PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT:
GRASS ROOTS ACTION IN SURREY AND NEWHAM

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by

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SUMMARY

This thesis examines the organisation and activities of local environmental groups. Environmental groups are defined broadly to include all local voluntary groups which devote a considerable proportion of their time to issues and activities concerning the physical environment.

Chapters 1 to 3 provide a background to the study of local environmental groups. They describe the history and present status of the British national environmental movement and the literature on environmental groups (Chapter 1); British environmental legislation (Chapter 2); and the environmental and social background of the two areas chosen for intensive practical research, West Surrey and Newham (Chapter 3).

Chapter 4 describes the organisation and activities of local environmental groups in West Surrey, including their numbers, size, aims, the issues which concern them and the tactics they adopt to deal with these issues, their relations with each other and with local authorities, and their achievements.

Chapter 5 describes local environmental groups in Newham under similar categories, contrasting them with West Surrey groups.

Chapter 6 compares and contrasts the data from the intensive studies in Newham and West Surrey with data available in the literature on local environmental groups elsewhere in Britain. It identifies patterns of similarity and difference, and advances possible explanations for these patterns.

Chapter 7 examines the patterns of activity identified in Chapter 6, along with more detailed data from the intensive studies, to assess the extent to which a local environmental
movement can be said to exist in Britain. It is concluded that the movement is not cohesive, and has changed little in response to the new ideas on the environment which have developed at national level since the 1960's.

The Appendix describes the method of data collection and analysis in West Surrey, which included a questionnaire and computer-based statistical analysis.
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INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

"The environmental movement has been the mass movement of the 1970's... We estimate that about one in ten of the adult population now belongs to an environmental group."

(LOWE and others, 1980)

In Britain, this 'environmental movement' is made up of a large number of voluntary groups. These range from large national organisations with paid staff and headquarters offices, to small local groups run from a volunteer's home. The aims which motivate them vary from the specific, for example conservation of birds, protection of Georgian buildings, to a general wish to "protect the world our children will inherit" (Ecology Party manifesto, 1979). Other groups wish to preserve amenity, the 'quality of pleasantness' of their area from harmful change.

The range of environmental groups at the local level is as wide as that of national groups. The groups have immense variety, they do not fall into clearly defined categories. Some groups are concerned with social issues, as well as the state of the physical environment. Many groups whose purpose is to protect their surroundings do not call themselves 'environmentalists', and groups whose main dealings are elsewhere may become involved in environmental issues from time to time. This complex social movement is, however, a very important one both because of the number of people it involves, and because the issues it encompasses affect the distribution of resources both locally and nationally in Britain. If wildlife is to be conserved and old buildings saved, money and skill must be diverted from other uses. If the Ecology Party is correct in its views, the very existence of mankind is at risk unless drastic changes are made by society. As man's ability to harm the environment has grown, so, it seems, has the number of people wishing to protect that environment. With the growth of leisure, more and more people
wish to take advantage of the pleasant features of the environment, and in itself this can cause problems through increasing pressure on popular recreation areas. Study of what environmentalists wish to preserve, and how they go about it, is thus of vital importance. In an area such as Britain, where the amount of land is low in relation to the number of people, conflict over how the land should be used is almost inevitable. Environmentalists, with their demands for specific types and locations of land use, play an important role in this process.

For the researcher, the complexity of the local environmental movement presents a number of problems. In order to obtain as full a picture as possible, it is important to study a wide range of groups. However, resources are seldom limitless, and thus many groups must be excluded. Defining what is meant by 'environmental groups' in such a way as to restrict the number, for example by including only those groups affiliated to a national organisation, can give a clear and easily traceable sample but runs the risk of defining out of existence much important environmental activity. Case studies of particularly important environmental issues also yield a manageable but interesting amount of data, but are by nature untypical of the day-to-day activity of environmental groups. Historical studies of particular environmental groups are similarly limited in providing much detail at the risk of lack of representativeness.

Ideally, a number of environmental groups should be studied over a period of time, during which both important and mundane activities take place, and the formation, activities and perhaps cessation of groups can be observed. One way in which the number of groups to be studied can be reduced, whilst still allowing for study of the activities described, is to restrict research to a particular geographical area. It is this approach which has been taken in this thesis.
Local environmental groups have been studied in two areas, both within the south-east of England, but chosen for their very different social and physical environments. West Surrey and the London Borough of Newham are described in Chapter 3. The results of the study of these groups is compared with data from elsewhere in the country to indicate their representativeness.

In order to achieve a broad view of environmentalist activity, no pre-set definition was imposed to determine which groups should or should not be included in the study. Instead, attempts were made to contact all local groups which appeared interested in environmental issues regularly, whilst evidence of other groups, showing more sporadic concern for the environment, was also collected. As the results of the study show, firm categorisation of local environmental groups is seldom either easy or particularly helpful. Whilst some groups are undeniably 'environmentalists' only, these are the exception rather than the norm.

By limiting the area of the study and the number of local environmental groups to be covered, a wide range of methods of study could be utilised, allowing the approach to be adapted to different groups, issues and problems. Research began with a number of in-depth interviews with key environmental group personnel, to obtain an overview of the scope of environmental activities in the two areas. Similarly interviews were carried out with local government officials in the two areas, and in Newham with a number of independent community work agencies, to give an outside view of environmental group activities. The number of environmental groups traced in West Surrey prevented research by interview with all of them. Instead a postal questionnaire was drawn up and distributed to all suspected environmental groups in the area. The replies were subjected to simple statistical analysis using programmes from the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, to sort the data and obtain information on the relationship between variables. The questionnaire was followed up by a further round of interviews with groups of particular interest.
In addition to this direct information, a large collection of material produced by local environmental groups for other purposes was amassed. This included newsletters, publicity and membership material, and minutes of annual and committee meetings. Further information was obtained from observation of group meetings, both public ones such as annual general meetings and those for members' interest, and private committee meetings. In this way an extensive bank of information was collected, covering the formation, resources, aims and activities of local environmental groups throughout the two areas. Local media in the two areas were also monitored for general information on the areas, news of group activities, and general local reaction to environmental issues.

The material obtained through empirical research was analysed in the light of a wide range of literature, both directly on environmental groups and of wider theoretical concern. Particular attention was paid to descriptions of local voluntary groups, particularly environmentally-oriented ones, elsewhere in Britain. Thus the overall aim of the thesis, whilst concentrating upon a detailed description and analysis of groups in two particular areas, is to comment upon the activities of the local environmental movement in general.

The thesis would have been impossible to conduct without the co-operation and assistance of many people from local environmental groups, and other statutory and voluntary organisations. To protect their privacy, and to stress the relevance of the material to the whole local environmental movement, their anonymity has been maintained throughout. The names of organisations and local authorities have been used only with permission, and where this is necessary for clarity.
CHAPTER 1
CHAPTER 1

THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN

The Growth of Environmentalism

The post-war period in Britain, as in many Western countries, has been a period of rapid technological, social, and industrial change. One result of such change has been the emergence of new political issues such as campaigns against nuclear weapons, and concern for the natural environment. In addition, the British political system has seen the development of a large number of voluntary groups, both of a caring nature (despite the advent of the welfare state) and campaigning for changes in policy and legislation. These two processes have come together in the growth of what is known as the 'environmental movement'.

Ecology, study of the environment as an interactive system, can be traced back to the early 20th century (LOWE (vii)) but it was not until the 1960's that it developed from a scientific discipline into a popular cause. CARSON's book, 'Silent Spring' was published in 1962 and is widely credited with first bringing to public attention the harmful effects that man's activities were having on the environment. Her work was the first of a series of studies of the effects of pollution and resource depletion carried out throughout the 1960's in Britain and America (COMMONER, EHRLICH, WARD, GOLDSMITH). These culminated in the work of MEADOWS, a series of computer forecasts financed by wealthy businessmen which purported to predict doom for mankind and indeed the earth, if future trends in pollution, population and resource depletion continued. Whilst later studies to some extent qualified these conclusions (MADDOX, COLE) their impact was undeniable. Environmentalism succeeded anti-bomb campaigning as the popular social movement of the day.

Coverage of environmental issues in the mass media increased, although in the national press in Britain it remained at a low level (see BROOKES). Television in particular adapted to the new concern for the state of the
environment, and in 1969 the annual Reith lectures, given
by Frank Fraser Darling, covered the decline of wilderness
areas. Environmental issues were quite rapidly taken up
by the major political parties in Britain, perhaps as
LOWE (i) says, because it was seen as a "cause without an
ideology". At the 1969 Labour Party conference, Harold
Wilson, a former admirer of the 'white heat of technology'
spoke of the "doctrine of environmental priority" being put
for the first time "in a major way on the political agenda"
(quoted in JOHNSON). In 1971 the incoming Conservative
government re-organised the administration to form a
Department of the Environment, to control most aspects of
the physical environment. Various new laws were enacted on
environmental issues, such as the comprehensive 'Control of
Pollution Act 1974' (which, however, has yet to be fully
implemented).

In Britain, however, as HERBST states:

"...... only the amount of political interest
in man's natural environment was new, for in
many respects there had been concern about
the environment and sporadic political attempts
to preserve and protect it for 700 years."

Whilst measures to protect the environment for practical
reasons - often the convenience of the monarch, as in the
case of the Royal hunting forests - have a very long history,
protection of the environment for its own sake are more recent
in origin, being rooted in the 19th and early 20th centuries.
WILLIAMS traces concern for nature back to the romantic
tradition of arts in Britain, and indeed in 1835 Wordsworth
called for the Lake District to be deemed a national property
to which everyone should have a right. WILLIAMS sees these
views as a reaction to the industrial revolution, an
explanation also used by ALLISON to account for the growth
of interest in both the natural and man-made environment
amongst many eminent Victorians.

In 1860, the embryonic Commons Preservation Society
first fought to prevent the enclosure of common land, and the
late 19th century saw the formation of a number of voluntary groups dedicated to preserving and improving the environment (see Table 1). It is interesting to note the links at this stage between the ideology of the environment and a hostility towards industry and mass production. This dual ideology, epitomized by William Morris (see WILLIAMS) re-appeared amongst some ecology-orientated groups of the late 20th century. The history of some of these early groups has been described in a number of works, for example FEDDEN, PAYNE and W. WILLIAMS. Groups such as the National Trust were actively supported by influential and wealthy people, for example Octavia Hill, and were able to save many buildings and areas of natural beauty from destruction. Their influence on the early development of planning legislation was considerable (see CHERRY, for example). In 1907, the National Trust Act transformed that organisation into a semi-official body as a recognition of its work, charging it with:

".....the permanent preservation of property and areas of natural beauty for the benefit of the nation."

The 1909 Housing, Town Planning etc. Act recognised this growing interest in the environment by allowing, at public inquiries into town planning schemes:

"Hearing of objections and representations by ....persons representing architectural or archaeological societies, or persons otherwise interested in the amenity of the proposed scheme."

Victorian interest in natural history was indicated by the formation of a number of societies whose aim was to preserve wildlife, at both local and national level.

In addition to preservation, access to preserved areas was the aim of many early environmental societies. It was a major policy of the National Trust and Commons Preservation Society to assure facilities for 'healthy recreation' amongst ordinary people, and the main aim of the Ramblers Association, formed in 1925, was to ensure access to the grouse moors of northern England, from which walkers were excluded, often by
### TABLE 1

THE FORMATION OF BRITISH ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>GROUP</th>
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<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>Commons Preservation Society in embryo. Formally founded in 1865.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>First local nature conservation trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>Society for the Protection of Birds (later Royal Society).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>National Society for Clean Air.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>National Trust.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>Town and Country Planning Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>National Trust incorporated by Act of Parliament.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Ramblers Association.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Georgian Group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Keep Britain Tidy (founded by Womens Institutes).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Civic Trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Victorian Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Noise Abatement Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>'Silent Spring' published.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Conservation Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Joint Committee of SPAB, Georgian Group, Victorian Society, Civic Trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Friends of the Earth (USA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Friends of the Earth (UK).</td>
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gamekeepers armed with guns. To this end, it undertook direct action, including the famous mass trespass on Kinder Scout, and resulting in numerous court appearances for members (see RUDDLESDE).n

Whilst numerous groups now existed to protect particular aspects of the environment, by the mid-1920's there was more general concern about the loss of countryside through development. In 1926 the Council for the Preservation of Rural England was formed to act as a federation of environmental groups, and lobbied for legislation to control ribbon development in particular. The organisation developed from its original role to have a separate existence, whilst retaining links with other environmental groups (see BULLER).

Further diversification occurred within the movement to preserve historic buildings, and this illustrates the role of taste within the environmental movement. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings was founded by William Morris in 1877, mainly to guard against inappropriate restoration of old buildings. As Georgian buildings became scarcer, the Georgian Group formed in 1937 to lobby for their protection. It was not until 1958 that previously-denigrated Victorian architecture gained sufficient popularity to merit the formation of the Victorian Society, and this was due in no small measure to the campaigning of John Betjeman, now poet laureate.

In 1957, the Civic Trust was founded by ex-minister Duncan Sandys to lobby for the protection and enhancement of town areas as a whole, rather than single buildings; in other words, to give the same coverage to towns as that afforded to the countryside by the Council for the Protection (as it now is) of Rural England. The Civic Trust was instrumental in obtaining legislation on conservation areas (see Chapter 2).

Thus by the 1960's, Britain had a range of active and well-established environmental groups at the national level, whose history is relatively well documented. These, however,
were not the only environmental organisations, for there were also local groups, whose history and even existence is barely covered in the literature. The first nature conservation group was an organisation in Yorkshire formed in 1869 to protect seabirds (NICHOLSON), whilst in Devon the Sidmouth Improvement Committee was formed:

"...... for the purpose of proposing plans for the general improvement of the place ...... and also for securing to the public the existing walks on the cliff and Salcombe Hill." (quoted in FUJISHIN)

Early planning legislation (see Chapter 2) notes that at a local public inquiry into a plan, the opinion of "local architectural or archaelogical societies" were to be sought (Housing, Town Planning etc. Act 1909). One role of the Council for the Protection of Rural England was to co-ordinate the activities of local environmental groups, and for many years it has had a network of county branches. The Town and Country Planning Association encouraged the formation of local groups to lobby for local plan-making, and held a conference in 1954 attended by:

"80 representatives of local organisations such as planning groups, civic societies, community associations and preservation societies."

(Town & Country Planning)

Unlike the national environmental groups, the history and activities of such local groups remained undocumented, and it seems likely that the records of many will have been lost.

With the formation of the Civic Trust, some co-ordination of such local groups began. The Trust compiles a register of local environmental groups whose constitution it approves, and maintains a library of newsletters and other publications the groups produce. The Trust also gives advice and information to local groups. Its records, however, only date back to its formation in 1957.

This well-established environmental movement was therefore in a prime position to take advantage of the upsurge
in interest in the environment of the late 1960's, and indeed during this decade many groups experienced a dramatic increase in membership. The Ramblers Association, for example, increased its membership by 100% to nearly 26,000 between 1962 and 1972. However, this was not the only response of the public to recognition of the 'environmental crisis'.

In 1966, the Conservation Society was formed in Britain. Its members were generally people new to the environmental movement, and it had few contacts with traditional environmental groups. It stressed a global approach to environmental issues, and prompted by EHRlich's book "The Population Bomb", concentrated in particular on the problem of population expansion. In the United States, where research and activism on environmental issues had been concentrated, an even more radical group, Friends of the Earth, formed in 1969. A British branch formed the following year, and immediately obtained massive media coverage with its campaign to dump non-return bottles at the offices of the Schweppes company (see LOWE (i)). Many of the people involved in both groups were young, and not averse to a more critical and direct approach than the discreet lobbying which had become the hallmark of the more traditional environmental groups.

Such developments attracted a great deal of interest amongst writers in both Britain and the USA, who felt that the activities of groups such as Friends of the Earth represented a new political movement, an answer to the impasse of traditional left-right politics, (see NICHOLSON, ALLABY, JOHNSON). Several authors analysed the ideology and modes of action of these 'new-wave' environmental groups, in a way which had never been attempted with the older groups (for example O'RIORDAN, BOWMAN, COTGROVE). Whilst most authors were basically sympathetic towards the environmental viewpoint, a number of searing criticisms of both older and new groups appeared. ENZENSBERGER criticised the political naivety and elitism of environmentalists, whilst ALDOUS, CROSSLAND and EVERSLEY criticised blanket preservation, and accused
environmentalists of wishing to 'pull up the ladder behind them'. Whilst most studies devoted little space to the more traditional environmental groups, supporters of Friends of the Earth were being urged to join and radicalise their local environmental groups, a course perhaps overtaken by the formation of their own local groups. An interesting comparison of Friends of the Earth with a very traditional group, the National Trust, is given by LOWE (i).

During the 1960's the traditional environmental groups had been far from inactive, and a major initiative had taken place in the form of the 'Countryside in 1970' conferences. These conferences, held in 1963, 1965 and 1970 were sponsored by the Royal Society of Arts, and brought together environmental groups, statutory bodies and industrialists in a discussion forum on the future of Britain's countryside (see CLIFFORD and others).

**Reasons for the Development of Environmental Groups**

The reasons for the degree of concern about the environment in Britain are complex. In the early years of the movement the growth of population and the effects of the industrial revolution were certainly causing dramatic changes to Britain's towns and countryside. ALLISON comments:

"The whole of Victorian intellectual life was a reaction to industrialisation, and especially to the existence of the industrial proletariat."

Indeed, the literature of the Victorian era contains constant examples of the view that the concentration of the population in cities caused moral and physical degeneration, from Dickens to George Elliot (see KEATING for a discussion of this aspect of Victorian literature). The feeling that cities were bad and unhealthy, whilst open air and the countryside were healthy and morally beneficial (itself a remnant of the romanticism of poets like Wordsworth and Shelley), led to the twin aims of improvement of town environments and preservation of the countryside and open spaces for recreation. The former aim was
one which had been adopted by a number of prominent industrialists, who had built 'model villages' for their workers to live in. The first of these was New Lanark, constructed by Robert Owen in 1784. Sir Titus Salt, with Saltaire, the Level brothers' Port Sunlight and Cadbury's Bournville all followed. All these villages had a strong moral element, often with strict rules on churchgoing, behaviour and the banning of alcohol. A broader approach to improved town living conditions was advocated by Ebenezer Howard in a book entitled "Tomorrow, a peaceful path to reform", which introduced the concept of 'garden cities', and the ideology of separate location for different land uses which is the basis of much modern planning legislation.

