants. In any case, tenants had no similar organisation through which they might have negotiated.

Different groups in Dundee had different housing opportunities, renting according to their income, the regularity of employment and their family situation. In a city where many households relied on a female breadwinner, the likelihood of casual work at the docks, the pennies earned by a 12-year-old half-timer in the mills and the prospect of pregnancy, were all factors which could limit and frustrate housing aspirations.
These circumstances could determine whether a household would aim to take a short-let house or a yearly one, whether it would have one, two or three rooms, and in which area of town it would be—perhaps even the particular street. These housing opportunities were limited by the factors who could refuse to let certain grades of housing to prospective tenants. Dundee factors giving evidence to the Guthrie Committee in 1907, not only described the class of people living in weekly houses as very different from the class who lived in yearly houses, but revealed that they operated the letting system in a manner which meant tenants were scarcely able to choose, because a "man of good class" could not get a short let [BPP (1907/08) Cd3792 XLVII 1 pp208]. One of the functions of tenure, as far as the factors were concerned, was to keep social groups apart.

The level of evictions is an obvious way of assessing tension between landlord and tenant, but official statistics on their own have proved a limited way of examining the impact of evictions on a community. The figures for the Sheriff's Small Debt Courts show a different pattern in Dundee than in other Scottish cities—a downward trend 1885-1909, when sequestrations were reaching a peak in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen. The assumption is that landlords and factors in Dundee adopted different strategies, including the threat of sequestration, but resorting to the Sheriff's court was not the favoured solution to tackle all but the most recalcitrant of tenants. If court action was taken, landlords and factors appear to have used the burgh or magistrates' court. Only further research can reveal the
strategies landlords and factors used in different situations at different times, but it seems eviction was not a major issue among Dundee's tenants. It is possible this resulted from the lack of apolitical tenants' organisations, through which tenants could express grievances, rather than a lack of a sense of injustice on the part of tenants.

The rent strikes of 1915 point to the failure of the 1911 Act to alleviate the grievances identified in the government-led inquiry of 1907-8, but also owe much to the economic price of war. The threat of a rent strike in Dundee in 1912 shows a high level of tension existed between landlord and tenant in the pre-war period. The events of 1912 and 1915 were directly linked to the 1911 Act, which had left landlords, factors and tenants dissatisfied. The Government's decision to freeze rents and mortgage interest at pre-war levels prevented the escalation of the rent strike issue, but failed to deal with the underlying problems. The Government was forced to adjust the mechanisms by which houses were let in 1911, and as a result the way in which rates were collected. The Scottish Secretary and the Lord Advocate were mediators, attempting to balance tenants' grievances against the powerful voice of the landlords and factors, but ultimately the 1911 Act failed to create stability. Dundee Town Council appears to have had no clear policy line on letting, but by virtue of the need to gather its own taxes, was not a disinterested party. During the 1912 rents crisis, Dundee's Lord Provost hosted his mediating conference as much because of the need to secure the council's income, as out of
sympathy for the tenants' predicament. The changes the council made to the distribution of the burden of the rates between occupier and owner in 1912-14, suggest the council believed landlords should take on a greater responsibility for paying for local services. However, by doing so the council unwittingly squeezed profit margins further at a time when margins on house property were becoming increasingly slim.

Private landlordism underwent a crisis during the Edwardian years and in the post-war era two new structures of provision emerged, based on state housing and owner occupation [Kemp (1982)]. The production of housing for the private rented market effectively ceased at the onset of war in 1914, and the rent controls introduced in 1915 nailed that coffin lid down. Between the two world wars, 73% of all new houses completed in Dundee were built by the local authority, and from 1919 to 1966 82% of all new housing was council or state financed [Pocock in Jones (1968) p304]. Mid-twentieth century Dundee, with 30,000 council houses, could fairly be dubbed a socialist city. However, in the inter-war years people acquired housing in the context of already existing social and spatial structures. The private rented market in Dundee did not mysteriously evaporate and still accounted for a significant proportion of housing in the city in 1961 (figure 12:1). In fact Pocock's figures which put owner-occupation at only 16% in Dundee in 1961, compared to an average of 23% throughout Scotland, suggest Dundee's low-wage economy persisted and it failed to generate the wealth required to fuel expansion of owner-occupation in the city throughout the 1930s.
Figure 12:1