The period between the two World Wars was also one of expansion of the environmental movement in Britain. During this period, many changes were being wrought to the countryside by the growth of suburbs around many towns and cities. This phenomenon is again reflected in contemporary literature with writers like Evelyn Waugh and George Orwell condemning the new development. For such people, as ALLISON explains:

"The ugliness, the mediocrity, the frightening expansion of urban and suburban areas, were the outward and visible signs of a more deep-seated change for the worse.

Nor were these isolated examples. Indeed it would be difficult to draw up a list of 'intellectuals' of any eminence in the thirties who were not concerned with the physical state of the English landscape."

Intellectuals were not the only people concerned. Shorter working hours had encouraged a new interest in the countryside for rambling and walking. The 'Countryman' magazine was first published in 1927, and was accompanied in the 1930's by many books devoted to rural themes. Improved transport facilities made access to the countryside much easier for many people. Within the cities, the National Playing Fields Association was formed to lobby for the provision of recreational land.
After the Second World War towns and town planning became the focus for concern, with a book on town planning by Tom Sharpe selling 25,000 copies. No doubt this in part reflected the need for reconstruction of many cities after bombing raids, and also a desire not to repeat the failures to keep promises of revival made after the First World War. In the 1950's there was an expansion of the numbers of environmental groups concerned with towns, for example the Civic Trust and the Victorian Society. Concern for nature, and the impact that increased development was having upon it was reflected in the growth of County Naturalists Trusts.

In the late 1960's and early 1970's there was continued expansion of existing environmental groups, accompanied by the development of new environmental groups, with a broader, even global concern. HERBST lists a number of reasons for this development, including an actual increase in the scale and rate of environmental damage, and increased perception of such damage. In addition there was increasing dissatisfaction with the achievements of science and technology, and the spread of both general education and teaching of environmental topics. LOWE (i) links the periods of rapid growth in the environmental movement to the world business cycle; the 1890's, late 1920's and 1950's, and the early 1970's all being towards the end of periods of sustained economic expansion. At these periods "..... more and more people turned to count the mounting, external costs of unbridled economic growth and sought to assert non-material values". As more people were sufficiently prosperous to be "..... freed from their immediate environmental needs and are able to attend more to the non-material aspects of the quality of life .....", so the scale of expansion of the environmental movement increased. For LOWE this poses the ironical question "Does it need mounting environmental threats for the environmental movement to flourish?". The question can only be answered by deeper study of the environmental groups themselves.
Environmental Groups in the Literature

Whilst some literature is available which describes the major events and organisations of the environmental movement at national level, the current state, as well as the history, of local environmental groups is less well documented. The most systematic study of local environmental groups was carried out in the early 1970's by BARKER, who carried out a postal questionnaire of groups registered with the Civic Trust. These are a particular subset of local groups who may be unrepresentative of the majority. A general description and literature review of local environmental groups is provided by LOWE (iv). This provides a useful summary, but indicates how little practical evidence there is about local environmental groups' actions and concerns.

Apart from these broader studies, the literature on local environmental groups has generally taken a case-study approach, concentrating on major conflicts between such groups and local and national authorities, usually in the context of a planning public inquiry. Some studies involve organisations established solely on the basis of the issue in question (e.g. HAIN, PERMAN), whilst others cover a number of issues, some involving the intervention of national environmental groups (e.g. KIMBER and RICHARDSON, GREGORY). Some studies are able to contrast the activities of national and local groups (e.g. HERBST), whilst a study by SMITH contrasts the actions of Friends of the Earth with that of more traditional groups on the issue of an oil terminal at Anglesey. As well as description, some studies attempt to analyse the particular factors which lead to the success or failure of groups at planning inquiries, and discuss the constraints of the planning system (see GREGORY, KIMBER and RICHARDSON). HAIN, meanwhile, draws a broader political analysis from the experience of environmentalists in Covent Garden, with gloomy implications for the future of public participation in Britain. Participation in planning is the subject of a variety of literature but the approach taken is from the viewpoint of planners trying to encourage participation, rather than that of local environmental groups.
The literature on environmental groups poses many questions, and indicates several fields for future research. Many publications about voluntary groups, of a more general nature as well as those specifically concerned with environmental groups, attempt to classify them in some way. GREGORY defines three basic types: permanent national organisations, permanent local organisations, and ephemeral, ad-hoc bodies formed to deal with a specific issue. The last type generally disband after the issue is completed. KIMBER and RICHARDSON distinguish between "traditional" groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England; 'official' bodies such as the Nature Conservancy Council and the National Trust, and single-issue action groups. They found, however, that the latter type drew for its membership largely on people already connected with one of the other two types. Their study does not cover 'new-wave' groups such as Friends of the Earth or the Conservation Society.

The WOLFENDEN report on the future of voluntary organisations distinguishes between a number of factors on which voluntary groups can be classified, for example by methods of operation, structure (hierarchical or non-hierarchical) and intended beneficiaries. The latter factor is discussed in much literature on pressure groups (e.g. PATEMAN, KIMBER and RICHARDSON ii). A division is made between interest groups, who are "the appointed spokesmen for particular sections of the community with a definable interest"; and principle (or expressive) groups, which represent no specific interest but "seek to defend particular values or promote causes involving aspects of social or political reform" (both quotes from LOWE). LOWE considers that local environmental groups would probably fall into the category of non-economic interest groups, a view shared by ALLISON, who distinguishes them from national environmental groups, which are considered to be principle groups.

ALLABY considers that groups ".....of young people, students, members of ecology action groups or the Conservation Corps....." are substantially different from "...conservation bodies whose members would regard themselves as representatives
of the establishment". He describes the latter group as 'conservationists' and the former as the 'new human ecologists', and considers the gap between them to be wide.

LOWE (iii) considers that "although no rigid classification would be stable over time", due to the amorphous and ever-changing nature of the environmental lobby, that "it is possible .... to identify certain broad categories of environmental objectives which have been longstanding and around which groups are clustered". Such objectives would include nature conservation, building preservation, and protection of the rural landscape. He states that "some recently formed groups that have tended to be more radical than others", taking "a global approach", which cuts across these categories. LOWE raises the issue of the changing nature of environmental groups over time. This phenomenon has been discussed and described in literature relating to other voluntary and community groups, in particular by BUTCHER, who found that both goal succession, and the existence of several goals simultaneously, were common.

With the differences in nature between environmental groups, one might expect some conflict to occur between them. This possibility is recognised by KIMBER and RICHARDSON, who state that whilst all groups share a wish to maintain or improve the quality of the environment, they differ widely in their assessment of the urgency of the problem, the solutions, and the means to achieve them. This they illustrate by quoting the Conservation Society's view of the Council for the Protection of Rural England: "..... organisations like the CPRE would have to move from a position of concentration on specific, easily identifiable amenity problems to face the complex and divisive questions of choosing between one good thing for one set of people and another good thing for another group ....."

HERBST quotes the leader of the Wing Airport Resistance Association, an ad-hoc single issue group, as considering the Council for the Protection of Rural England to consist of "the
usual do-gooders who get involved with everything in the community". They also considered the local, long-established amenity group to have as members only "the three-litre Rover set". Comments equally harsh have no doubt been made by established groups about ad-hoc environmental groups.

ALLISON considers many local environmental groups to have an "anywhere but here" attitude to unpleasant developments. This type of attitude certainly led to conflicts between environmental groups over the siting of the third London airport, where most groups agreed that Maplin was the best site, much to the chagrin of its local environmental group (see ATTENBOROUGH). If such differences, and indeed conflicts between local environmental groups are the norm, can there be a co-ordinated local environmental movement? This is a question later chapters examine further.

A major aim of much literature, not only on environmental groups but on voluntary groups in general, is to assess their political significance. The environmental groups themselves express various attitudes towards politics. Whilst most stress their independence from party politics, some, particularly local groups, deny they are involved in political issues at all. Others, such as Friends of the Earth, are open about the political nature of environmental issues and list political lobbying as a major aim. Most groups, however, feel that their work is in "the public interest" (see KIMBER and RICHARDSON), and "the image that is diligently avoided is a sectional one" (LOWE (v)). ALLABY considers that the 'new human ecologists' are overtly political in outlook, inclined towards anarchism. COTGROVE feels that groups like Friends of the Earth and other 'eco activists' "..... openly challenge what is in many ways the central or master-value in industrial society - the primacy of economic goals....." PERMAN points out that campaigning for the environment indicates a lack of confidence in the political system, whilst GREGORY considers environmental issues necessarily political as they concern the allocation of unavoidable social costs. HAEFELE sees the increasing number of pressure groups, including environmental groups, in America
as a dangerous tendency which undermines democracy. ENZENSBERGER considers environmental groups to be not only political but deeply sectional, representing the aims of the middle-classes, often at the expense of working class people. Such sectional conflict is described by CLIFFORD in the London area of Barnsbury, where a residents association scheme for environmental improvement took precedence over installing basic facilities in working-class housing, and re-routed traffic away from middle-class towards working-class streets.

In practice, the differences between groups professing and denying a political side to their activities are mainly of method. Groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England work through discreet lobbying of ministers and civil servants, whereas both local single-issue groups and Friends of the Earth are willing to use more public methods such as demonstrations and petitions to achieve their objectives. However, Friends of the Earth have also undertaken the lobbying methods used by a-political groups (see BUGLER) where they have felt these to be useful.

Environmental Politics

DISCH believes that there is a fundamental dichotomy between those groups which believe that environmental problems can be solved within the present political system, and those which do not. There is little evidence within the literature of environmental groups in Britain with a revolutionary perspective - perhaps the closest example is the formation of the Ecology Party. This organisation was formed in 1973, as the People Party, and has contested both general elections (in 1974 and 1979), and local council elections. In the 1979 general election, the Party fielded 50 candidates, produced a party political broadcast on television, and attracted a total of 38,878 votes. Its candidates beat a total of 28 other candidates, being bottom of the poll in 27 seats. The Ecology Party sponsored three candidates for election to the European Parliament, attracting 17,953 votes. The Party has achieved
success in a small number of elections for County, District and Parish councils, but by 1981 the Party had not achieved the electoral breakthrough it had hoped for, and feared that it might be eclipsed in the public eye by the formation of another new party, the Social Democrats. The Ecology Party's 1979 election manifesto stated:

"When it comes down to it, the message of the major parties is very similar - business as usual. They all recommend more of the same, even though their policies have proved themselves increasingly inadequate, even though it is clear that the deepening crisis of the industrial world requires a new approach.

The Ecology Party exists to help people face up to this crisis."

Despite its contention that existing British politics is "......just a meaningless exchange of narrow-minded dogma", it is not revolutionary, but is committed to achieving its objectives through the democratic process of election to Parliament.

In contrast to the Ecology Party are the three environmental groups organised around the three major political parties. The Liberal and Conservative Ecology Groups draw their membership from within their respective parties. The Conservative Ecology group aims to:

"......form a bridge between the fast-growing ecology movement and the world of practical politics.

We believe that the Conservative Party, with its proven record of environmental concern, is the best hope for political, economic and social stability in the difficult years which may lie ahead."

The aims of the Liberal Ecology Group include:

"To encourage the adoption by the Liberal Party of policies based on sound ecological principles.

To encourage environmentally aware people to join and give support to the Liberal Party."

The two groups between them have under 500 members, but both claim to have access to the decision-making machinery of their
respective parties, and support from party Members of Parliament. To date, however, neither group is able to point to significant advances which they have made towards achieving their aims (private communications).

The Socialist Environment and Resources Association, whilst having 'consultative status' with the Labour Party, and having clause four of the Labour Party constitution as part of its aims, seeks to:

"Disseminate information throughout the labour movement and enlist its support......"

by the labour movement, including other socialist parties and particularly the Trade Union movement. SERA aims to "...... ensure that present and future generations live and work in a healthy and stable environment". Its membership is about 800, with over 100 trade union branches and local Labour Parties affiliated. Whilst the group feels that it has made some impact, especially upon the policies agreed at Labour Party annual conferences, many trades unions and much of the Labour Party remain unconvinced of the seriousness of environmental problems (see Annual Reports, 1980 and 1981).

Whilst all four of these overtly political environmental groups have what COTGROVE describes as a 'catastrophist' view of environmental problems, none is revolutionary in DISCH's terminology, as they seek in different ways to work through the existing political system. Whilst a small number of far-left political groups have recently shown some interest in environmental issues, particularly over the question of nuclear power generation, revolutionary activity on environmental issues is very rare in Britain.

One other organisation in Britain seeks to bring a political dimension to the environmental movement, in rather a different way. The Green Alliance was launched in 1979 aiming to:

"......ensure that the political priorities of the United Kingdom are determined within an ecological perspective".
The Alliance is to a large extent composed of existing environmental groups, and has links with all the 'political' environmental groups. Its stance is non-party political, and its major practical initiatives have been the circulation of a parliamentary newsletter to assist lobbying by environmental groups, and the circulation of a questionnaire on environmental attitudes to prospective Members of Parliament before the 1979 general election. The purpose of this questionnaire, the replies to which were to be published, was to allow people to vote for Members of Parliament with a sympathetic attitude to the environment, rather than along party lines. In the event, few candidates replied to the questionnaire, perhaps an indication of the priority they give to environmental issues.

In general environmental groups appear keen to deny party political allegiance, with Friends of the Earth, for example, stressing that it is 'unhampered by party political allegiance'. The case studies of local environmental groups indicate that most of them desire a closer co-operation with their local authorities. The belief of such groups that they are acting in the public interest leads them to believe that only lack of knowledge and poor communication cause conflict with their local authority (GREGORY). For these groups, full implementation of the procedures for public participation in planning is a goal (see LOWE (iii)). Studies by HAIN and COCKBURN for example, would, however, seem to show that the existence of a system of participation does not by itself ensure that environmental groups can play a real part in decision-making, and as CALDWELL points out, environmental groups believing they are acting in the public good are often in conflict with "the conviction of public and business administrators that they represent the public interest." GREGORY, meanwhile, points out that there is no reason to believe that, any more than any other group of people, environmentalists' actions are always in the public good. What do local environmental groups think about politics? Do they share the types of views expressed by national groups? and how does this affect their actions. These questions
arising from the literature are discussed in later chapters.

The question of what power environmental groups do, and should, have in decision-making is part of the debate on pluralism and participation which has continued in the USA since the 1930's, and more recently in Britain (see PATEMAN, KIMBER and RICHARDSON ii). In 1935, BENTLEY in America wrote that "the process of government must be treated wholly as a group process", but in Britain pressure groups were ". . . largely ignored until the mid 1950's on the national level and the late 1960's in local government" (FUJISHIN). FUJISHIN attributes this lack of study to the "deep tradition of Burkean representative democracy" in Britain:

"According to this tradition, it is the exclusive function of political parties to canalise and transmit the will of the citizenry to their elected representatives who then proceed to transmit this public will into positive law. The existence of organised groups of citizens standing outside the party system and pressing the legislature and executive to adopt specific policies is an unfortunate aberration from the democratic ideal."

The first studies of pressure groups in Britain, however, revealed that their influence on decision-making was considerable. HAIN states that, during the 1960's and 1970's:

".....a massive growth in participation through various pressure groups is not in question: it is a phenomenon which has occurred throughout the Western capitalist societies."

Amongst the reasons for this growth was a realisation of the shortcomings of the representative system. FUJISHIN lists, for example, the trend towards larger and remoter administrative units, the involvement of specialist-trained officials in policy making, and the a-typical socio-economic characteristics of elected representatives (SAUNDERS) as reasons why electors felt that policy-making was not under their control. NEWTON found that poor turnout in local government elections, plus the fact that electors based their decision mainly on national factors, meant that local issues had little impact on local elections, and therefore may not have been a firm sanction upon local representatives. HAIN in addition analyses the aims of
participation as including currently powerless groups in society in decision-making, and overcoming the failure of the current system to deal with a range of social problems.

Support for, or opposition to, participatory democracy would therefore seem to depend on the relative ability of this system to represent the views of the electorate. Studies of pressure groups have, however, questioned their representativeness. SAUNDERS, in a study of Croydon, found that far from including the views of the disenfranchised, participation was more easily utilised by the already privileged, and "those who protest loudest are often those who have least to complain about". Even where groups are formed to represent a range of interests, they may come to be dominated by the middle-classes and professional people (see HAIN), or by an "inner circle" of decision-makers (see FUJISHIN). Indeed, the decision-makers may dominate more than one pressure group, forming a stage army (NEWTON, FUJISHIN).

Even when they are representative, the degree of power exerted by a pressure group can vary greatly. HAIN's study of the Covent Garden Forum concluded that voluntary groups had achieved little power through the Forum, conforming to the limited idea of participation envisaged by the local authority, and hampered by lack of information and expertise. COCKBURN found that neighbourhood councils set up by the local authority in Lambeth were starved of funds and influence once their views began to differ markedly from those of the local authority. Various studies have likewise pointed that groups having no practical sanctions (such as strikes, for example) are forced to rely for influence on the goodwill of the authorities, and must modify both their demands and tactics accordingly (see ALLISON). DEARLOVE found that local councillors regarded some voluntary groups as 'responsible' and were sympathetic to their wishes. Groups making demands which did not accord with the councillors' policies were not accorded an equal hearing. If these groups then resorted to more public methods of achieving their aims, such as demonstrations, councillors denounced them as 'irresponsible' and continued to ignore their demands.
Again, the question arises of how applicable these findings are to local environmental groups in the study areas, and how the groups' activities might be modified by local authority attitudes. Given that most environmental groups aim to influence the authorities to their viewpoint, and that they rarely have any sanctions available, the ability to present a coherent and credible case for their views is most important. The case-study literature on environmental groups in particular points to the difficulty that many groups face in obtaining sufficient finance and expertise to function efficiently. This is particularly true in situations involving a public inquiry. ATTENBOROUGH, describing one such inquiry, says:

"It is clear that much of the data that ideally would have been required to make the decision was not available.....(the environmental group) although articulate and able to call several expert witnesses, had difficulty finding the time, information and opportunity to match point-for-point the case (of the developers)."