Dwellings by tenure, Dundee and Scotland 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure</th>
<th>Dundee</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented: local authority</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented: private landlord</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other forms</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DCD Pocock in Jones (1968), p305.
1940s and 1950s. (It should be noted that by this time the city boundaries incorporated the wealthy suburb of Broughty Ferry.) This invites stark comparison with Edinburgh where the private housing market revived in the 1920s and 1930s - in the first half of the 1930s about £2 million a year was spent on new housing in Edinburgh, nearly two-thirds of it provided by private enterprise [Butt (1983) pp255-6]. The private rented sector at 38% in Dundee in 1961 may have been far larger than in other Scottish cities - a feature which deserves further investigation. By mid-century it was a rapidly deteriorating stock of flatted dwellings. The lack of investment, which was a symptom of the unprofitability of private rented housing, ensured the social problems associated with low-amenity dwellings persisted in Dundee throughout the first half of the twentieth century. In 1951 the Census revealed that 43% of households in Dundee shared a water closet and 58% had no fixed bath [Butt (1983) p254]. The fate of the private rented market in twentieth century Dundee deserves to be properly examined and the pattern of housing consumption fully exposed. The council-built estates of twentieth century Dundee formed spatially discrete areas where officials had the power to limit and enable access to housing, by virtue of their discretion to say who may rent what and where. As this research has shown, this form of housing management pre-dated local authority housing. It is also true that the private house factor did not disappear, but the way in which tenants were selected and the management of tenement flats must have changed as the profitability of such housing diminished in the 1920s and 1930s. Factoring firms became better known as quantity surveyors.
and valuers; and house management became a less significant part of their work.

The aim in mapping tenure-based distinctions has not been to analyse patterns in Dundee in 1911 in the context of ecological and social area theory, but simply to describe a pattern of residential segregation as revealed by tenure. Dundee had a multi-dimensional social and spatial structure in 1911, and there are dangers in overinterpreting the meaning of the spatial reality of tenure distinctions. In an area like Lochee the cultural distinction associated with being of Irish extraction probably was of far greater importance in terms of residential segregation than any other element of social status. The point has been to show that tenure, as an element of social status, had a spatial reality, not whether that spatial reality conforms in any way to models based on the structure of North American cities, or to measure "modernity" or even to define the specific boundaries of status areas [cf Gordon (1979)]. What is clear is that in Dundee in 1911 the minority group of owner-occupiers were more distinctly residentially segregated than any other tenure group, and this segregation worked at a larger scale than for the majority of those who worked in the city. For those whose income and profession gave them access to commuting by rail (and perhaps the motor car), the choice of residence was not by any means confined to the city. A study which was to take owner-occupation as its central focus would therefore have to spread its net far wider to incorporate satellite settlements, and in consequence deal with the records of a number of different local authorities.
It would be interesting to find out if, as owner-occupation grew in popularity during the twentieth century, the pattern of segregation increased in scale. At the other end of the social ladder the poor lived wherever they could get accommodation, and for those with transient lifestyles and nowhere else to go, the common lodging houses provided a bed for the night. These lodging houses were concentrated in the city centre and were effectively residentially segregated at the discretion of the local authority, thanks to a long list of regulations. The variables which have been mapped for Dundee in 1911 do have a spatial dimension, but it is a complex one which indicates these patterns were produced by a combination of factors in which tenure distinctions played a part, but they may have been overridden by other considerations. Areas of owner-occupation were mixed with privately rented houses, but there were fewer unlet, short-let or low-value houses in these areas. The number of unlet tenancies was more than double the number of owner-occupied houses (6.5%), but spatially the pattern is more confused. There were streets with broadly sympathetic levels of empties, but sometimes the spatial concentration was at a different scale with particular tenement blocks being affected rather than whole streets. There are a number of examples where high levels of unlet houses went hand-in-hand with short lets and low values, but also glaring exceptions. The reasons for the individual peculiarities of a street were found to be quite specific, and it seems the particular characteristics of a street may have often outweighed any processes which operated as a result of differences in tenure, making the patterns difficult to
unravel. The fact life assurance was refused in Dundee around the turn of the century purely on the basis of address points to the fact that areal differentiation could be more clearly fixed in the popular imagination than it has been possible to discern on the ground. Dundee "representatives" of the working class who were called before the Guthrie Committee in 1907 were quite clear in their minds that they would not desire short-let tenancies if they were available. Some of them also expressed prejudiced views about the character and worth of short-let tenants. Dundee factors also described the class of people living in weekly houses as very different from the class who lived in yearly houses, and their management practices reflected this opinion.