GREGORY describes how the courtroom-like atmosphere of an inquiry, and the need to match one expert testimony with another heighten the sense of conflict between environmentalists and developers. Often a situation arises where all major parties in an inquiry are represented by barristers, and comparisons with a criminal trial are likely (COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND SOCIETY). Whilst some environmental groups are able to muster formidable resources of money and expertise (see HERBST on Wing Airport Resistance Association), this type of system for the resolution of environmental conflicts seems likely to discriminate against poorer and less well-educated groups in society. HALL describes the problems faced by groups with members unused to official meetings, and with no knowledge of local and national government procedure. The Surrey and Newham study aims to ascertain whether such problems were regularly faced by local environmental groups.

A number of authors call for assistance to voluntary groups to combat the inequality of resources between them and the businesses and official bodies they oppose. GREGORY calls
for financial assistance from government to aid environmental
groups, but HERBST points out the contradiction in this, in
that government would often then be financing opposition to
itself which was causing costly delays to proposed projects.
The WOLFENDEN report saw this contradiction, but felt that by
using intermediary bodies to distribute finance, sufficient
distance between government and voluntary groups could be
maintained. Both BUTCHER and TAYLOR describe situations where
voluntary groups received advice and assistance in non-financial
as well as financial ways, but the various reports of the
government-financed Community Development Projects question
the extent to which outside assistance can be of long-term
benefit to groups in more deprived areas (CDP). The studies
by TAYLOR and BUTCHER are interesting in that they describe
the activities of local voluntary groups over a period of time,
often not involving issues of overwhelming importance, but of
an everyday nature. Similar descriptions of voluntary groups
in three areas (HATCH) and of community groups (JONES and MAYO
for example) do exist, but are relatively few in number (see
BUTCHER). There are no similar studies of environmental
groups as such. Do they in fact receive assistance of this
type? Broad descriptions of the movement lack the detail of
the community group studies, whilst the case-studies tend to
concentrate on major planning issues which, by their nature,
are relatively scarce. One result of this is the multiplicity
of descriptions of major issues that do occur, the most extreme
example being the controversy over the third London airport,
discussed by ATTENBOROUGH, GREGORY, HERBST, PERMAN and SELF,
amongst others. There are a large number of local environmental
groups, over 1500 registered with the Civic Trust alone, so
that only a minority of total environmental group time is taken
up with major planning issues. What activities fill the rest
of environmental groups' time?

In addition, the community group studies suggest a number
of questions about the influence and organisation of local
voluntary groups. How and why do they form? What are the
preconditions, as opposed to the immediate trigger to formation?
How are aims decided and do they change over time? Are groups
hierarchical or broad-based in organisation? What steps do they take to influence local authorities?

For environmental groups in particular, the question of issues is a vital one, which has received relatively little stress in the literature. GREGORY points to the vast number of planning and other environmental decisions made, and the fact that "..... it may only be one case in a hundred that eventually becomes a matter of public concern ......" What leads to some being taken up and others ignored? What aspects of their environment do groups wish to protect or improve? How do groups choose issues, and over which issues do they form? Questions raised in the broader studies of environmental groups include the complexity of issues and their political and economic implications - are the local environmental groups aware of these? LOWE (vi) has found that many national environmental groups share both committee and ordinary members. Does the membership of local groups also overlap in this way? What is the relationship between local and national environmental groups?

The intensive studies of community groups have shown that this type of research cannot easily be subsumed under one academic discipline. BUTCHER found no single set of concepts explained the activities of community groups in a satisfactory manner, and other writers in the field of environmental groups (for example CLIFFORD, LOWE) have drawn on the literature of a number of disciplines for useful concepts to employ. There is thus a vast range of literature which, whilst not dealing directly with environmental groups, can be of assistance. Such literature includes that on planning, law and administration, urban and rural sociology, environmental psychology, local government politics, organisational theory and human geography as well as those already mentioned - community group studies and the theory of participation in politics. It is not proposed here to attempt an outline of these many fields. Where the literature has been particularly useful, it will be described in the relevant chapter of the thesis. References in the various chapters will also include a variety of relevant literature at the appropriate point.
National Environmental Groups in Britain

To provide a background to a detailed study of local environmental groups, it is necessary to have some idea of the structure of the environmental movement in Britain at the national level. A reasonable amount of information is available about national environmental groups in Britain from study both of existing literature and studies underway, and of information produced by the groups themselves - journals, annual reports and publicity material. The picture that emerges from these sources is of a complex, interlocking series of groups, a full study of which has been carried out by LOWE (forthcoming).

It is difficult to establish exactly the number of national environmental groups in Britain. This is partly a problem of definition, similar to that encountered with local environmental groups (see Introduction). The Directory of British Associations lists less than one hundred environmental and conservation groups, whilst the 1969 'Countryside in 1970' conference was attended by over three hundred organisations professing an interest in the rural environment. These included groups like the Caravan Club, for whom the environment is not the major purpose for their existence.

There is a wide variety of environmental groups at the national level, from those concerned with a single interest, such as the Victorian Society, to groups concerned with a range of issues, such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England. The former is concerned only with the preservation of Victorian buildings, the latter with all issues affecting the rural environment. There are organisations concerned with wildlife such as the Royal Society for Nature Conservation, the Flora and Fauna Preservation Society, and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Other groups are concerned about public access to the countryside, for example the Ramblers Association and Commons and Footpaths Protection Society, or planning in general, for example the Civic Trust and the Town and Country Planning Association.
The variety of voluntary organisations taking action on environmental issues at national level is matched by the statutory and semi-statutory sector. These organisations vary from the large and powerful Department of the Environment, through quangos such as the Countryside Commission and the Nature Conservancy Council, to almost-independent organisations such as the National Trust.

LOWE (iii) describes the amorphous nature of the national environmental movement, and also the various efforts that have been made to co-ordinate its activities. When the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) was formed, its aim was to co-ordinate the activities of existing national and local environmental groups. It developed beyond this brief, however, and is now a large organisation in its own right. Following the 'Countryside in 1970' series of conferences, the Council for Environmental Conservation (CoEnCo) was formed to try and link all sections of the environmental movement in a similar way. In addition, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations, which attempts to provide a co-ordinating and supportive role for voluntary activity as a whole, has a sub-committee for groups concerned with planning and the environment. Table 2 shows how the membership of these different bodies overlap. Some of their members are in turn co-ordinators of other environmental groups. The 'Joint Committee' referred to in the table consists of representatives from the Georgian and Victorian groups, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, and the Civic Trust. The thirty organisations listed in the table are regularly in contact with each other, and theoretically at least able to co-ordinate their campaigns. In addition to this formal contact, LOWE (iii) traced a network of informal links between groups. In 1972, for example, five people were members of the national committees of the CPRE, Ramblers Association and Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society simultaneously. Eight other people were members of the committees of two of these three groups at the same time.

Local environmental groups are linked to this web of contacts through affiliation to national environmental
## TABLE 2

**MEMBERSHIP OF THREE ENVIRONMENTAL UMBRELLA BODIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Group</th>
<th>Umbrella Groups</th>
<th>Has local branches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NCVO</td>
<td>CoEnCo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglers Co-operative Assn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>British Trust for Conservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camping Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caravan Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commons Preservation Society</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council for British Archeology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council for Environmental Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council for National Parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country Landowners Assn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyclists Touring Club</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farming &amp; Wildlife Advisory Grp</td>
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<td>Friends of the Earth</td>
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<td>Inland Waterways Assn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joint Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keep Britain Tidy</td>
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<td>National Soc. for Clean Air</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedestrians Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ramblers Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Inst. British Architects</td>
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<td>Royal Soc. Prevention Accidents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Town Planning Inst.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Royal Soc. Nature Conservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soil Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>Town &amp; Country Planning Assn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transport 2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Hostels Assoc.</td>
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<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

 *(NCVO - National Council for Voluntary Organisations Planning & Environment Group  
 CPRE - Council for the Protection of Rural England  
 CoEnCo - Council for Environmental Conservation  
 o - other NVCO group)*
organisations. The CPRE has a network of forty-three county branches in England. Some of these in turn co-ordinate the actions of smaller local groups, as the Surrey Amenity Council does in that county. The Royal Society for Nature Conservation similarly acts as a federation of forty-three county naturalists and nature conservation trusts, and the Ramblers Association has many local branches throughout the country. The Civic Trust was formed specifically to encourage the formation of local amenity groups, and is in regular contact with nearly one thousand of them. Through channels such as these, local environmental groups can play a part in issues as both national and, through the contacts of co-ordinating bodies, international level (see Table 3).

However, not all environmental groups are part of this network. It is noticeable that few of the 'new-wave' environmental groups are represented on the umbrella bodies. Both Friends of the Earth and the Conservation Society are represented only on CoEnCo, and in the case of the former this involves a presence on one committee only. In addition to these two groups, which are interested in a broad range of environmental issues, many other 'new-wave' environmental groups have formed in Britain in recent years. There are many which are more specialised in their concerns. Topics which they cover include opposition to nuclear power (such as the Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace, and many local anti-nuclear groups); wildlife conservation (including Greenpeace and the British Association of Nature Conservationists); alternative technology (for example the Intermediate Technology Development Group); rural re-settlement; animal welfare and organic farming; and the philosophy of the environment (the Schumacher Society). Many groups are relatively informally structured, and are not discussed in the press or the literature of the more traditional environmental groups, and thus information about them can be found only in journals such as Vole and Undercurrents, or in literature which the groups themselves produce.
**TABLE 3**

OUTSIDE BODIES UPON WHICH THE COUNCIL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION IS REPRESENTED

"In order to pursue the co-ordinating function of CoEnCo, numerous links and contacts are maintained with official and unofficial bodies ......

(Annual Report, 1979)

Those bodies listed in the Annual Report on which CoEnCo is represented by its officers or paid staff are:

- The Royal Society of Arts
- All-party Conservation Committee
- Water Space Amenity Commission
- Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution
- British Waterways Board
- Environmental sub-committee of the House of Lords EEC Scrutinising Committee
- National Council of Voluntary Organisations Planning and Environment Group
- United Kingdom Committee of the International Union for Nature Conservation
- British Standards Institution Environment and Pollution Standards Committee
- Countryside Commission
- European Environmental Bureau
There are a variety of links between environmental groups of this type. Mostly these are informal, through people who are active in several groups or via exchange of publications. Some information-exchange networks exist, such as the Network for Alternative Technology and Technological Assessment (NATTA), and that formed around publication of the Rural Resettlement Handbook. Ad-hoc networks form occasionally to organise conferences and meetings. Some more formal links do exist, the major ones being around a specific issue, in which non-environmentalist groups are involved. Transport 2000 and the Anti-Nuclear Campaign were organised to involve the interest (and resources) of trades unions in particular environmental issues, and thus had to have a more formal structure. Co-operation with trades unions marks the 'new-wave' environmental groups off from those of a more traditional nature, whose links tended to be more with employers than employees, for example through CoEnCo's business contacts, and the Business and Industry Trust for the Environment (see VOLE).

There is considerable overlap between some of the 'new-wave' environmental groups and other 'alternative' movements in Britain, such as fringe political groups, the alternative communities movement, vegetarian groups, and those concerned with civil liberties. All these movements share the problems of lack of resources and difficulties in disseminating their ideas common to British groups outside the current political concensus. These shared problems have lead, for example, to the establishment of small printing and publishing ventures, and even an alternative distribution organisation, the Publications Distribution Cooperative. Through using these facilities, and through overlap and exchange of literature, the groups come into fairly regular contact. Another point of contact is provided by the few organisations and foundations which are prepared to give funds to fringe groups. The Rowntree Social Service Trust, for example, provides premises in Soho which are used by small groups in the fields of the environment, politics, medicine, science policy, civil liberties, and consumer rights. Similar facilities exist in several areas of London and elsewhere in Britain.
The 'new-wave' environmental groups also have links with organisations throughout the world, and particularly within Europe. Some links are organisational, for example there are Friends of the Earth groups in many countries, and Greenpeace is also a world-wide organisation. Other contacts exist through interest in common issues, and through international meetings (particularly opposition to nuclear power generation). Other links are personal, through activists from abroad visiting Britain and making contact with groups here, and by Britons travelling abroad (see for example newsletters produced by Friends of the Earth and the Conservation Society).

The informal organisation of the 'new-wave' environmental groups, and their links with the 'alternative' movement, have caused problems for them. One well-known trade unionist referred to such groups disparagingly as the "brown rice and sandals brigade", although this did not preclude his working with several of the groups in the Anti-Nuclear Campaign. More conventional organisations, such as Trades Unions, are suspicious of those groups which claim to be informal and co-operative rather than hierarchical. Friends of the Earth have evolved a more traditional power structure to facilitate contacts, and in particular, decision-making appears to be highly centralised in the national headquarters (see BUGLER). A true picture of the organisational differences between groups would only be obtained by more detailed study, however.

One characteristic which the 'new-wave' environmental groups seem to share, in contrast with the more traditional groups, is a relatively high level of member activism. This is only a subjective impression, prompted by the content of published material, the relatively high number of conferences and meetings, and the attendance at demonstrations. The existence of the latter is another characteristic more common to the 'new-wave' groups. Their activities have included marches, highly publicised stunts by Friends of the Earth (for example appearances in nuclear fall-out suits), and
occupations of land. These types of direct action are most common over anti-nuclear power issues, but have reached nowhere near the violence of similar demonstrations in Europe, particularly France and Germany. Many of the 'new-wave' groups are also involved in practical activities, attempting to live their philosophies in the case of rural resettlement groups, and actual construction work in the case of alternative technology. However, practical activity is also carried out by older environmental groups, especially the Royal Society for Nature Conservation and the Civic Trust. The latter administers several funds to promote practical conservation work, whilst the former is involved in the purchase of land to form nature reserves. Also groups like Friends of the Earth have adopted more traditional tactics, such as sitting on government committees of inquiry.

There appear to be relatively few links between the older and the 'new-wave' environmental groups. This is perhaps unsurprising given the differences outlined above. Nevertheless, some contact does occur. Journals such as Vole do describe the activities of traditional environmental groups, and both the Conservation Society and Friends of the Earth do have direct contact with traditional environmental groups, the latter increasingly so. In 1978, for example, Friends of the Earth and the Council for the Protection of Rural England made a joint submission to government on public inquiry procedure. At present Friends of the Earth are acting jointly with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Nature Conservancy Council, and the Society for the Promotion of Nature Conservation to lobby parliament on the Wildlife and Countryside Bill. Friends of the Earth has also worked with the Cyclists Touring Club on transport issues and with a number of traditional groups opposing building developments. It is interesting to note that Friends of the Earth refused to join the Anti-Nuclear Campaign because left-wing political groups were involved in that organisation, although the Liberal Ecology Group had no such qualms.
Environmental Issues in Britain

Despite this apparent cleft within the British environmental movement, many environmental issues concern all types of group in one form or another. By searching through the national press, specialist environmentalist publications, and publications produced by environmental groups, it is possible to identify some of the issues with which the environmental movement has been concerned in recent years. By searching through publications such as Vole, Undercurrents, Town and Country Planning (Town and Country Planning Association), Civic Trust News, Conservation News (Conservation Society), Friends of the Earth Supporters Bulletin, Conservation Review (Royal Society for Nature Conservation), and annual reports of a number of statutory and voluntary organisations, the following major issues can be identified.

Energy is an issue which has appeared in the literature of many environmental groups, and the national press, throughout the last few years. Environmental groups have opposed wasteful use of fossil fuels, advocated conservation and use of renewable energy sources such as solar and wave power. They have opposed energy production by nuclear fission because of its present and future dangers. The inquiry into expansion of the nuclear waste reprocessing plant at Windscale, in 1976, was attended by many environmental groups, including both older groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England, and newer groups. Since expansion was allowed, the issue of nuclear power has continued to be a major one, although mainly amongst the newer groups. Another major inquiry on an energy issue was that into plans for coal mining in the Vale of Belvoir in 1979/80. Again, both the CPRE and Friends of the Earth were present. The general issue of energy conservation is one upon which some 'new-wave' groups, particularly Friends of the Earth, have been active, whilst alternative technology groups have looked at renewable sources of energy, particularly wind and solar power.
Few environmental groups have been actively involved in pollution issues in the late 1970's and 1980's, in contrast to the stress which was laid upon this hazard in the 1960's. Recently, however, a number of the 'new-wave' groups have campaigned with parents' groups against pollution from the high lead content in petrol. Again, some 'new-wave' groups have campaigned with the agricultural workers' union against the use of pesticide 245T, and with other trades unions against use of asbestos, both for the damage they are thought to cause to health.

In 1980 the Government commissioned an investigation into the possibility of introducing heavier lorries into Britain. The campaign against this possibility has been a major one, and many different groups, of all types, have submitted evidence to the commission conducting the inquiry. Both the CPRE and the Civic Trust urged their local groups to submit individual evidence on the effects of heavier lorries on the environment, but the commission reported in favour of permitting heavier lorries. Both national and local environmental groups have opposed plans to build motorways, although the motorway building programme had been severely curtailed. The "new-wave" environmental groups, in conjunction with trades unions, have campaigned against cutbacks in the provision of public transport. Friends of the Earth has worked with specialist cycling groups to try to persuade the government to introduce special facilities for bicycles. This campaign has included mass cycle rallies.

Wildlife conservation has remained an important issue, both for specialist groups and others. Whilst many nature reserves have been set up, both sites of special scientific interest and areas in national parks have been lost, often through the effects of agriculture. Environmental groups have continued to lobby for better co-operation between the ministries of Agriculture and the Environment. Both specialist groups and Friends of the Earth are, as previously stated, opposing the Wildlife and Countryside Bill as it allows the shooting of protected bird species, and does not strengthen
nature conservation measures. Outside Britain, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace campaigned to prevent extinction of whale species by lobbying the International Whaling Commission. They and other wildlife groups also campaigned on the loss of wildlife habitats worldwide, and the Conservative Ecology Group was also active on this issue.

Building conservation, and opposing large redevelopment schemes has been a continuing concern to the environmental movement. For the Civic Trust and other historic building groups, the main problem has been neglect of historic buildings by their owners, forcing their demolition. With community groups and 'new-wave' groups they have also been involved in opposition to large-scale office development schemes, particularly, recently, in London on the Thames south bank.

In addition to these issues of wide importance, groups have been involved in many other issues recently. Some of these include the problem of over-population, recycling of waste materials, types of industrial production and the quality of work, preserving the green belts, and the loss of countryside through building and the increasing dereliction of inner city areas. Many environmental groups have also been involved in education, at youth as well as adult level, whilst some have concentrated on practical achievements rather than political, lobbying, activity (for example the National Trust).

The environmental movement in Britain thus appears large, wide-ranging and active. However, it is difficult to judge whether it has achieved any real progress towards its aims. Much of its activity, as outlined above, has been a reaction to the decisions of others; those of Government, developers and even farmers; this indicates that the influence of the movement has been restricted at the policy making level.
One reason for this may be the limited financial and other resources of environmental groups, compared with national government and the large companies who are often their opponents. Few of the national environmental groups have large staffs. CoEnCo has a staff of four with which to attempt co-ordination of the entire environmental movement, the Civic Trust has 21 staff, the CPRE 12, and Friends of the Earth about 15 staff at its headquarters, although there are more in the regions and especially in Birmingham. Most of the groups are constantly short of funds, illustrated by their regular appeals to members and the public at large for funds. The 'new-wave' groups, being most opposed to the existing order of society, experience most difficulty in raising funds. The more traditional groups, such as the CPRE, are more likely to count wealthy people amongst their supporters (see LOWE (vii)). Table 4 compares the incomes of some of the largest environmental groups with those of other well-known charities, although traditional groups carrying out practical activities, like the National Trust, are better off, their income is also considerably lower in most cases than that of their opponents. This is particularly ironic, as the COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND SOCIETY point out, when they are opposing one of the nationalised industries or public undertakings, for example the power generating industries or the National Coal Board. Environmental groups are fortunate in that many of them are able to attract people of expertise to give their services free to the organisation, as witnessed by the quality of their publications, and the evidence given to public inquiries such as Windscale. Some of the 'new-wave' groups were only able to be represented at that inquiry by members giving up their jobs to attend (see Socialist Environment and Resources Association, Annual Report 1979). Some groups, especially in the field of historic building preservation, are regularly asked for advice by the Government.

Despite the availability of expertise in this fashion, environmental groups do suffer from their lack of resources. GREGORY indicates some of the constraints which this can
### TABLE 4

**INCOMES OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER VOLUNTARY GROUPS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total Income 1978/79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CoEnCo</td>
<td>£29,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPRE</td>
<td>£104,113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic Trust</td>
<td>£134,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Barnados</td>
<td>£17,163,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Cancer Research</td>
<td>£12,724,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Trust</td>
<td>£9,662,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Wildlife Fund</td>
<td>£1,242,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildfowl Trust</td>
<td>£925,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battersea Dogs Home</td>
<td>£429,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: CHARITIES AID FOUNDATION.
Charities Statistics 1979/80
Kent: the Foundation, 1980
CoEnCo, Civic Trust and CPRE
Annual Reports, 1979/80)
impose upon environmental group activities, especially when they are involved in major public inquiries. In particular, specific types of expertise may be required to fight a case which are not generally available. GREGORY cites, for example, the case of electricity power-stations, where most experts do work or have worked in the very organisations which environmental groups may be opposing. It is always easier to raise funds and assemble expertise for an immediate crisis, rather than a long-term project, so that the concentration of environmental groups upon reacting to outside events may also be a consequence of their lack of resources.

Judgement of the effectiveness of the national environmental movement is further complicated by the fact that many complex economic and political factors affect decisions upon the environment. This is illustrated in the case-study literature, particularly the case of the Third London Airport (see HERBST) and Concorde. The anti-nuclear power movement has mobilised a great many people, and achieved support within major political parties and some Trades Unions, but the programme of building new nuclear power stations has been accelerated and expanded since 1979. Whilst new nature reserves are being declared, others already in existence are being lost to farming and building development. Some large developments have been prevented, only to return later as new proposals, for example the Third London Airport. Other inquiries have been lost by environmentalists, even though they felt that they had won the argument, for example the Windscale inquiry (see BREACH). The question of permitting heavy lorries on Britain's roads has arisen again, ten years after it was thought to have been defeated, following a massive campaign by groups such as the Civic Trust (see KIMBER and RICHARDSON).

A journalist with much experience of environmental issues, BUGLER, summarised his view of the effect of the national environmental movement over the last ten years:
"I am driven to the conclusion that it has been a decade of considerable intellectual achievement and success in consciousness-raising, but one of great practical failure....the most effective prevention of vast, destructive projects has come not from environmentalists but from slump and recession. Environmentalists in the UK have failed to prevent Windscale's growth....or indeed an expanded nuclear programme; they have nobly opposed motorways and delayed them for a few years, but in the end the Civil Service has come back to build them; the Alkali Inspectorate still exists in its cozy relationship to industrialists, allowing them to unload muck into the atmosphere. Oil pollution is written off as a fact of modern life .....Perhaps this coming decade should be seen as one in which environmentalists maintain their moral advance - and start winning. And that may require new tactics."

Whilst information is available about the national environmental movement, the crucial question of its achievements remain unclear. There is even less information available about local environmental groups - not even their numbers are known with any accuracy.

It is not clear whether local environmental groups share the same problems as their national counterparts. They may not even be concerned about the same issues. Do local and national environmental groups form a coherent movement? Do they use similar methods to achieve their aims? Have local groups achieved the practical success which BUGLER feels has eluded their national counterparts? Only a detailed study such as this thesis is part of can, by relating its findings to available data, answer these questions. The literature posits a number of models to which local environmental groups might be expected to conform, for example those of the pressure group theorists described above. The question is how many, if any, of these models reflect reality. Overall the question is "Does a local environmental movement exist, and if so, what is its form?"
CHAPTER 1

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Vole (editorial) vol IV, no 1, January 1981.


The Need for Environmental Legislation

In Britain, environmental groups operate within a complex framework of legislation, with a wide variety of Acts of Parliament covering people's activities in relation to the environment. The legislation affects both the way environmental groups act, and their chances of success, as later chapters will show. Some of these restrict specific types of damage to the environment, others restrict the uses to which certain areas of land can be put. As the COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND SOCIETY remark:

"The time is long past, (if it ever truly existed) when people were free to do what they wanted with their own land."

The rationale behind such controls over the freedom of the individual is that an individual's activities can have a sometimes dramatic effect upon both their neighbours, and the environment in general. These effects are known as externalities, because they are not covered by the market system, or diseconomies because they are of a harmful nature. Externalities arise when the actions of individuals or groups of people (for example firms) have a harmful effect upon either other individuals, or the environment as a whole, which the instigators of these effects need not take into account. For example, a factory may emit smoke which causes air pollution, damage to surrounding buildings, and affects people's health. Costs, such as repairs to buildings or loss of wages through illness, are thus imposed upon people living around the factory. The firm does not have to take these costs into account when deciding the volume and price of goods it sells, so that the optimum level of production for the firm may be higher than the optimum level of production for society as a whole. The problem arises because the firm uses a 'common good', air, which everyone needs, but which they do not have to pay to use.
Theoretically, there are two different ways in which this problem can be tackled, apart from making all common goods private property and subject to the market, which is clearly not feasible. If the manufacturer in this theoretical case were to pay compensation to people who have suffered from the effects of smoke, this would add an extra cost to the manufacturing process, and the producer's optimum level of production should approach that of society. In practice, however, this approach has many problems. Whilst in the example cited, it might be fairly easy to allocate a cost to the damage suffered by people affected by smoke, this is not always the case. Assessors trying to carry out a cost-benefit analysis on the proposed Third London Airport found it impossible to distinguish a generally acceptable way to work out costs for environmental disruption (see SELF, HERBST). In some cases the diseconomy may be so widely dispersed that it would be almost impossible to allocate any compensation, for example with the loss of an area of scenic beauty enjoyed by many thousands of people, or the harmful effects of lead in petrol upon school children. The other approach to the problem of diseconomies is to limit them by legislation, for example by regulations limiting the amount of smoke which may be emitted from a chimney. In this case too, there can be complications. The manufacturer in the hypothetical case might argue that, if smoke control regulations are imposed, he is likely to face additional costs, for a benefit which will accrue to the whole of society, and thus society should compensate him for these additional costs. Basically, diseconomies represent a cost which is not allocated by the market mechanism, and any attempts to alter where that cost falls are likely to cause controversy.

Diseconomies, and their related problems, are not limited to manufacturing. Whilst the aggregation of people into cities to work and live may lead to economies of scale in the provision of services, it also has diseconomies. As the size of settlements increases, the time which has to be spent upon moving people and goods increases, as does traffic congestion, as any Londoner will testify. Similarly, the
development of a new housing estate on the edges of a town may require expenditure by the local authority to provide roads, sewers and other services, which must be paid for from rates levied from existing residents. New residents moving into the estate balance the increased rate costs, which their presence brings to the area, against the pleasure of their new homes. Existing residents have increased costs, and may be faced with a less desirable environment as a result.

In some cases, for example that of the factory, diseconomies might be decreased if the factory was located away from buildings and people which its smoke might harm. The local people would no longer have to suffer the effects of pollution, and the manufacturer would not have to face the cost of smoke control. In this way, people with different needs from the environment would be situated in different areas, where their needs did not conflict with those of other users of the environment. This question of separate facilities is further discussed by MISHAN, who uses the example of a beach where some people wish to play radios, and others require peace and quiet. If the two groups are separated, diseconomies are minimised. However ideal this may sound, it also presents problems. In the first instance, the amount of land available for separate facilities is limited, especially in a small country such as Britain. Secondly, it is not always possible to separate uses geographically (for example roads need to be combined with houses, to provide transport to the houses), and separation may induce costs of its own. The more distant a factory is from its sources of inputs, including labour, the higher the costs of transport will be to both manufacturer and employees.

Despite the complex nature of diseconomies, and the problems faced in trying to minimise them, there is in Britain a large body of law which attempts to do just that. A major part of this legislation relates to separation of different land uses, with the types of activity allowed in different geographical areas controlled by planning legislation. This is the basis of the earlier statement on the restriction
of an individual's freedom to exploit land which s/he owns in any way, and has been the basis of environmental legislation in Britain for many years.

Early Environmental Legislation in Britain

Piecemeal legislation to reduce environmental diseconomies, for example pollution from offensive smells or fire hazards, has a history dating back to Greek times (see BELL & BELL). Comprehensive legislation on the environment was not, however, introduced in Britain until after the industrial revolution. The dramatic growth in population, and the rapid pace of development of towns, factories and housing made the existence of diseconomies impossible to ignore. The growth of city slums, viewed as dens of vice, disease and depravity, alarmed many influential people in Victorian times (see for example CHERRY). At the same time these people were faced with the loss of valued landscapes and historic buildings, leading people like Octavia Hill to found 'rescue' organisations such as the National Trust to save them.

As the problems of the new cities became clear, Parliament was forced to adopt legislation to attempt to overcome them. The first legislation of this period related to public health matters, regulating water supplies, drainage and cleansing, and controlling the density of buildings for housing. Legislation also allowed for the clearing of residential areas considered as slums, which were a hazard to the health of those who lived in them and the public in general. The idea of separate locations for conflicting land uses was first contained in the 1844 Metropolitan Building Act and the 1874 Slaughterhouse Act, which restricted 'offensive trades', such as slaughtering and bone-boiling to beyond the boundaries of London. The 1906 Alkali Act, by contrast, attempted to limit pollution from certain types of factory which were not so restricted, to agreed standards.
Whilst this legislation did attempt to reduce environmental problems, it was relatively unsuccessful. Slum clearance occurred, but those dispersed by it merely became homeless, and in many cases made slums still in existence even more crowded (see CHERRY). The removal of noxious industries to the outskirts of London was followed by a similar movement of people, with the development of new residential areas near the factories. Thus following the introduction of multi-purpose local authorities, elected by local people, (County councils in 1888, Borough and District Councils in 1894), a new approach was attempted. This approach was to prevent areas of slum housing from developing, and incompatible land uses being located next to each other, by planning in advance the way a particular area would develop. This provision related only to previously undeveloped areas, and allowed either local authorities or developers to draw up 'Town Planning schemes', which would set out the way in which an area was to develop. These schemes had to be approved by central Government, after which any developer must adhere to the plans for a particular area of land. The Act making these provisions was the 1909 Housing and Town Planning Act. As the act curtailed the freedom of landowners, compensation for any loss of potential profit from land covered by a planning scheme was payable by the Government. Similarly, if the value of the land was increased by its inclusion in a planning scheme, the Government was entitled to collect a betterment levy. These two provisions, betterment levy and compensation, caused many problems for government in future years (see CHERRY). The need to pay compensation limited the extent of planning schemes, whilst the betterment levy proved extremely unpopular, and difficult to assess. However, the system of town planning schemes forms the basis of British environmental legislation.

As early environmental legislation represented a dramatic increase in State control over the rights of landowners, a number of checks upon the Executive were included in the legislation. Town Planning schemes approved by Government departments had to be laid before both Houses of Parliament for thirty days, and fell if any objection was received from
a member of either House. This provision was repealed in 1919, but other checks upon the working of the legislation remained. Appeals against closure orders on unfit properties, and objections to Town Planning schemes could be made to the Local Government Board (part of Central Government), and a public inquiry held into the objection or appeal. The procedure of holding public inquiries dates back to the 1875 Public Health Act, and assisted in settling disputes between Government and the public outside the courts. Whilst this meant that a wide range of views on the subject in question could be heard, and the expense of legal representation was (in theory at least) avoided, its consequence was that the relevant Central Government department was the final arbiter in disputes between Government and the public. This principle remains in planning legislation today, and Chapters 4 and 5 indicate some of the effects that national Government activity can have upon the local environment.

From these limited beginnings, environmental legislation in Britain gradually broadened in scope throughout the twentieth century. Town Planning schemes were authorised, and later made compulsory, for more and more areas. They were extended in scope to allow schemes to protect features of historic and architectural interest. Preservation of the countryside was another feature of environmental legislation introduced in the first half of this century. The administrative machinery governing environmental legislation remained cumbersome, however (see CHERRY), and the rate of implementation of both planning schemes and other environmental legislation was slow. Only 38 planning schemes had been approved by 1930, and the process of plan-making was so slow that the plans had often been superseded by interim development. It was not until after the Second World War that environmental legislation in Britain began to become more comprehensive in its approach, and broader in its coverage of the country.
The Influence of the Second World War

During the Second World War, state control over many aspects of life increased dramatically, and the idea of national planning became gradually accepted, in the economic as well as land use sphere. There was a general determination also to plan in advance for peace, so that the unfulfilled promises of the First World War would not be repeated. ELKIN describes how planners had come to realise that a piecemeal solution to problems created difficulties in itself - for example the improvement of housing conditions through the building of new estates could bring problems of lack of work and amenities in the vicinity of the estate, unless it was planned on a comprehensive basis. Research into problems of planning and development thus began in the early stages of the War, and continued throughout the 1940's. The first major inquiry was undertaken by the Barlow Commission, which reported in 1940. It's conclusion was that:

".....the disadvantages in many, if not most, of the great industrial concentrations, alike on the strategical, the social, and the economic side, do constitute serious handicaps and even in some respects dangers to the nation's life and development, and we are of the opinion that definite action should be taken by the government toward remedying them."

The main recommendations of the commission were:

1. A central planning board should be set up.
2. Congested urban areas should be re-developed and industrial populations dispersed from them.
3. A balance of industrial development should be encouraged throughout the country and the drift to London and the South East should be studied with a view to halting it.

In 1940 the Prime Minister appointed Lord Reith as Minister of Works and Buildings, to investigate post-war re-construction. Reith formed the Uthwatt Committee to investigate the problems of compensation and betterment which had bedevilled earlier planning legislation; and the Scott Committee to advise on land utilization in rural areas.
The Uthwatt Committee reported in 1942, by which time an interim report had already recommended that development control be extended throughout the country, to prevent building work which might prejudice re-construction, and that special re-construction areas for planning as a whole be defined.

The final report of the Committee suggested vesting in the State the rights of development in all land outside built-up areas, on payment of fair compensation, and a betterment levy on increases in site value due to planning factors. For developed land they recommended compulsory purchase of all war-damaged and other re-construction areas, plus other land on which to build homes for displaced people.

The terms of reference of the Scott Committee were:

"To consider the conditions which should govern buildings and other constructional development in country areas consistently with the maintenance of agriculture, and in particular factors affecting the location of industry, having regard to economic operation, part-time and seasonal employment, the well-being of rural communities and the preservation of rural amenities."

The committee interpreted their terms of reference widely. Their report, issued in 1942, recommended the establishment of national parks under a central authority, special action to preserve Britain's coasts, the registration of commons to safeguard access rights and the formation of national nature reserves.

In 1943 the Ministry of Town and Country Planning was established. This had the responsibility of "securing consistency and continuity in the framing and execution of a national policy with respect to the use and development of land throughout England and Wales" (SCHAFFER). One of the first acts of this newly-created Ministry was the preparation of the 1944 Town and Country Planning Act. This allowed local authorities to purchase land quickly and simply to deal with war damage and "areas of bad layout or obsolete development" (CHERRY).
This was a necessary prerequisite for controlled reconstruc-
tion after the end of the war. The Act was also the first
to make provision for the control of land used by statutory
undertakings, such as the gas and electricity industries.