Housing tenure distinctions were part of the social structure of Dundee in 1911, but care must be taken not to use the terminology of tenure as if it equalled the terminology of class, particularly since the major social distinction between short-let and yearly-let tenancies appears to cut across the working class. Saunders has argued convincingly that it is unhelpful to use the same conceptual tools to analyse relations constituted in the sphere of production and relations constituted through processes of consumption [Saunders (1984)]. Consumption, he points out, is constrained but not determined by production. However:

"While more research is called for, it does seem plausible to suggest that ownership of housing may be very significant in shaping people's political values and in structuring political alignments as well as in generating a distinct 'owner-occupier interest' which no government can ignore." [Saunders (1984) p205]

For Saunders, the social divide is between those who can satisfy
their housing needs through personal ownership and those who rely on collective provision through the state. In an era when personal ownership was unusual and council housing did not exist, it could be argued no social divide of this kind existed because almost everyone rented from a private landlord. The reality in Dundee was that the way people rented a house varied, and the length of the lease had particular significance. What this study supports is that class was not the only basis of social cleavage in the first decades of the twentieth century in Dundee. The crises of 1912 and 1915 illustrate that a particular social group, the yearly-let tenants, did find themselves involved in a struggle which arose not from the social organisation of production, but from their location in a particular tenure-based division, arising from the way in which they consumed housing. An examination of the records of labour organisations in Dundee is required in order to reveal a more balanced picture of what happened in 1912 and 1915 and to better assess the rôle of particular labour leaders in those events. Somewhere there may be evidence of meetings between angry tenants in tenements across the city or even female rent strikers' leader. The evidence examined thus far does not hold out much hope. Dundee's economic reliance on paid female labour may even have contributed to the lack of a local network of resistance, a long working day and family tasks leaving little to devote to fighting the factors or marching to the city chambers. Melling attributes the success of the rent strikes in Govan and Partick in 1915 to the fact so many organisations and groups within the working class contributed to it, especially women. In Dundee leaders from labour
organisations attempted to politicise the issue, firstly by tacking on demands for housing reform and municipal housing and secondly by translating a consumption issue into work-based strike in war sensitive industries employing a skilled elite. In organisational terms they attempted to make the 1915 rent strike issue exclusively that of a small band of trade unionists and shunned the mass of public support. In a similar way, labour leaders acted late in the 1912 rents crisis, after the Lord Provost had stolen the initiative and offered the factors and landlords an escape route. The ineffectiveness of Dundee's labour leaders appears to result from a combination of immaturity and internal divisions, which robbed them of the ability to act in a cohesive and pragmatic way to working class concerns outside the workplace. The sorry tale also points out the real need for a sound and considered analysis of trade unionism and the growth of the labour movement in Dundee, as well as a more balanced and accurate examination of the whole of the local political scene than it has been possible to undertake in the context of this thesis.