Investigations and inquiries into land use and economic
planning continued throughout the War. When the Labour
Government was elected in 1945, it was committed to put into
practice many of the recommendations of these enquiries, as
part of an ambitious programme of social legislation, which
included for example the formation of the National Health
Service. It was in this spirit of reform that the Act which
formed the basis of modern land-use planning was introduced.

Post-war Reconstruction

Once the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act became law,
a landowner merely had the right to continue using his/her
land for its existing purpose, but no right to develop it.
Virtually all land was subject to planning control, and local
authorities were permitted to undertake development. All
development rights and values were vested in the State, with
compensation paid 'once and for all' for loss of development
rights, out of a central fund. Developers were to pay a 100%
charge on betterment.

Plan-making became compulsory for the whole country, and
was based on the counties. The County Council had to conduct
a survey of their area before preparing a plan. The survey
had to include physical features, population and economic
trends, social structure, existing land use and future trends,
and the projects proposed by other government agencies in the
area. The survey was to be used as the basis for the develop-
ment plan, which included a map showing land use; a programme
map showing proposals for the next five years, and less
comprehensively for future years; and a written statement.
The plan included proposals for housing, schools, transportation,
open space and standards for development. The aim of such plans
was, as far as possible, to separate incompatible land-uses by
a system of allocating zones, within which only certain types of land use would be permitted. The surveys were intended to make this possible by ascertaining how much land each particular category of use would require during the lifetime of the plan.

Under the 1947 Act, anyone undertaking development had to apply for planning permission – although statutory undertakers and central government were excluded from this provision, and were expected only to consult with relevant planning authorities.

In addition to plan-making and development control, the Act granted various other powers, including the designation of "green belt" areas around cities where the countryside was to be preserved, and comprehensive development areas. The latter was a process by which public acquisition of land was used to develop or re-develop a large area, and was a means of ensuring that land was made available for re-construction after war damage.

The plan-making process had an increased degree of public involvement. After surveying the area, the planning authority prepared a draft plan. They then consulted all other local authorities affected by the plan, and considered any objections they made before formally approving the plan, and submitting it to the Minister. Notice of the proposed plan was posted in local and national press, and the public was able to inspect copies displayed by the council in public places. Members of the public could then make objections or representations on the plan to the Minister, who was under obligation to provide either a public inquiry or a public hearing at which all objectors had a right to appear. The object of the inquiry, held by an Inspector appointed by the Minister, was to provide new information, to give an idea of public feeling, and to give guidance to the central government review of the plan. The consultation process aimed to give the Minister:

"......access to the sentiments of both the affected neighbouring political units or sub-units and the affected public." (ROBERTS)
Following the inquiry, at which cross-examination was allowed, the Inspector reported to the Minister, who made the final decision on whether a plan was accepted or not. Once the plan was accepted, development control decisions were to "have regard to the provisions of the development plan" (ROBERTS), although "other material factors" (SMITH) could be taken into consideration. The 1947 Act allowed prospective developers who had been refused planning permission the right to appeal to the Minister, who could then instigate a local public inquiry or a private hearing into the case. The public inquiry would function in the same way as one held into a development plan. There was no specific provision for public involvement in development control. Neighbours to a proposed development had only to be informed of the application if the development was of a particular type, known as 'bad neighbour'.

The 1947 Act was greeted with enthusiasm by proponents of planning. In 1948, a leading article in 'Town and Country Planning', the journal of the Town and Country Planning Association, said:

"Until the coming into force of the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act, for nearly 50 years the emphasis of the struggle to secure good planning has been on obtaining adequate legislation. Broadly, this has now been done."

Already the journal had seen the possibilities for public participation that the Act contained - and some hint of the problems which might arise. The article continued:

"The new powers are very strong indeed, and the only safeguard against their abuse or misuse is an active and informed public opinion organised in an independent and responsible body."

(Town and Country Planning, Summer 1948)

In a later issue of the same year, an editorial in the journal remarked:
"...in a democracy, however irritating it may be to technical people, the consent of the planned must be secured. Not for the way in which a piece of planning is being carried out, but for the goal at which the planning is aimed. This is secured by the 1947 Act....."

Throughout the next two years the journal waged a campaign of encouragement of local environmental groups to promote planning, and to keep a watchful eye on procedure under the Act. This legislation was the first to give environmental groups real scope to influence the planning procedure.

The other major plank of the Labour Government's legislation on the physical environment was the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. The findings of the Scott Committee about national parks had been more extensively studied in the Dower Report, published in 1945. Following this, the government had set up a National Parks Committee, which was converted by the 1949 Act into the National Parks Commission, and which later designated the 10 National Parks. It also prescribed the sphere of work of the Nature Conservancy Council, which had previously been formed as a research council on the natural environment. The Conservancy was to select, manage, and study National Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. It was also to establish research stations, and survey the biota of England, Wales and Scotland.

The National Parks etc. Act was a disappointment to some people as it did not provide for separate, independent planning authorities by right for National Parks. In addition, it was decided not to designate National Parks in Scotland. Despite these reservations, many environmental groups hailed the Act as a major advance in countryside recreation in Britain (see STAMP).

The National Parks were intended to be "extensive tracts of land in which natural beauty and potential for enjoyment by the public" are to be enhanced by "necessary
measures" (SMITH). The main distinguishing feature of National Parks is that planning authorities should exercise a stricter control over development within them. Designation of an area as a National Park was a "strong indication of planning priorities within the designated area rather than a hard-and-fast barrier to development" (SMITH). Neither does designation give the public automatic rights of access. Access orders can be made by the planning authorities, and access agreements negotiated with landowners. The land remained in the hands of the previous owners.

Whilst the national parks legislation was being drafted, it was realised that Britain was too developed to allow for the creation of American-style 'wilderness' parks. A further section of the Act provided for a separate system of designation of land "which is of particular importance to the flora and fauna of Great Britain and the physical conditions in which they live, for the purposes of study or conservation" (SMITH). These areas are the National Nature Reserves, managed by the Nature Conservancy, and in the absence of agreement on management with the landowner, they may be purchased compulsorily. Local authorities also have the power to create local nature reserves, which they usually do in collaboration with the voluntary County Naturalists' Trusts. Thus the legislation relied heavily upon the efforts of environmental groups for its implementation.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest are areas with rare or particularly interesting flora, fauna, or geological or geographical features. Their positions are given to the local planning authorities, who are under statutory obligation to inform the Nature Conservancy of any proposed developments on the sites. Their position is also shown in plans.

The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act also gave local authorities the power to make voluntary agreements with landowners for public access to land. The authorities were able to pay compensation to the landowner for this, but no central funds were made available.
Disillusionment with Planning

Unfortunately, the 1947 Town and Country Planning Act did not prove to be as good in practice as on paper, and the general public rapidly became disillusioned with planning. Participation in plan making was left to the committed few who retained their interest, or those who felt adversely affected by a particular scheme. Major criticisms began to develop in the 1950's over the building of tower blocks of flats, seen by many local authorities as a cheap and speedy solution to housing shortages, and limited availability of land. As early as 1949, groups such as the Town and Country Planning Association were criticising flats, although countryside lobbyists, such as the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, saw them as a way to avoid further encroachment on agricultural land for house building. The blocks were, rightly or wrongly, seen as the fault of planners, who at the same time were being criticised by farmers whenever they used agricultural land to build lower-density housing.

In Autumn 1949, Town and Country Planning stated:

"Suddenly, and we think disloyally to the planning concordat, the agricultural interests have raised their sights. It is forgotten that planning has removed from the greater part of rural land the threat of casual development. Proposals for any use of land for any urban purpose are automatically opposed; in some cases......to the serious injury of good schemes."

The planning process was not working efficiently in practice. The 1947 Act had led to a large number of decisions being taken on planning applications and development control. As these decisions directly affected the profits of landowners, they tended to appeal against every refusal of development permission. There were too few trained planners to cope with the workload placed upon local authorities, and delays became inevitable. The technical nature of planning, and the pressure of work, meant more and more decisions seemed to be taken by planning officers who were not accountable to the public, and then rubber-stamped by elected councillors.
The problem began with the plan-making system, which contained many inefficiencies. Plans excluded many important social and economic matters, and there was little coordination between neighbouring areas. The legislation had assumed that society would change slowly, and was thus not flexible to cope with the rapid social and technological changes which did occur. These changes meant that the areas zoned for different land-uses were often inadequate for the time-scale of the plan - particularly, for example, in the amount allocated for road transport. Participation by the public in plan-making was limited to criticism once the plan was completed and it was felt that little attempt was made to ascertain what people wanted from a plan. Plans were presented using technical language, and were very difficult for the ordinary interested person to understand. The right for every objector to be heard at an enquiry meant that they were long and repetitious for officials, whilst the fact that plans were so detailed meant that much time was taken up discussing specific properties. (The public, and particularly environmental groups, greatly favoured this right for them to give their views, however). Landowners affected by plans were often legally represented, lengthening the procedure further. In some cases, the plans took up to 15 years to implement, being out-of-date from the start. The problem was worsened by their inflexibility.

With development plans delayed and out-of-date, development control decisions had to be made on a more ad-hoc basis, and as they often seemed arbitrary, the number of appeals increased further. In 1954 the Minister issued a circular informing all planning authorities of the increasing number of appeals, and suggesting that one reason could be the lack of explanation of reasons for refusal of permission.

The procedure at planning inquiries was widely criticised. The participants were not always informed of the reasons for decisions, and the quest for informality had lead to some parties feeling they had not been fairly treated. In 1950 the Franks Committee on Administrative Tribunals and Inquiries was
instructed to investigate the situation. Its report, implemented in 1958, recommended the setting-up of a Council on Tribunals, publication of a series of procedural rules to ensure a fair hearing, and that the decision of the inquiry be made public. Although this procedure is generally acknowledged to have made the system fairer, it also led to an expansion of legal representation at inquiries, and a whole branch of lawyers expert in planning matters developed. Planners were forbidden by their professional body, the Town Planning Institute, from appearing as advocates at inquiries.

Planning began to be seen as an irrelevant bureaucratic nuisance to many people, with planners envisaged as either inefficient bunglers who put trunk roads next to schools and herded people into flats, or as "anonymous public servants proscribing individual rights in an attempt to secure the faceless, planned state" (CHERRY). The grave failure to tackle the post-war housing crisis, and the slow start to repair of bomb damage exacerbated this feeling.

The feeling of common aims during and immediately after the war had given way to "an inclination to pursue security and comfort and short-run materialistic objectives" (CHERRY). Sir John Littlewood, addressing the Town Planning Institute in 1957 said:

"John Citizen hates and distrusts the planners, and we have about as good a press as burglars."

(CHERRY)

In March 1951, "Town and Country Planning" felt that the procedure could still work if full use was made of the opportunities that existed under the 1947 Act for public participation:

"Planning can be saved, plans made popular and satisfactory, and a reasonable balance of urban and rural land use ensured, by the emergence all over the country of local planning groups, led by people who will study the problems as a whole, and make known locally their impact on the ordinary person's way of life,"


Thus voluntary groups would redress the failures of the local planning authority to involve and consult local people. As early as the 1950's, certain planning authorities were realising the importance of increased public involvement. In 1952 Hertfordshire County Council took steps to publicise the contents of its development plan by producing a "brief, easily-understood outline", and "holding a series of one-week exhibitions in five centres of the county" (Town and Country Planning, January 1952).

In some areas, local environmental groups were trying to persuade local planning authorities to go further than the legislation required in public consultation in development control, as well as plan-making. In May 1955 "Town and Country Planning" reported the discussion taking place within local groups about whether local authorities should supply them with information about specific applications for planning permission. Some authorities were doing this, and the Minister (Duncan Sandys) had refused, in answer to a Parliamentary question, to circularise local authorities forbidding them to do so. He felt that "publication was essential so that other parties who might be affected could be informed and make objections if they wished". (Town and Country Planning, May 1955).

Despite these moves on the part of the planning lobby and some local authorities, criticism of planning continued to grow. In 1955, the 'Architectural Review' published a special issue, entitled 'Outrage', which attacked the course of urban development:

"If what is called development is allowed to multiply at the present rate, then by the end of the century Britain will consist of isolated cases of preserved monuments in a desert of concrete, wire, roads, cosy plots and bungalows."

'Family and Kinship in East London', by YOUNG and WILMOTT, published in 1957, questioned the wholesale disruption of communities in London for relocation and redevelopment:
"The question for the authorities is whether they should do more than they are at present doing to meet the preference of people who would not willingly forgo these advantages (of city community life), rather than insisting that more thousands should migrate beyond the city."

Environmental groups remained enthusiastic about the aims of the 1949 National Parks etc. Act. The first national park, the Peak District, was designated in 1951, and in the same year a proposed route for the Pennine Way long-distance footpath was submitted. Town and Country Planning reported in February 1951 that:

"......voluntary organisations are surveying proposed paths following the Thames valley from Teddington to Cricklade; the Chilterns; and the Berkshire, Wiltshire and Dorset downs; the Pilgrims Way from Canterbury to Winchester; and Offa's Dyke from Prestatyn to Chepstow."

If the idea of the Act remained popular, the late '50's and early '60's saw anger at the way in which it was operating, as the National Parks began to be eroded by developments such as the nuclear power stations at Trawsfynydd and Wylfa, and the early warning station at Fylde. These developments occurred despite the insertion since 1952 of an 'amenity clause' in various Acts of Parliament, beginning with the North Wales Hydro Electricity Act, reading:

"......The Board or Minister, as the case may be, having regard to the desirability of preserving natural beauty, of conserving flora, fauna, and geological or geographical features of special interest, and of protecting buildings and other objects of architectural and/or historic interest, shall take into account any effect which the proposals would have on the natural beauty of the countryside or on any such flora, fauna, features, buildings and objects."

(quoted in STAMP)
The Concept of the Environment

The existence of an 'amenity clause' in various Acts of Parliament indicated the beginning of a wider concern about the environment in legislation. During the 1950's and 1960's, a variety of environmental legislation concerned with other factors than the control of land use came into being. The introduction of these acts indicated that attempting to separate different land uses was not enough, positive measures had also to be taken to preserve and improve the quality of the environment in Britain.

The 1956 Clean Air Act owed its existence mainly to the efforts of what is now the National Society for Clean Air, (KIMBER and RICHARDSON). The intensive lobbying and research exercise carried out by this group came to fruition after they had made public the true, terrible effects of the Great London Smog of 1952. The Act allowed for the designation of smoke control areas, making the first attempt to reduce air pollution from private homes, as opposed to factories.

In 1954 the Protection of Birds Act came into force, forbidding deliberate killing of all birds except for a list of common birds which were thought to be pests, or so numerous as to be a threat to rarer species. This represented a major step forward in nature conservation, conferring as it did a blanket protection upon a wide range of species.

The 1965 Commons Registration Act finally carried out the recommendations of the 1942 Scott Report that all commons should be registered to ensure that the public had rights of access. Again it represented a move towards more comprehensive protection of the environment. The 1967 Civic Amenities Act began as a Private Member's Bill promoted by the founder of the Civic Trust, Duncan Sandys (who was a former Minister in charge of planning). The Act allowed for the preservation of whole areas of towns, rather than just single buildings, by the creation of Conservation Areas, with special planning protection in areas of historic or architectural merit.

According to BARKER, many local environmental groups registered
with the Civic Trust were formed to ensure that the provisions of this Act were enforced in their locality. In 1968, a further Clean Air Act extended the powers of local authorities to instigate clean air programmes, in the light of the success which the 1956 Act had achieved where it was implemented.

In 1968 it was the turn of the countryside to receive broader environmental protection. The Countryside Act formed the Countryside Commission, which took over the work of the National Parks Commission to co-ordinate countryside preservation. The Commission was empowered to designate Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which were too developed to qualify for National Park status, but still required additional planning protection to preserve their qualities. They do not have separate planning boards, but are shown on plans, and within them there is a strong presumption against further development. The Act also enabled the Countryside Commission to create, own and manage Country Parks. These are smaller areas of open space, usually close to towns, and designed to take some recreational pressure off over-used areas of the National Parks. In addition to these specific proposals, the Countryside Act had the broader purpose of requiring:

"...every Minister, Government Department and public body to have due regard for the desirability of conserving the natural beauty and amenity of the countryside, including its flora, fauna, and geological and physiographic features."

This was to be done out of recognition that:

"maintaining a decent environment, improving people's living conditions and providing for adequate transport facilities all come together in the planning of development." (JOHNSON)

This gradual broadening of the legislative approach to the environment, with a presumption in favour of environmental protection, backed up by legislation on specific issues, culminated in 1970 with the formation of the Department of the Environment. This Department merged the Ministries of Housing and Local Government, Public Buildings and Works, and
Transport to form a giant Department headed by a Secretary of State. Such a move had been promised by both political parties in response to the growing concern for the environment developing in the mid-1960's (see Chapter 1), and was finally carried out by the incoming Conservative Government. The move was generally welcomed by environmental groups (see JOHNSON). Its aim was that legislation previously drawn up by separate departments would now be more co-ordinated, giving improved protection to the environment. It marked the recognition by Government of the concept of the environment as a unified entity.

Development of the Ideology of Participation

Parallel to the development of the concept of the environment, the 1960's saw growing interest in public participation in planning. Although certain environmental groups had had the strength to make their views on planning matters known, the public as a whole had made a limited contribution. Some local authorities had developed sophisticated techniques for publicising their plans, but it remained a one-way information giving process, apart from the representations made by the public at inquiries. In the United States and Canada steps had been taken towards a more positive public involvement in planning, obtaining public views before firm plans were drawn up.

The 1960 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act for the first time required local authorities to admit the press and public to council meetings and certain committee meetings. The Ministerial circular accompanying the Act outlined its purpose as that of ensuring that:

"...informed public opinion should have an opportunity of playing its part in the formulation of policy."

It was intended to counter the public impression of local authorities taking arbitrary decisions in secret, but as the public would not be allowed to speak at meetings, and could be
excluded if the agenda contained items which it would not be in the public interest to be heard publicly, it is difficult to envisage what opportunities this provided for participation other than information provision.

During the second half of the 1960's, there were growing demands for people to be involved in decision-making about their environment:

"The needs of a complex industrial society have led to increasingly large administrative and planning units which contrast with the basically local concerns of most of the population. As the powers of administrators and planners grow stronger and more comprehensive, the public......are beginning to assert their democratic right to be informed and involved. Their doubts about the actual extent of decision-makers' representativeness and responsiveness have led to a basic questioning of authority and the desire to be heard."

(STRINGER)

Efforts to promote public participation were supported by some sections of the planning profession, who, after years of vilification, welcomed the chance for co-operation with the public. Participation had:

"......become a universal word that has described a vague and un-differentiated good. Everybody believes in it just as everybody is against corruption."

(STYLES)

In the mid-sixties, the Planning Advisory Group reported to the Minister of Housing and Local Government on the need for a new system of planning to counter the problems of the 1947 Act. The report made no specific recommendations on participation, but said that any new planning system should:

"......make for a better public understanding of planning policy, both in its general objectives and as it affects individuals in areas of development or re-development."

(PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP)
In 1968, just before the new system of planning became law, the Skeffington Committee was appointed to study the question of public participation further. The committee's remit was:

"to consider and report on the best methods, including publicity, of securing the participation of the public at the formative stage of the making of development plans in their area."

(DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT)

The committee's report argued forcefully that participation was useful, and that it should take place in the early stages of plan-making. The report, entitled 'People and Planning', stated that:

"Participation involves doing as well as talking and there will be full participation only when the public are able to take an active part throughout the planning process."

(DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT)

The report stressed the importance of ensuring that the views obtained were those not only of activists such as local amenity societies, but also those of people not involved in planning before. It also emphasised the importance of education for participation, and of publicity.

Current Legislation

The recommendations of the Planning Advisory Group were largely incorporated, along with those of the Skeffington report, into the major current Act, the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act, as amended by the 1972 Local Government Act, and various ministerial circulars and codes of practice. This replaced the 1947 Act. The Department of the Environment administers the planning process, and planning functions are split between County and District Councils. There is a degree of latitude in the exact division, allowing authorities to negotiate with each other their exact responsibilities. The 1980 Local Government and Planning (No. 2) Act transferred more responsibilities to District Councils.
The basic framework of planning in any area is the Structure Plan. This is drawn up by the County Council, and covers the whole of their area. Structure Plans are meant to give a broad outline of future planning policy in counties, over a period of 20 years. It was hoped that by limiting plans to general policy, sufficient guidance could be given to ensure rational and controlled future development, without plans becoming obsolete due to unforeseen changes, either economic or social. These plans would also avoid the delays experienced in making detailed development plans. Structure Plans do not have a map, so the effects of the plan on particular properties cannot be seen - cutting out another area of dispute which so delayed development plan implementation. The Structure Plan consists of a written statement of policy supported by diagrams. The policy laid out in the plan must be related to land use in neighbouring areas, and the social and economic situation in the area. The authority making the plan must first carry out an extensive survey of the area to be covered. It must contain information on: physical and economic characteristics, including current land use; size, composition and distribution of population; communications, transport and traffic; and the likely trends in these areas. As Chapters 3, 4 and 5 describe, both the study areas had recently undergone the structure planning process.

The Secretary of State has wide powers under the Act to require specific topics to be covered in either the survey or the plan, and also has wide powers to approve, disapprove or require changes to the plan. The Secretary of State's decision can only be challenged in the High Court if it can be proved to have been reached improperly, i.e. is ultra vires.

The Structure Plan can designate 'action areas' for which a more detailed plan for specific action will be drawn up in the near future. In addition, local plans may be prepared to show in more detail what the plans are for a particular area. These Local Plans are usually prepared by District Councils, and what they will cover is decided between
them and the County Council. Local plans must relate to the relevant Structure Plan. Except in very unusual circumstances, they do not have to be approved by the Secretary of State - another step aimed at speeding up the process of plan implementation. They must, however, be verified by the County Council as being in accord with the Structure Plan. Local plans are more like development plans, having a detailed map plus a written statement. The legislation is flexible on their content to encourage positive planning steps to be taken.

The proposals made by structure or local plans can be put into operation either by the local authority acquiring land or using land it already owns for the purposes specified by the plan, or indirectly by refusing planning permission for developments which do not accord with the plan. Planning permission is required for all development, defined in the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act as including:

Building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land.
Material change in the use of buildings or land.
Use of one house for two or more separate dwellings.
Dumping on an existing dump if the area is extended or the height rises above adjoining land.
Advertisements on the outsides of buildings.

Development excludes:

Internal or external improvements or alterations not materially affecting outside appearance.
Statutory undertaking or local authority works to mend underground pipes or cables.
Agriculture and Forestry, and the use of existing buildings for related purposes.

Thus an extremely wide range of activities is subject to planning control, from large developments to putting up shop signs. However, in order to lessen the workload of local authority planning departments, some small developments, such as extensions to houses, are exempt from the need for planning permission. This exemption does not generally apply in especially protected areas such as conservation areas.
When an application for planning permission is received, it is dealt with by the officers of the local authority planning department, who usually visit the site, and make a recommendation on whether or not planning permission should be granted. The decision is made by the planning sub-committee of the council, taking the officer's report into consideration. Their decision is subject to formal ratification by the full council.

If the proposed development is in a special area, such as a conservation area, or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the local authority has to take this into special consideration when deciding the application. Within Greater London and the South East, offices and factories over a certain size require a special certificate, as well as planning permission. The certificate is granted by the Secretary of State. Development control is regarded as very important by many local environmental groups. In West Surrey, as Chapter 4 shows, it provided the focus for much group activity.

Planning law is supplemented by a variety of other environmental legislation. The Secretary of State compiles a list of buildings of historical or architectural interest, on which there is a presumption against alteration or demolition. The strength of this presumption depends on the 'grade' of listing - 1, 2 or 3. If all or part of a grade 1 or 2 listed building is threatened with demolition, a variety of bodies interested in architecture and history must be informed. Grants and loans are available for preserving listed buildings. Older historic buildings are protected from damage or demolition by the 1972 Ancient Monuments Act, and Ancient Earthworks are protected from agriculture and forestry (which do not need planning permission) by the 1972 Field Monuments Act.

Trees, or groups of trees, can be protected from felling by tree preservation orders. These are independent from plans and are made by district councils. The orders must be confirmed by the Secretary of State if opposed, and they are
enforced by fines. In addition, certain trees in conservation areas are automatically protected.

The major legislation on highways is the 1959 Highways Act, modified by later legislation. Highways and traffic are the responsibility of County Councils. County Councils also deal with footpaths and bridleways, and under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act they were obliged to survey all such public rights of way and draw up maps and written statements defining and commenting upon them. This map is periodically revised. Owners of footpaths must maintain stiles and gates in good condition, and are not allowed to put up signs which "may deter the public from using the way". If footpaths are ploughed up, they must be re-instated within three weeks, and notice must be given. The highway authority must erect signposts along the way.

Control of pollution is governed by several different Acts, the most comprehensive of which is the 1974 Control of Pollution Act, which attempts to impose a general duty to minimise pollution of all types. Many sections of this Act, however, are not yet in force. The legislation is of an enabling type, and many of the detailed regulations envisaged have not yet been made law. Pollution control legislation is enforced by a variety of authorities, national and local.

Air pollution from most types of industry is policed by the Health and Safety Executive, a national government body set up by the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act, and which absorbed the Alkali Inspectorate. The 1974 Act imposes a general duty upon factory owners to use the "best practicable means" to reduce pollution, and hence danger to both employees and the general public. Control of pollution from the rest of industry (generally smaller firms), and from domestic sources is the duty of District Councils, and is usually carried out by Environmental Health Departments. The major legislation under which they operate is the 1956 and 1968 Clean Air Acts, which cover emissions of smoke or particles from boilers or chimneys.
There is no formal process for public participation in air pollution control under the legislation, and the Health and Safety Executive is obliged to keep secret any information on trade processes (see FRANKEL). Under the Control of Pollution Act, however, a local authority may collect and publish information on air pollution within its area from all sources.

Water pollution is also covered by the Control of Pollution Act. Local water authorities must give their consent before industrial wastes can be discharged into rivers or sewers, and they are also responsible for the general quality of water - carrying out surveys of river quality and levels of pollution. Such surveys may be published, although they do not have to be.

Collection of solid wastes is generally the responsibility of district councils, whilst its disposal is the duty of county councils. The Control of Pollution Act requires county councils to draw up solid waste disposal plans, for approval by the Secretary of State for the Environment, and county councils are also responsible for the sections of the Act covering the disposal of toxic and hazardous wastes. Dumps for such wastes must be licensed and inspected by the county council.

A general control over pollution is also given by the 1936 Public Health Act. Under this Act, local authorities must inspect for, and prevent, nuisances or hazards to health within their area. This is generally the function of Environmental Health Departments, and can cover anything from poor quality food to noise and air pollution. Control over pollution from new developments can also be achieved in some cases by stipulating conditions before planning permission is given. Such conditions may cover the height of any chimneys, or reclamation of sites after a certain period of use. These are, however, subject to the right of appeal of the developer, as is a refusal of planning permission. Apart from the latter method, there are few procedures for public participation in pollution control. The control carried out by local authorities
is, however, subject to representations from the general public on the same basis as any other local government activity and action by environmental health departments is quite often the result of public complaints. The complex nature of pollution control legislation, and the lack of a set procedure for public participation, makes it much more difficult for local environmental groups to make representations on this issue.

Participation under Current Planning Legislation

Chapter 1 indicated the importance to environmental groups of good relations with the local authority, and thus of procedures for public participation. Public participation begins during the making of a structure plan. The planning authority must inform anyone who "might be expected to desire to make representations" (including local amenity groups) that they have a right to do so, and give them at least six weeks to comment. When the draft structure plan is submitted to the Secretary of State it must be accompanied by a statement on the measures which have been taken to achieve participation, and if the Secretary is not satisfied with this, he/she can refuse to accept the plan.

The system of public inquiries into draft development plans was replaced in 1973 by an 'examination in public'. Unlike the previous system, the issues to be discussed, and the persons who will be heard, are decided in advance by the Secretary of State. The examination deals with broad policy rather than specifics. Objectors have no right to be heard. Procedures and advertising of the hearing are controlled by a code of practice. The hearing is purely advisory, and the Secretary of State is not bound by its findings. Before the hearing copies of the draft plan must be made available to the public, along with details of how to make a representation or objection to the Secretary of State. For local plans, interested persons must be allowed to comment on what the district council propose to include in the plan, and the council must consider these comments. Objections to the plan
can be made after it has been drawn up, before adoption, to the district council itself. If such objections are made, the council must hold a public local inquiry, presided over by an Inspector from the Department of the Environment, and all objectors have a right to appear. If a plan is considered seriously inadequate by the Secretary of State he/she can hold a public local inquiry to assess the matter.

Legislation contains less encouragement for public participation in development control, where individual properties are involved. However, the planning departments of local councils are required to make available to the public a list each week of the planning applications they have received. Notice of certain planning applications must be posted in the local press, and site notices posted in certain circumstances. The plans themselves are available for public consultation at the planning office. Although it is permissible for the local authority to take into account the views of third parties when making decisions about planning applications, they are not required to do so. The planning authority must send copies of applications to parish councils, and must take their views into account. Whilst developers may appeal against refusal of planning permission and cause a public inquiry, opponents of a development are not able to appeal against the granting of permission. Only in an issue of major importance, where the Secretary of State for the Environment "calls in" an application for his/her decision, can an inquiry be held at the instigation of the general public.

Other environmental legislation contains provision for public participation. Applications to fell a tree covered by a preservation order are made like planning applications, with the right to appeal to the Secretary of State on refusal. When a tree preservation order is made, it must be publicised in the area of the trees concerned. If objections are received, a local public inquiry can be held.

Under highways legislation, the public has no statutory say in alteration of traffic flow, but for more extensive changes,
from altering the direction of flow to construction and routing of new highways, the highway authority must publicise the proposal in the press, and post notices throughout the area affected. If objections are received from a local authority, the Department of Transport must hold a local public inquiry into the proposal. The Department has discretion as to whether to hold an inquiry if objections are received only from individuals, voluntary societies, or parish councils. The Inspector at the inquiry is not an employee of the Department of Transport, but as with planning inquiries, the final decision is made by the Secretary of State.

Once a highway authority had drawn up a footpath map for their area, there are procedures for objections to be made against the designation of a footpath. The objection must be heard by a person appointed by the highway authority. Any changes to be made to the map, once it has been approved by the Secretary of State, must be publicised locally, and 28 days allowed for objections to be made. Again these must be heard by a person appointed by the highway authority, and if the objector feels they have been aggrieved, there are rights to appeal to the Secretary of State, and, on a point of law, to the High Court. The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act provided for the diversion and closure of footpaths, taking account of the needs of agriculture and forestry, subject to confirmation by the Secretary of State. Again, there is a procedure of objections, with a final appeal to the High Court on a point of law.

There is an appeal system also under the Commons Registration Act. Commissioners investigate, including hearing evidence, whether a piece of land is common or not, and their decision can be appealed against.

The public can also participate in historic building conservation, through the existence of Conservation Area Advisory Committees. These bodies are made up of knowledgeable local people who advise their local authority on policy
and practical activity in the conservation area.

Criticism of Current Participation Procedures

The current legislation on public participation has already been the subject of a great deal of criticism, both from those who think it does not go far enough, and from those who think it goes too far. The latter group object to the time and expense that participation exercises require, and feel that the process undermines the position of elected councillors. Some planners feel that because of the need for compromise at every stage, only the blandest planning proposals will be accepted - positive changes will be harder to get passed. There is also the question of whether the public is knowledgeable enough (and interested enough) to make a positive contribution.

Those who believe the legislation does not go far enough see it as simply a more elaborate form of public relations, with the public denied any real power, and therefore in general showing very little interest. Many participation exercises have had response rates as low as 3%, and response has been greatest from the middle classes. The people most likely to respond are members of amenity societies, who are familiar with the terminology and processes involved, and so results of such an exercise may be biased towards their viewpoint. DRAKE, in a survey of participation exercises, concluded that planners have found their inexperience in dealing with the general public a great constraint - they must forget all their technical jargon - moreover the information they obtain from the general public is in a form which is much more difficult to feed into a plan. A whole new series of skills is needed. There are also criticisms stemming from the form of the new plans:

"In place of the old, detailed development plan only the skeletal structure plan is subject to public inquiry and ministerial approval, but at this stage the plan is insufficiently detailed for potential objectors to know how their interests are affected. The impact of planning on localities
and individuals only really becomes apparent with the local......plans. But at this stage, objections can only be addressed to the local council which is not only the final arbiter but which can also use acceptance of the structure plan as a strong argument in favour of local plans."

(BATLEY) *

Similar criticisms apply to participation in development control, and again the degree of encouragement of participation by the local authority varies greatly. Plans are often only available for consultation during working hours which can cause problems for voluntary groups where members have day-time jobs (see Chapter 4); the local authority has no duty to take into account representations made by third parties in most cases, and if the council grants planning permission, there is no right of appeal for those who opposed the application. The only recourse objectors to a proposal have in such a case is to persuade the Secretary of State that the proposal is of such importance that it should be dealt with by him/her personally, a process called 'calling in' an application. Usually a public inquiry is part of the process. The increasing use of lawyers by developers at public inquiries means that objectors feel they must do the same, although their resources are far smaller than those of the developers. The developer will certainly be better informed about the proposal than the objector.

The strongest objections to the present system of participation involve proposals made by government departments and statutory undertakers, where the State is being opposed by local people. Especially in the case of road proposals, some people doubt the impartiality of a system where the final arbiter is the Department making the proposal. In the past, doubts about the system have lead to such events as the disruption of motorway inquiries, and the massive campaigns waged against proposals for the third London Airport. It has also been argued that a system which requires this amount of time, energy and resources to combat State proposals will

* The validity of this claim is illustrated by the reluctance of local environmental groups in West Surrey to participate in Structure Plan making (see Chapter 4).
inevitably lead to bias - proposals in areas where people have these resources will be stopped, whilst proposals in areas where people are less organised will go through.

**Conclusion**

The very fact that criticisms such as those outlined above are made about current legislative provision for public participation in planning shows just how far planning and public participation have become accepted in Britain.

Legislative control over what a private landowner could do on his own land was only reluctantly accepted in Britain, in the face of the terrible conditions created during the industrial revolution, and the threat to social and industrial stability that this was thought to pose.

As the effects of industrialisation and population growth on the landscape became more obvious, legislation was extended to cover more and more aspects of the environment. Most procedures still provided extensive safeguards to the rights of landowners, the major restriction on planning being the requirement to pay heavy compensation for loss of a landowner's right to develop land.

From the earliest legislation, public inquiries into the operations of the planning system were empowered to seek the views of interested local societies, and whilst the Skeffington report stressed the need to consult with all sections of the population, local environmental groups have continued to play a major role in the participation process.

Following the Second World War there was a consensus in favour of central control and planning, perhaps a result of the success of central planning during the war, and the feeling of common aims that remained. This climate of opinion, allowed for the radical extension of planning procedures, and the nationalisation of land values. The process of planning contained the right for anyone, landowner or not, to spell out
their objections to a plan. Planning was seen as a force for social change, and the other environmental legislation passed at the time, for example that ensuring access to the countryside, continued the theme of proscribing the rights of the landowner for the benefit of the general public.

Disillusionment with planning rapidly set in, as far as the general public was concerned, when its promise was not fulfilled. People began to feel that planning was controlling them, rather than responding to their needs and wishes. From being a force for social change, planning became seen as something which made conditions worse for many people. Landowners, and groups of people who had the knowledge, time and money to exploit the public inquiry system benefited from this procedure, but the complex and semi-legal nature of the proceedings deterred ordinary individuals. Thus planning became more a battle between local government, developers and amenity societies than a restructuring of land use in Britain.

This situation was increasingly criticised, and, encouraged by the growth of interest in community politics, calls were increasingly made for ordinary people to be allowed to participate in the process. The resulting legislation was seen by some to be extremely radical, but once more it has been criticised as the hopes it engendered have not been fulfilled.