Social status in late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century Scottish cities manifested itself in occupational structure, voting behaviour, membership of organisations, religious faith and cultural identity. Housing tenure distinctions are simply another way in which social status manifested itself. Further work, using the 1911 Census when it becomes available, might show that the unskilled in Dundee had predominately short-let tenancies, the skilled and semi-skilled yearly tenure and that
professional groups owned houses in Newport and Broughty Ferry. However, such firm conclusions cannot yet be drawn. Other correlations, for example between Irish immigrants and short-let tenure, could be investigated. It would also be worthwhile examining patterns of social behaviour in areas of the city where there were strong clusters of owner-occupied housing (e.g. Maryfield). There may be evidence of group political allegiance or religious affiliation, and in particular high concentrations of office bearers, which street directories could reveal.

This analysis has concerned itself primarily with a static picture of Dundee in 1911 and as a result has not examined patterns of movement in any great detail. However, the main source used, the valuation rolls, certainly would allow such studies across space and time to be made. Vertical transects could be sliced through time by focusing on particular areas to look at rates of population turnover associated with particular types of tenure. Contemporary evidence has suggested short-let tenants moved frequently, but that many yearly tenants lived in the same house for several years. It seems likely short-let tenants moved over short distances, within the same area of the city. It might also be possible to identify tenants who moved up the social ladder from a short-let tenancy to an annual one, and vice-versa. The valuation rolls also give the opportunity to find out whether tenants who did move remained with the same house agent. Geographers have examined patterns of residential mobility by using the Census, but for Scotland at least, such studies could be considerably enhanced by incorporating data from
the valuation rolls.

Many large property owners and house factors figured prominently in local life, but did they become directly involved in local politics in order to further their own interests? In the mid-1880s there were at least four police commissioners who sat in judgement over planning applications for buildings, three of them magistrates or ex-magistrates, who were themselves directly involved in financing and constructing new housing. This does not take into account those councillors who owned housing. In the mid-eighties it appears groups with an interest in property achieved an unhealthy degree of involvement in the main mechanism of housing regulation. The town council was overwhelmingly dominated by traders in the 1880s and 1890s - most councillors described themselves as merchants of one sort or another. The analysis of the valuation roll for Dundee in 1911 shows property ownership was widespread, and it would have been strange if many councillors between 1870 and 1920 did not turn out to have investments in house property. However, it seems large owners and prominent house factors in 1911 were more likely to pursue office as a financial manager or spiritual leader in their local church, than in municipal politics. Those who were most involved in the business of owning and letting property in 1911 and who might have sought political office chose other avenues. This does not mean those who were in office had few vested interests in property. Investors in house property were predominately shopkeepers and other traders and these are the social groups from which the town council was overwhelmingly
The implementation of housing policy examined from a local government point of view has allowed activity to be studied in historical and concrete instances. A major change throughout the period was the creation of a body of professional local authority officers in distinct departments with specific duties to carry out the policies of elected members. These officials came to have considerable influence over how policy was translated into action, and in some instances were directly active in the formulation of policy.

Dundee, like other Scottish cities, used local Acts, putting proprietors, their agents and tenants under pressure by using a number of regulations. Slum crusades were undertaken with the express aim of raising the quality of housing in the city, but the form such waves of action took often depended on the continued enthusiasm of individuals. Crusades altered the priorities of officials - the powers used were available outside crusade periods. The removal of the slums often did little for the poorest groups whose lot the crusades were intended to alleviate. The Greenmarket scheme of 1912 had more to do with civic pride and a desire to improve Dundee's shop front, than notions of improving the welfare of slum dwellers. Not until 1916, in the post-Kinnear era, was a systematic survey of most of the city undertaken with the aim of raising the standard of housing overall. The number of notices issued during 1916-18 indicated clearly that the council felt the responsibility for
poor housing conditions lay with the landlords and factors. However, the activities of sanitary officials throughout the period 1882-1920 demonstrated a willingness to target unsatisfactory properties. The crusades should be seen as waves of action in a sea of controls and checks exercised by local officials intervening to fill the gap between the actual and desired performance of the urban environment.

The measures of control adopted by local authority officials were not designed to transform urban society, but to keep the economic machinery going by maintaining a minimum set of social standards. There were tensions between the local authority and the landlords and factors - the latter arguing notices were issued too freely while the council failed to keep its side of the bargain by cleansing the courts often enough. However, the most draconian measures affected those social groups in the city who had least influence. The rigorous inspections of common lodging houses and the lists of regulations which applied to them were unlikely to result in votes against particular councillors. In reality such measures against the unrespectables who inhabited such dens of vice were likely to be popular with groups who saw their own behaviour and position as respectable. Part of the stigma which was attached to a short-lot tenancy must have resulted from the likelihood of inspection, day or night, by Dundee's sanitary police. The statistics show town council officials carried out raids on a target group of tenants in "houses let in lodgings or a shorter period than six months". Some of these raids were connected to outbreaks of disease, but
political pressures were probably more important. The extraordinary pattern of visiting undertaken between 1899 and 1903 was closely connected to the personal fortunes of the sanitary inspector Thomas Kinnear, an official whose conduct and "gross vulgarity" led to various calls for his resignation. It is interesting that the council looked to the Local Government Board for Scotland for assistance in resolving the thorny problem of how to get rid of Kinnear, a long-serving official who had carved out a little empire for himself. The debacle could not have contributed to the successful pursuit of a clean and healthy city, and it indicates that unelected officials could occasionally wield their power in ways which hampered or killed off initiatives being pursued by elected councillors. What cannot be denied is the invasive character of the visits made to the homes of short-let tenants. Although few tenants were prosecuted and fined, hundreds of visits could be made in a month. Kinnear maintained verbal persuasion was the most productive route, and given the complaints about Kinnear's rudeness it is unlikely he handled tenants with kid gloves. The evidence also suggests the courts were not the most effective way of combating dirt and overcrowding. In Dundee, those tenants with short-let homes who did not pay rates directly, but had them paid on their behalf by the proprietor, had no vote. By the same token anyone who was a domestic servant, lived in a lodging house or was not a householder in some other way, had no vote. This meant the local electorate was heavily skewed towards respectable groups in society. It also meant those groups of people whose lives came directly within the sanitary officials visiting net could not use
a vote in the municipal elections to protest about the heavy hand
of council officialdom.

Under the 1919 Act Dundee built 262 houses at Logie and was
the self-proclaimed winner of the municipal housing derby.
Without town planner James Thomson's breadth of vision and
administrative skills, it is difficult to imagine Dundee would
ever have lined up at the start of the race, never mind crossed
the finishing line. Public officials and civil servants took the
central roles in the story of Dundee's first council houses, not
its councillors. Many councillors never succeeded in divorcing
housing from purely sanitary issues, and none in 1918 could have
imagined the council would become major landlords in the
twentieth century. The real political shift in the composition
of the council which enabled such notions to take hold did not
occur until 1919. However, was Dundee the most advanced of the
Scottish cities in its housebuilding programme? At the time the
city fathers certainly seemed to think so. The opening of the
Logie scheme was a carefully stage-managed public relations
exercise designed to show the city in the best possible light.
In fact few such press opportunities were missed in the early
days. The quality of the scheme was certainly very high, but as
this research has shown this was very much dictated by Local
Government Board civil servants, who with experience perhaps
learned to drop the high standards for later schemes in other
cities, or simply did not have the time to oversee them in such
great detail. While the quality of building may well have been
superior to that in other cities as Butt suggests, he also points
out the smaller city of Aberdeen actually built more houses (Butt (1983) p254). Nonetheless over 73% of all new houses built in Dundee between 1919 and 1939 were for the local authority (Pocock in Jones (1968) p304). Logie was the beginning of a realistic solution to the magnitude of the housing problem, in addition to making a significant contribution to raising expectations of housing standards.