It is the planning field that environmental legislation has developed most in Britain. Planning legislation has expanded to encompass other legislation such as the protection of natural beauty, and preservation of ancient buildings. Other environmental legislation has been slower to develop - perhaps its lack of provision for public involvement is related to this.

Throughout planning's development, it has tended to be regarded most highly by Labour governments, due to the capacity for social change it is believed to have. In the
past, Conservative governments have tended to weaken planning legislation. Perhaps it is because of the recognition that its impact has always been less than hoped that this is no longer the case (the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act was passed under a Conservative government).

Legislative control over the environment is now deeply entrenched in Britain. Within the last 70 years it has become accepted that a landowner does not have unfettered rights to do what he/she wants with their land, and that not only elected representatives, but the general public have the right to determine what a landowner can do. Knowledge about this extensive background of environmental legislation, and the facilities it contains for public participation, is vital to understand the constraints and encouragements faced by local groups aiming to protect the environment.
CHAPTER 2

REFERENCES


SCHAFFER, J. in The Planner, May 1974 vol 60 no 5 (Jubilee issue, on the evolution of the town planning acts).


CHAPTER 3
As the concern of the groups under study is their physical environment, it is important to know something of the nature of this environment to understand the groups' activities.

The County of Surrey is one of the smallest in England, with an area of about 650 square miles. It adjoins Greater London, but 40% of the County is used for agriculture. There are many large areas of open space, and over 100 separate villages. Surrey also has a number of medium-sized towns, such as Woking, Farnham and Guildford, whilst the north of the County is almost continuously built-up, and merges with London. The south of the County, bordering Sussex, is much more open and rural. Away from the London fringe, settlements follow the radial routes from London through the County.

Surrey has three contrasting landscape belts. The low-lying Thames valley in the north consists mainly of heathland, though there is some good-quality agricultural land on well-drained sites. The central east-west chalk hills, including the Greensand ridge to the south, has grassland and deciduous woods. The undulating weald on the Sussex border contains patches of woodland amongst pasture. The two principle rivers of the County are the Wey and the Mole, rising respectively in the south-west and south-east of the county, and forming tributaries of the Thames. Road and rail routes, and settlements, have followed the gaps in the chalk hills carved by these rivers.

Newham is one of the 33 boroughs of Greater London. It is an inner-city area of east London, bounded by three rivers. These are the Thames to the south, the Lee to the west and the Roding and Barking Creek to the east. The Borough is low-lying, much of it being former marsh land. Newham covers an area of about 9 square miles, and is heavily built-up.
History

The historic county of Surrey extended as far north as the Thames, including the site of the Surrey docks at Milwall, and stretching eastwards to Deptford, where it adjoined Kent (see SALMON). In the Domesday Book the county was called Suthridge and formed part of the kingdom of Wessex. The chief towns of the county at that time were Guildford, Southwark and Kingston.

In 1215 the Magna Carta was signed at Runnymede, in the Thames Valley - the only major historic event to occur in the county. Throughout most of its history the county was a through route rather than a place where events occurred, although at the time of the Civil War the county was associated with both the Levellers and the Diggers - whose first stand for common ownership of land was made near Weybridge.

By the 18th century, Daniel Defoe noted that Londoners were moving to Surrey to escape the pollution and bustle of the capital. In 1822 William Cobbett, a Surrey resident, noted the pleasant contrast that Surrey provided to Middlesex, which was being absorbed by London. He also noted the considerable poverty that existed in the county, at that time still mostly agricultural, due to poor soils, low productivity and prices.

The roads of Surrey were notoriously poor, and despite attempts at improvements in the 18th century, extensive development of the County awaited the advent of rail travel. Soon after Cobbett's death, the London and South Western Railway reached Southampton, through Surrey. The Brighton line, also running through the County, was opened in 1849. The first result was the growth of the railway towns, such as Woking and Surbiton. Soon, however, wealthy businessmen discovered that the railways allowed them to live in Surrey and travel to their offices in the City each day. Less wealthy people soon followed their example, encouraged by the introduction of season tickets. After the First World War, judicious marketing by the newly-formed Southern Railway
Company contributed to the development of Surrey, with developers being offered cut-price season tickets to give to purchasers of the clerical workers' housing they built. By 1926, the line to London was electrified as far as Guildford, allowing much faster journeys for commuters.

The cheap price of land in Surrey encouraged the development of large estates by the London County Council, first at Morden, and later at Merstham, Sheerwater and Camberley. A further contribution to the development of Surrey came from military establishments. Lying between London and the south coast, the County occupies an important strategic position, and the open heaths to the north-west are ideal for training. Whilst the major military base is over the county boundary at Aldershot, associated Surrey areas such as Pirbright and Camberley owe much of their development to the army.

Development of Surrey has continued rapidly in the latter half of the 20th century. The depression had a relatively mild effect on the county, and building of new housing suburbs continued rapidly in the 1930's; so much so that the first restraints on development were introduced. Even the introduction of Green Belt legislation after the Second World War could not halt development, and between 1951 and 1971, there was a 30% increase in population and a 50% increase in the number of houses in Surrey.

The history of Newham can be traced back to Roman times when, like Surrey, the area was on a major route to London, from Colchester. The area consisted of fertile farmland to the north, and a series of marshes to the south. From the 17th century onwards, the area came increasingly under the influence of London. There had been industry along the River Lee from the Middle Ages, with flour mills, gunpowder and soap making. In the late 17th century there were extensive calico works, and in 1748 the famous Bow porcelain works opened just over the river in what is now Tower Hamlets. SAUNDERS describes West Ham in the 17th century:
"...being outside the London boundaries, their restrictions on some of the more noisome trades, was a place where industry could flourish, and flourish it did alongside market gardening."

In 1844 the Metropolitan Building Act, and in 1874 the Slaughterhouse Act limited still further the amount of offensive trade allowed within London's boundaries. Encouraged by the cheap price of land, soap manufacturers, bone boilers and others moved east of the River Lee.

Like Surrey, the development of Newham was greatly boosted by the growth of the railways. In 1839, Eastern Counties Railways opened a freight depot at Stratford, and by the turn of the century this employed 7,000 people, and a special town, now Stratford New Town, was built to house them. However, in Newham, the importance of the railways is eclipsed by the importance of water-born transport.

By the 1850's, the older Thames wharves, between the Tower of London and Blackwall, had become overcrowded. Even the new docks on the Isle of Dogs were reaching capacity. In the southern part of Newham there were large areas of low-lying vacant land, and in 1885 the Victoria Dock was completed in this area. This was the first dock in the country to use hydraulic equipment, and covered 83 acres of water. Two other 'Royal' docks followed: the Albert, opened in 1890 was the first public undertaking to be lit by electricity. Further increases in trade necessitated the opening of the King George Vth dock in 1921, with a depth of 38 feet to cater for large 20th century ships. Together, the Royal docks enclosed 250 acres of water, and had 11 miles of quays.

The docks were linked to London by the Barking Road, and the new North Woolwich railway line. This proximity of various forms of transport attracted industry to the area, including the Tate & Lyle sugar refinery and the huge Beckton Gas Works. Docks-related industry such as chemical, and fertiliser manufacture, food processing, boat building and ship repair congregated on the cheap land close to the docks.
Further north, East Ham developed as a residential, rather than industrial area. As in Surrey, the introduction of cheap season rail fares helped the growth of commuting, as did the opening of the Metropolitan underground line in 1888. The 1920's brought the peak population of the area; as London expanded, people moved further outwards, and the population decreased (see NEWHAM LIBRARY SERVICE).

The concentration of vital industry made Newham an obvious target during the Second World War and the Borough suffered a great deal of damage during the Blitz. By 1939 the area had been almost totally built-up, and during the war 29,000 buildings in East Ham and 14,000 in West Ham (27% of the total) were destroyed. In one dockside ward, 85% of the houses were destroyed.

Since the war, the history of Newham has been one of decline. The docks have very little trade and are threatened with closure, other industry has closed or moved out of the Borough. This is in contrast to Surrey, where development has continued and prosperity increased.

Administration and Government

The present County of Surrey was formed in 1974, but it had been subject to changes in its boundaries for some time. When modern local government, with elected councillors, was introduced in 1889, many parts of the historic county of Surrey were excluded from the new administrative area. Croydon became a separate County Borough, whilst a great deal of the northern fringe, including the County cricket ground, the Oval, were absorbed into London. This trend continued with the re-organisation of London's local government in 1965. The Greater London Council was formed, and Surrey lost Wimbledon, Richmond, and Kingston which is still the administrative headquarters of the County. The re-organisation also created the Borough of Newham, by merging the boroughs of East Ham (which had been part of Essex), and West Ham with parts of Woolwich and Barking.
Further alterations to the boundaries of Surrey took place during local government re-organisation in 1974, when the County lost Heathrow Airport, and gained parts of Berkshire around Virginia Water.

The present County of Surrey is divided into 11 districts of uneven size (see SALMON). In the south and east are the larger districts of Guildford, Waverley, Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, and Tandridge. In the north and west are the smaller districts of Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell, Woking, Runnymede, Spelthorne and Surrey Heath. Division of responsibilities between the County and District Councils is complex, and changing. At present the trend seems to be the devolution of power to the districts. The County Council is the highway authority and deals with waste disposal; the districts are housing authorities and collect refuse. The County Council draws up the Structure Plan for the County, whilst the District Councils are responsible for enforcing it through development control, and draw up local plans. Wildlife and open space management are shared between the two tiers of authority.

The London Borough of Newham has similar administrative status to the Surrey Districts, with the Greater London Council the equivalent of a County Council. The division of responsibilities is similar, although the Greater London Council has some housing responsibilities.

In Surrey, co-ordination between the two tiers of authority is fairly good. Both the County and District Councils are controlled by the Conservatives, and thus their policies are broadly similar, with differences of emphasis. In Newham the situation is rather different. Until April 1981, the Greater London Council was Conservative controlled, whilst Newham Borough Council has had a majority of Labour members. When this situation existed, there were some serious differences of policy, particularly over the Docklands area. Since the change of control of the Greater London Council, relations have improved, although there are still some differences on policy.
The labour movement in Newham has a very long history. The first Labour MP was returned for West Ham South in 1892, and the large Keir Hardie housing estate is named after him. In recent years, all three Newham constituencies have returned Labour Members, although Reg Prentice crossed to the Conservatives between elections. West Ham was the first socialist-controlled borough, returning a coalition of Trades Council and socialist councillors in 1898, during the prolonged gas and dock workers strikes. From 1919 West Ham has been under Labour control, and a similar situation existed in East Ham. Following the formation of Newham, Labour has had a majority of council seats, although at one time Ratepayers candidates were very strong. Newham's representatives on the GLC have always been Labour Party members.

In contrast to Newham, Surrey has returned Conservatives for nearly all its Parliamentary seats since the beginning of the century. The few constituencies which had occasionally returned Labour Party candidates were absorbed into London in 1965. Both the County and the District councils are overwhelmingly Conservative controlled, although the tradition of Independent councillors, and those from Residents and Ratepayers groups continues.

Some parts of Surrey have a third tier of local government, Parish Councils. These were founded in 1894 as successors to church councils, and were confined to rural areas. Following re-organisation in 1974, several former Urban District Councils became Town Councils, with similar powers to parish councils in urban areas. Parish and Town Councils can levy a rate, spend money on small local works, and have a right to be consulted on planning and highways issues in their area. Surrey has 75 parish and town councils, in Guildford, Waverley, Surrey Heath, Mole Valley, and Reigate and Banstead Districts. The proportion of Independent councillors is high, with Conservatives the most numerous of the party candidates. Recently there have been moves to create new Parish Councils in urban areas, but although these have received support from residents, none have yet been sanctioned by the Boundaries Commission.
People in Surrey and Newham

Background documents to the Surrey County Structure Plan indicate that the population of the County is heavily biased towards those in professional and managerial occupations. Over half the economically-active residents have white collar jobs, with nearly one third professionals or managers. More stockbrokers live in Surrey than any other county (21% of the total), along with more people listed in 'Who's Who' than anywhere except London. By contrast, 70% of Newham's population have manual jobs, and three quarters of professional and managerial jobs in the Borough are occupied by those who live elsewhere.

Since the Second World War, Surrey has experienced an increase in population, although the rate of increase has lessened since the 1960's. The County's population was over 1,000,000 in 1971, though it has now decreased to 999,393. The increase has been due mainly to migration into the County; Surrey is an area of high population mobility, with a flow of people from London to Surrey, and from Surrey to more rural areas. This has caused a slight bias in population towards the middle age-groups, who are better placed to afford the move to Surrey. More younger people leave the County than move in.

The peak population of Newham, 465,000, was reached in 1925. Since then, the population has been falling steadily to its current level of about 209,290. Between 1961 and 1971, the population decreased by 10%, whilst the number of economically active people decreased by 19%. There was a similar decrease between 1971 and 1981. The population has a bias towards the elderly and young children. Outmigration from the Borough is about 1,500 people per year, and the birthrate is falling. Migration into the Borough has brought the proportion of Commonwealth residents to 8.4%. Many of Newham's schools are designated as educational priority schools, and less than 10% of children receive further education. Newham has one of the highest rates of mental illness in the country.
Industry and Employment

Throughout the 20th century, the south east of England has remained prosperous relative to the rest of Britain. It has had lower unemployment and bankruptcy rates, and the major problem has been a shortage rather than an excess of labour. Within the region, however, there are major variations.

Industrial development in Surrey has occurred mainly since the Second World War, and the County is still one of the less industrialised areas of the south east. Lack of mineral and power resources, plus poor transport facilities, meant that the industrial revolution largely by-passed the County. A little industry did develop, for example the Dennis bus and truck works at Guildford originated at the turn of the century. During the war, both military and industrial establishments moved to Surrey to escape the bombardment of London, for example the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, and British Aerospace at Weybridge, and remained in the County. They were followed, after the war, by service industries and offices escaping high land costs in London. The war-time exodus of training and research establishments has continued, encouraged by cheaper land and the availability of large former country homes at lower prices than are found in London. Such establishments include government and industrial research laboratories, trade union and civil service training centres, and military establishments. Various modern science-based industries, such as electronics and instrument manufacture, have also developed in Surrey since the War.

Industry in the East End, including Newham, developed much earlier than in Surrey, based around the docks and railway links. The latter half of the 20th century has seen a dramatic decline in many of these industries. The Newham docks have virtually ceased operation, and are threatened with closure. Along with the other upper Thames docks, they have suffered from the increased use of containerisation, and the transfer of business to other British ports or further downstream. As industry in Newham developed so early, it has the problem of
ageing plant and outmoded processes. Investment in new plant and machinery has been restricted in the past by regional policy, and there have been many closures.

With the discovery of natural gas, the huge Beckton Gas Works became redundant, and the Harland and Wolff ship repair yard closed in 1970 because of lack of business. The sugar glut which followed Britain's entry to the EEC has caused problems for the Tate and Lyle sugar refinery. Much of the remaining industry within the Borough is of the traditional engineering type, with the large Steetly Chemicals plant at West Ham a reminder of the original reasons for development of the area.

As Surrey's industry is mainly modern, and spread over many sectors, the area has suffered less in the current recession. In the past, the problem faced by the area has been a shortage of labour. Employment in the County has increased in line with increases in population, with a proportionate shift from manufacturing to the service sector.

Newham has also seen a shift away from employment in manufacturing, with the number of industrial jobs falling by 25% between 1971 and 1975. The amount of warehouse and office space in the borough has increased, but this has had little impact upon unemployment (see Table 1). Warehousing employs fewer people per acre than manufacturing, whilst the majority of unemployed people in Newham are manual rather than clerical workers, and do not gain from an increase in office employment.

In the past, the decline of Newham's industry has been exacerbated by Government policies to relocate industry from London, and the freeze put on development whilst the preparation of plans for docklands were underway. Unemployment in Newham has been consistently higher than the average for London in recent years. New industrial development in docklands is planned to alleviate the level of unemployment, but as yet has had little effect. Delays have occurred due to the difficulty of freeing land for development, and the industry attracted so far has been warehousing rather than manufacturing.
### TABLE 1

**UNEMPLOYMENT IN NEWHAM AND SURREY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 1981</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>20,723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford area</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater London</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>326,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>14,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 1980</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>12,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford area</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater London</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>204,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6,830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October 1979</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>8,081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford area</td>
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<td>2,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater London</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>139,922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5,201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Department of Employment. Gazette.
It would be a mistake to assume that Surrey has no employment problems. At present, the level of unemployment is at its highest since the 1930's, and the number of registered unemployed people in 1980 exceeded the number of notified vacancies for the first time in many years (see Table 1). A major problem is still one of shortage of skilled labour, with an excess of unskilled workers over jobs available. Restrictive planning policies have been blamed for these problems, in that they restrict housing for skilled workers and industrial development to provide unskilled work.

Housing and Transport

Both Surrey and Newham have housing problems, although there are great differences between the two areas in the condition and type of housing stock, and terms of tenure.

The proportion of people in Surrey owning their own homes is very high, at about 65%. The proportion renting accommodation from the local authority is 18%. In Newham 30% of accommodation is owned by the local authority, around 33% is owner-occupied. Surrey's housing is generally in good condition, with few properties lacking basic amenities. The number of people living in overcrowded conditions is also low. In contrast, a 1979 report to Newham Borough Council stated that almost a quarter of houses in the borough were deficient in some way, and a considerable number were unfit for human habitation. The proportion of privately-rented accommodation in Newham is very high (27%), and much sub-standard property is found in this sector.

In both Surrey and Newham, there is an excess of demand for housing over supply. Since the Second World War, housing development has been restricted in Surrey by planning policy and Green Belt legislation. This restraint, however, had contributed to making Surrey a very popular place in which to live. The result has been an enormous increase in house prices, with most new developments being high-priced, with large buildings at low density. This, combined with a low level
of local authority building for rent, has caused great problems for those on lower incomes. The problem has been increased by the large number of extensions built on to houses, increasing the average size, and therefore price, of housing still further. In Guildford, in 1980, the waiting list for local authority accommodation was 4,114 with 837 priority cases. The Council was building only old persons' accommodation, and are thus only able to house about 250 families per year from vacancies. Most local authorities in Surrey seem similarly reluctant to build housing to let, and the compulsory sale of council housing under recent legislation may make the situation even worse.