The year 1906 was a watershed year in Dundee's municipal history and it heralded the birth of labour politics in Dundee's council chambers. It was to prove a fractious child. Recriminations flew about officials and accusations were made about their conduct. Debates were bitter and long-winded. The political damage was widespread and tainted officials. Groups of councillors took the opportunity to make their exit. A third of those elected in November 1906 were new faces. Scandals, scenes and midnight sittings continued until 1910, by which time it was reported municipal meetings had become dull. Christian socialist and professional maverick Cllr Edwin Scrymgeour, who had a gift for routing out a scandal, can take much of the blame for this turbulent period in Dundee's local politics. A counter-attack was launched by Dundee Citizens' Union, formed in November 1908, in order to promote a sense of responsibility in public affairs. Between 1905 and 1910 the composition of Dundee's town council was reshaped in a way which brought housing issues to the forefront. The next watershed year in municipal politics in Dundee was 1919, when labour politics reached maturity - excepting the two Broughty Ferry wards, every Dundee ward
returned at least one Labour councillor. After 1919 the commitment to municipal housing was strengthened. Only a full history of local municipal politics can reveal what real impact the growth of labour had on the local political scene. The extent to which "cronieism" was rife in Dundee Town Council would also be worth investigating. It would appear that around the turn of the century those with friends on the council could reasonably expect to use that relationship to advantage. The growth in the number of opportunities for officials and the widening scope of the council's activities opened up avenues which could be exploited by those with councillors or officials for friends. More important for council housing is the scope for profit through such contacts for architects, builders, building suppliers and those in the joinery and plumbing trades. This may also have extended beyond production to consumption. The first council houses in Dundee were definitely at the top end of the rented market and the council had to find a means of allocating them to deserving families when there were a far greater number of such families than houses to go round. Oral tradition in Dundee has it that those who were successful in getting a new house were those who knew a councillor. Research into the evolution and management of Dundee's council housing between the wars would reveal whether or not there is any truth in this claim.

"Laissez-faire" and "Homes fit for Heroes" are historical catchphrases anchored in time by legislative dates, and have been used here to illustrate ideological extremes. As the title of
this thesis suggests, the period 1868-1919 saw major changes in government policy towards housing, and ended with state intervention at both local and national levels. However, it was not a simple chain of cause and effect in which the inadequacies of the private sector led to the housing policies of the late nineteenth century and inevitably to twentieth-century council housing. The catchphrases conceal as much as they illuminate.

In Scottish cities housebuilding had never entirely been a matter of laissez-faire, and it is difficult to pinpoint where a change of heart took place in public policy (chapter 4). Progressive interpretations have suggested the law became an active agent of social change achieving more than the maintenance and adaptation of the status quo [Davidson (1985) pp3.10; Checkland (1985); Gauldie (1974)]. There is a danger of studying the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in terms of what came later, and Daunton has suggested, as in other countries, the private rented sector could have continued as a component of government strategy without public housing necessarily being a major part of policy [Daunton (1983) p293]. Yet it is difficult to see how housing problems in Scottish cities in the early-twentieth century could have been confronted without abandoning some free market principles, either by subsidising building, or by giving sufficient aid to the low-paid to enable them to pay for decent homes. The most astonishing thing about the 1919 Act was that, apart from the granting of exchequer subsidies, it contained so little that was actually new. As Wilding has argued, if late-nineteenth century legislation had been taken up vigorously, it could have been the basis of a real
attack on unsatisfactory housing, because the fundamental failure was one of administration rather than legislation [Wilding (1972) p3]. Local authorities were charged with translating powers into action and it is only by examining municipal decision-making at the scale of individual urban centres that the reasons why legislation was not taken up vigorously can become clear. It is also evident that policy implementation was subject to a peculiarly Scottish housing experience.

While the home was separate from the workplace it had a crucial role in maintaining the workforce. Dundee's economic fortunes were based on jute, an industry where women outnumbered men two to one. Standards of care within the home and attitudes towards what the home was expected to provide were undermined in Dundee by the specific nature of the productive process. Welfare agencies focussed on what they interpreted as a failure to be good mothers, but also recognised it resulted in part from implementing a strategy for family survival and in part from poor housing conditions. The "social evil" of female labour could not realistically be eradicated, but the conflict between working and being a mother identified by welfare workers was reconciled to some extent by providing services to meet their needs (eg restaurants for nursing mothers, créches and babyminders, clean milk depots). Campaigns to educate women how to be better wives and mothers took different forms, from widespread visiting by officials to training in domestic skills for schoolgirls. Garden City pioneers aimed to combat degeneracy by spatially re-organising society. Women working was perceived as a social evil.
contributing to social degeneracy. Voluntary and municipal agencies providing these specialist services did so indirectly in response to the needs of working women. Underlying all their worthy efforts was the clear assumption wives and mothers belonged in the home caring for their husbands and children.

In Dundee's circumstances planners might have chosen to organise domestic living space differently to meet the needs of working-class families where mothers worked. Centralised, communal facilities would also have given working mothers considerable support in their domestic rôle. James Thomson had started to do this by planning for a crèche, communal laundry and centralised baths. However, local authorities who needed access to centrally-provided finance in order to build houses at all, found they had to draught their plans according to the Local Government Board for Scotland's design pattern and conform to its minimum standards before the loans could be authorised. The form living space took in the first state-built houses was dictated from the centre, and the LGBS took the view that a woman's place was in the home.

Women did attempt to be consulted about the design of the first council houses. Much of the serious discussion took place among small groups of highly motivated women on the fringe of the formal political stage, but the women appointed to the Local Government Board for Scotland's special house-planning committee were locked out of the central arena of policy-making. At a local political level in Dundee women's views were either not
taken seriously or at worst ridiculed. Scottish women were unable to get more than token recognition for their views on the environment a male-dominated society expected them to confine themselves to. The plans for early council houses indicate a deliberate move towards privatising living space - a desire to break down activities within the home and confine them to specific areas. Homes where family activity was concentrated in one main room, smacked too much of the multi-functional rooms in tenement homes which social reformers regarded as encouraging moral depravity. The Local Government Boards demanded high-amenity homes where laundering clothes, personal bathing and child care could take place unseen and privately. The introduction of compact gas cookers meant cooking could be removed to the scullery and a significant part of a housewife's domestic responsibilities repositioned on the spatial margins of family life. The woman's place was to be in the home, but within this workplace the housewife was expected to confine labour central to the needs of her family to a small backroom. House design reemphasised perceived social norms and failed to respond to the needs of groups who did not conform to the family-based household ideal. In Dundee the built environment was shaped by central state agencies in a way which was intended to make the home the sole place of work for women in a city where the formal economy could not function without cheap female labour.

Earlier in this chapter it was stated that at different geographical scales the patterns, and the processes which formed those patterns, look different. Not only is a city part of a
changing landscape created by social activity, but individual houses and even rooms within them are an integral part of that total landscape. Space created by social activity - an integral part of a totality which is at once social and economic and political.
APPENDICES AND REFERENCES
APPENDIX: I
Scottish Legislation on Housing

Pre-1868 legislation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Act Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>Removal of Nuisances Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Amendment Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Dwelling Houses (Scotland) Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>Nuisances Removal (Scotland) Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>Labouring Classes Dwelling Houses Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Public Health (Scotland) Act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Torrens and Cross 1868-1884:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Act Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Improvement (Scotland) Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Act (1868) Amendment Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Improvement (Scotland) Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Artizans Dwellings Act (1868) Amendment Act (1879) Amendment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>Artizans Dwellings Act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 & 10 Vict.c96
11 & 12 Vict.c123
12 & 13 Vict.c111
18 & 19 Vict.c88
19 & 20 Vict.c103
25 & 26 Vict.c101
29 & 30 Vict.c28
30 & 31 Vict.c101
31 & 32 Vict.c130
38 & 39 Vict.c49
42 & 43 Vict.c64
43 Vict.c2
43 Vict.c8
45 & 46 Vict.c54
### Post-Dilke Royal Commission 1884-5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Act</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>Housing of the Working Classes Act</td>
<td>48 &amp; 49 Vict. c72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Housing of the Working Classes Act</td>
<td>53 &amp; 54 Vict. c70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act</td>
<td>9 Edw.7 c44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Housing Act</td>
<td>1 &amp; 5 Geo.5 c31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Housing (No.2) Act</td>
<td>1 &amp; 5 Geo.5 c52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Housing (Rosyth Dockyard) Act</td>
<td>5 &amp; 6 Geo.5 c49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Housing, Town Planning, etc. (Scotland) Act</td>
<td>9 &amp; 10 Geo.5 c60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Housing (Additional Powers) Act</td>
<td>9 &amp; 10 Geo.5 c99</td>
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</table>

### House-letting Acts:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Act</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Removal Terms (Burghs) (Scotland) Act</td>
<td>41 &amp; 15 Vict. c39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>Removal terms (Scotland) Act</td>
<td>49 &amp; 50 Vict. c50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>Removal Terms (Scotland) Act, 1886, Amendment Act</td>
<td>53 &amp; 54 Vict. c36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>House Letting and Rating (Scotland) Act</td>
<td>1 &amp; 2 Geo.5 c53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>Increase of Rent and Mortgage Interest (War Restrictions) Act</td>
<td>5 &amp; 6 Geo.5 c97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Courts (Emergency Powers) Act</td>
<td>7 &amp; 8 Geo.5 c25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Police Acts post-1867:

1868 General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862, Amendment Act
1877 General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862, Amendment Act
1878 General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862, Amendment Act
1882 General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862, Amendment Act
1889 General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862, Amendment Act
1892 Burgh Police (Scotland) Act
1903 Burgh Police (Scotland) Act

Acts which did not apply to Scotland:

1851 Common Lodging Houses Act
1851 Labouring Classes Lodging Houses Act
1853 Common Lodging Houses Act
1874 Working Men's Dwellings Act
1879 Artizans and Labourers Dwellings Improvement Act
1900 Housing of the Working Classes Act
1903 Housing of the Working Classes Act
A number of publicly available primary sources have been used, and are cited where appropriate in the text. The following abbreviations have been used to indicate the provenance of the source material. (The form of reference given after these letters is usually the code employed by the repository concerned, and may be found using the indexes at these places.) The Scottish National Register of Archives, held at the Scottish Record Office's West Register House branch, is invaluable for tracing manuscript source material.

BLLD  British Library Lending Division.

BPP  British Parliamentary Papers.

These have been followed by the year, volume, and command paper number (C, Cd or Cmd); there are published directories of these documents, copies of which are held by many libraries.

For Acts of Parliament, the date has been followed by the year of the reign of the monarch and the number of the Act. The Census has been described only as the Census (although it was a Parliamentary paper).

CH  Companies' House, Edinburgh:
Files on undissolved companies.

DCA  Dundee City Archives, City Square, Dundee:

TC Minutes - town council and police commissioners' minutes, and the minutes of committees.

DPL  Dundee Public Libraries, Wellgate Centre, Dundee:

CA - Courier and Argus newspaper
DA - Dundee Advertiser newspaper
PJ - People's Journal newspaper
WN - Weekly News newspaper
DYB - Dundee Year Book
Lamb - Lamb collection (pamphlets, mss, cuttings).
RCAHMS Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland, Edinburgh:

Plans of buildings.

SRO Scottish Register Office, Edinburgh.

VR - Valuation rolls
BT1 - Registers of companies
BT2 - Files of dissolved companies
HH - Scottish Home and Health Department, Local Government Board files
DD6 - Scottish Development Department, housing papers (30 year closure)
RHP - Register House plans.
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