Newham's housing problems date back to the initial development of the area, when speculative builders built poorly-constructed property at high density with few facilities. About half of the Borough's housing dates from the first half of the century, and the majority of substandard property dates from this period. In addition, the loss of housing stock during World War II necessitated a massive development programme, undertaken with relatively little government financial support. Falling household size, and the increasing number of properties falling into disrepair offsets the decrease in population and maintains the high level of demand for housing. Despite the large amount of re-development undertaken, demand is likely to exceed supply for the near future. The Borough has also experienced problems with housing built since the war. Newham has 108 tower blocks, including the infamous Ronan Point. Several blocks have been found to have design or construction faults, and one block has recently been demolished, as this proved cheaper than repair. The 1980 repair bill for tower blocks was over £1,000,000, and they are very unpopular with residents.

Surrey and Newham share several transport problems, notably congestion, parking problems, and declining public transport. Most of Surrey's transport system is geared to London. The rail system is particularly dominated by the capital, with only one cross-county route, all others radiating
from London. The rail system is used heavily by commuters, and services are fast and frequent during the rush hours. The service is almost completely electrified.

Surrey's roads are similarly dominated by London. One motorway and most trunk roads radiate from London, with one trunk road, and the M25 (which is still under construction) crossing the county. Surrey's road-based public transport, the bus service, has suffered severe cutbacks in recent years, and several villages have lost their service completely. In other areas, the service is restricted to peak periods. The level of car ownership in the County, with 70% of households owning at least one vehicle, is very high.

Newham is also crossed by a number of routes to London. East London's major north-south route, the North Circular road, runs through the centre of the Borough. The Romford and Barking roads, and Newham way, carry traffic from the east coast to Central London. The Borough is served by two underground lines; the Metropolitan and District line crosses the centre of Newham, whilst the Central line links Stratford with Central London. There are rail services crossing the north of Newham, and a service to the docks area. There are a large number of bus services, both local and linking with Central London. The level of car ownership is below average for London, at around 52% of households.

The major transport problem in both Surrey and Newham is congestion on the roads. In Surrey the traffic is largely private, though the County does form a major through route for goods vehicles. Over half the traffic in Newham passes straight through the Borough. In both areas, traffic seeking to avoid congestion uses roads through residential areas, with resultant danger to pedestrians, noise and fumes. Both areas experience problems with parking - Surrey due to high levels of car ownership and reluctance to allow development of car parks near town centres. In Newham, the high density of development leaves little space for parking elsewhere than on the streets.
In the past, both Surrey and Newham have had proposals for new road development to alleviate congestion. In both areas, high social, environmental and financial costs have led to delays or cancellations of new roads. In Newham a new underground line, an extension of the Jubilee line, has been cancelled due to lack of funds. Both areas suffer from the additional problem that traffic is unevenly spread throughout the day. Along with public transport usage, it is concentrated into morning and evening peaks, when crowding becomes very severe. In both areas, co-ordination between different forms of public transport is poor. For the future, both road-building and public transport improvement are unlikely in the present economic climate of financial restraints, falling revenue, and increased costs.

Planning and the Environment in Surrey and Newham

In its 'County Handbook', the Surrey County Council praises the fact that:

"......so much natural beauty can exist on London's doorstep and remain largely unspoilt."

The constant flow of migrants to the County, including many who are willing to travel long distances to work in order to live there, would seem to confirm that not only the Council hold such a favourable view of Surrey. Meanwhile, in the Surrey Advertiser newspaper, a community worker in Newham has said of that Borough:

"In a national household, where do you put the things that are useful, but that seem better hidden away? Gas works, factories, sewage works, chemical industries.....well, one answer is the London Borough of Newham....."

There are many features of an area which can make it seem a desirable place in which to live. One such feature is the amount of open space it contains. Surrey has a large amount of open space (see SALMON) ranging from large commons, (such as Chobham at 1,650 acres) woods and hills, to a network of footpaths. Much of the open space, around
36,000 acres, is either publicly owned or open to the public such as that owned by the National Trust and the common land. Because of this, Surrey has become a major recreational area for Londoners, especially at weekends. In some popular areas, such as Box and Leith Hills, and Newlands Corner, recreational use has become so intense that some damage to the environment has occurred, and traffic congestion is common during the summer months. Use of footpaths over the 40% of Surrey under agricultural use has caused some conflict between ramblers, and the farmers who feel that their crops and stock are liable to be harmed. The many open spaces in Surrey have so far been able to accommodate local recreational needs, and even the highly-developed north of the county has sufficient open space for most of its needs.

Newham is much less well-endowed with public open space. It has poorer facilities than any London borough other than Kensington and Chelsea or Islington, and the level of open space provision is well below that recommended by the Department of Health and Social Security. Most open space is in the form of small, multi-purpose parks combining, sport, children's play and other recreational pursuits. Some of the newer housing developments have incorporated open space, but poor siting has caused problems, with children's play areas next to old people's accommodation causing annoyance. Wanstead Flats, the southernmost extension of Epping Forest, provides a larger area of open space to the north of the Borough. In the south, at Beckton, is a large area of open marsh and waste land, but this is in the process of being developed for industry under the docklands development scheme. It is planned that this new development will provide a considerable amount of open space to cope with deficiencies elsewhere in the Borough, where open space could only be increased at the expense of housing.

The cleanliness, or freedom from pollution, of an area is another factor affecting whether people may see it as a pleasant place to live. Surrey's industry is mainly light, and the level of both air and water pollution it generates is low. Pollution from traffic fumes became an issue in the
County briefly during public inquiries into the building of the M25 motorway, but most of Surrey is relatively free of chemical pollution. Noise pollution, is, however, a problem for Surrey. The two main London airports, Heathrow and Gatwick, are situated just over the Surrey borders and have flightpaths over the County. A helicopter link between these airports, flying across Surrey, was introduced in 1980.

Traffic noise is also a problem in parts of the County. In the north west of the County in particular, there are several problems associated with gravel extraction. Sand and gravel working is quite extensive in this area, with these aggregates being of national significance particularly for road construction. During extraction, a great deal of disturbance is caused both by the extraction process itself, and by the transport of sand and gravel away from the workings. After extraction, large spoil heaps and worked out pits may remain with poorly drained ground on what may once have been productive agricultural land. In some cases, this land has then been used for refuse dumping, which, if not properly controlled, can cause pollution problems, and possible health hazards.

Compared with Newham, however, pollution in Surrey is very limited. In Newham, polluting industries were those first attracted to the area, and although conditions have improved a great deal since then, large chemical factories can still be found in close proximity to homes and schools. There is controversy over whether the regular emissions from these works, both accidental and deliberate, are harmful to health; they are certainly malodorous. The closure of the giant Beckton gasworks halted pollution from that source, but a relic of their heyday remains in the form of the 'Beckton Alps', a huge heap of mixed noxious waste, which is proving both difficult and hazardous for the local authorities to remove. In addition to major sources of pollution such as these, Newham is still characterized by an intermingling of housing with small factories and workshops, many of which may use hazardous chemicals with little proper control, and also cause nuisance by the generation of noise and refuse. The density of development, along with the large amount of heavy
traffic which passes through the Borough means most people are exposed to traffic noise and fumes.

Planning Policy in Surrey and Newham

Surrey and Newham are both part of the South Eastern Region, and thus share a regional plan, the Strategic Plan for the South East. This plan was drawn up in response to the problems being encountered with post-war regional planning. Regional planning in Britain began with the war-time report of the Barlow commission on industrial relocation (see Chapter 2, page 53). The relocation of industry from the south east of Britain envisaged by this commission had not occurred, and drift of industry within the region had caused problems. The Strategic Plan for the South East was completed in 1971, and its major aims were the improvement of living conditions within Central London, and maintenance of the economic role of the capital. Outside London, industry and other development was directed to five major growth areas, including Aldershot/Basingstoke and Crawley/Burgess Hill which abutted onto Surrey. Throughout the rest of the South East, development was to be restrained, to preserve open countryside for environmental, agricultural and recreational purposes.

Although the Strategic Plan for the South East forms the basis of modern planning policy, to a large extent it built upon existing aims and policies. Since the 1930's, the aim of the Surrey County Council had been to restrain development and preserve open countryside. Under the 1931 Surrey County Council Act, the Council was empowered to acquire large tracts of land for preservation as open space. Financial assistance was given by the London County Council, as a major aim of such preservation was the provision of recreational space for Londoners. In 1938, the Green Belt (London and Home Counties) Act permitted the designation of a belt of permanent open space around London with the twin aims of preventing the spread of London and providing for recreation (see SALMON).
After the war, the concept of a Green Belt was consolidated in the Greater London Plan, which divided the South-East into four concentric zones. The inner two covered London, where the aim was a decrease in population and density of development. The third ring was the Green Belt, and covered half of Surrey. The fourth, outer country zone was the site for development displaced from inner London. The 1947 Town and Country Planning Act permitted Green Belts to be incorporated within County Development Plans, and a large area of Surrey was thus designated. Within the Green Belt, existing settlements were to be prevented from coalescing by refusal of planning permission for development outside the existing boundaries of settlements.

The Greater London Plan experienced problems almost immediately. The planned population limits for Surrey in 1971 were exceeded in 1952, but the Green Belt was largely maintained. The County Council found it possible for most of the increase to be absorbed by infilling and rounding off existing settlements, plus expanding a few towns mainly outside the Green Belt. In 1978, the Surrey County Council submitted a draft Written Statement on the new Surrey Structure Plan to the Secretary of State for the Environment. This was accepted with some modifications by the Secretary of State in 1980, and forms current planning policy in the County (see Chapter 4, page 147). The major principle of the plan is severe restraint on development and preservation of the Green Belt. The Council states that in several areas, expected demand for land uses will probably exceed supply.

The Surrey Structure Plan uses restraint on housing development as a means of restraining population growth in the County, though the severity of restraint was lessened by modifications made by the Secretary of State, who introduced housing targets for each Surrey District, to be achieved by the end of the plan period in 1991. The particular housing problems of lower income groups in the County are noted in the Plan, but little practical action is promised other than an agreement to allow slightly higher densities in housing
development, in the hope that this will lead to cheaper housing being built. The policy is also to restrain growth of industrial and office development, for example by permitting new development only where the developing firm is already located within the County. Little development in transport is envisaged due to lack of funding. The draft Structure Plan contained plans to extend the Green Belt to cover the whole of Surrey outside towns, confirming the policy of the Council to treat these areas as Green Belt. Although extension of the Green Belt was refused by the Secretary of State, he did allow a policy of severe restriction on development in these areas.

Following approval of the Surrey Structure Plan, a number of District authorities have begun work on local plans, although some District Councils do not envisage this process taking place for some time. No local plans are yet complete, but the policy of severe restraint contained in the Structure Plan is not expected to be challenged.

The 1947 Greater London Plan had grave consequences for the Borough of Newham, in that it prevented new industry from moving into the area to replace the dying docks and dock-related industry. The policy of encouraging industry to move out of London continued until the Greater London Development Plan was drawn up in 1969. This plan, inspired by the Structure Plan system contained in the 1968 Town and Country Planning Act was very ambitious. It aimed not only to control land use in the capital, but to bring about economic and social revival. Its aim was to halt the drift of industry from London, and take positive steps to solve the housing crisis, and create a better environment for Londoners. The plan created great controversy, with Government officials seeing it as too ambitious, and a public outcry at the 'motorway box' system designed to solve London's traffic problems. Following a mammoth public inquiry, which led to changes in the system of Structure Plan inquiries, the plan was extensively modified, with the motorway system dropped apart from the M25. The modified plan was finally adopted in 1976. The Plan identified
Beckton, West Ham and Canning Town in Newham as areas for the location of industrial development, whilst Stratford was designated as a 'strategic centre'; one of several to provide a range of office, shop and recreation facilities to take the pressure off central London. The Greater London Development Plan identified Newham as a housing problem area, where there was to be particular emphasis on building new homes.

The Greater London Development Plan acts as the structure plan for Newham, and following its approval, the Borough Council began preparing a series of local plans to cover the whole Borough. The main aims of Borough planning policy are the retention and expansion of industry, and improvement of both the quantity and quality of housing. In the latter context, it is now Council policy that family housing should not be more than three stories high. The aim is that the majority of housing development should still be undertaken by the local authority, but financial restraints by Central Government may make this impossible. These planning policies require the development of a large area of land. The only remaining undeveloped land in Newham is in the docklands area, so it is on development in this area that planning in Newham depends.

Docklands Planning

In the early stages of preparation of the Greater London Development Plan, London's docklands were recognised as having such severe problems as to merit a plan of their own. The Greater London Council commissioned a firm of consultants, Travers Morgan, to study the area and suggest plans for the revival of this area of wasteland and decaying industry and housing. The plan they produced was to turn the area into a luxury leisure zone, with marinas, expensive housing and wildlife parks. Criticism of the plan from the Boroughs concerned, and the local people who would be displaced, was overwhelming, and when control of the Greater London Council changed hands, the Travers Morgan study was dropped (see
Chapter 5, page 188). In its place a Docklands Joint Committee was set up, with representatives from the Boroughs and the Greater London Council to draw up a new plan for Docklands. The result of their endeavours was the Docklands Strategic Plan, completed after a massive exercise in public consultation, and adopted as an action area plan under the Greater London Development Plan in 1976. The objective of the Docklands Strategic Plan is:

"To use the opportunity provided by large areas of London's Docklands becoming available to redress the housing, social, employment/economic, environmental and communications deficiencies of the Docklands area and the parent Boroughs, and thereby provide freedom for similar improvement throughout east and inner London."

The plan calls for the retention of existing industry and the attraction of new firms, aided by the preparation of new industrial parks. The population of Docklands should increase too, with 23,000 new homes to be built. Both public and private transport access to the area should be improved; by road building, a new river crossing, and extension of the Jubilee underground line to Docklands. Newham contains the largest proportion of Docklands of the parent Boroughs, around 40%, and the Borough Council sees this as a great opportunity, saying it:

".....could mean some 8,000 new homes and 10,000 new jobs, a sizeable shopping centre.....a large open park....."

An industrial park on the old Beckton gasworks site is under construction, and a strategic lorry park is planned.

Together the Docklands Strategic Plan and the various local plans represent current planning policy in Newham. In 1980, however, the Government set up an Urban Development Corporation (UDC), along the lines of new-town development corporations, to control development in London's Docklands. The UDC does not cover the whole of Docklands; it omits part of the Beckton area of Newham. Although the UDC was set up in 1981, it was over a year before it became operational, and
in the uncertainty of this period the Docklands Joint Committee virtually ceased operation. The local authorities on the committee and the Greater London Council had opposed the formation of the UDC. The policies of the UDC remain unclear, but they appear to wish for a much higher proportion of private housing in Docklands, and have concluded agreements with a number of private developers to this end.

A variety of other proposals for Docklands have been put forward, including one that it should be used as a site for the Olympics, and a new plan for motorways through the area. At present though, the future of Docklands planning, and thus of planning in Newham as a whole, remains uncertain. The Government also proposes to designate part of the Isle of Dogs, to the west of Newham, as an "Enterprise Zone", with reduced taxation and planning controls for businesses. It is unclear what effect this designation will have upon either the Isle of Dogs itself, or the ability of Newham to attract new industry.

Conservation in Surrey and Newham

Although conservation of both the built and natural environment has become a major concern in the 1970's, it is not a new idea. Conservation in Surrey has a long history. By 1913 the County Council had compiled a list of historic buildings and sites in the county, and some of the earliest acquisitions made by the National Trust were in Surrey.

By 1974 Surrey had over 100 conservation areas, and more have been added since then (see SALMON). Many are the original centres of towns or villages. The number of conservation areas varies greatly between different Districts, some having only one or two, whilst others number tens. There are also many listed buildings in Surrey, dating from medieval times onwards, and including large houses, cottages and barns. Some are the work of well-known architects, and the work of Edward Lutyens is particularly admired. Development of Surrey has tended to be on greenfield sites rather than by demolition.
and redevelopment, so many older buildings remain, and many are still occupied and used. The shortage of building land is now placing a great deal of pressure on older buildings, but it is the policy of the County Council that buildings of historic or architectural interest should be preserved wherever possible. Many District authorities take a similar view and have staff with special responsibility for conservation of buildings.

In Newham, there are few buildings more than a century old, most having been lost through redevelopment both at that time and more recently, or through war damage. In recent years, Victorian architecture of the type found in Newham has become more popular, and about 100 buildings in the Borough are listed. There are two conservation areas in Newham, one of which is a Victorian clerical workers' housing estate with many unusual details on the buildings. The other is a group of mills and oasthouses dating from the 18th century and now part of a brewery (see NEWHAM LS). The owners were persuaded to use the buildings as offices rather than demolish them, and recently the Borough Council, with the support of national conservation groups, has purchased one building. The Council's conversion to conservation is fairly recent, and during the 1960's many sound older buildings were demolished simply because they were part of a large area chosen for comprehensive redevelopment. Economic rather than other factors persuaded the Council to put greater emphasis on rehabilitation.

Nature conservation also has a long history in Surrey, through the preservation of open space for the Green Belt. In addition to this protected area, there is a Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, an Area of Great Landscape Value and many nature reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest. It is the policy of the County Council that development should not normally be allowed on Sites of Special Scientific Interest or nature reserves, and that the effect of proposed development on wildlife should be taken into account before permission is given. The District Councils vary in their
enthusiasm for nature conservation, some having officers whose special concern is conservation. Most Surrey local authorities have policies of tree preservation, and the County has many hundreds of tree preservation orders. Whilst pressure for development poses a threat to wildlife, in parts of the County new areas for nature conservation are being created by the rehabilitation or flooding of disused gravel workings.

Newham is in general too densely developed to have much wildlife interest, but there is one nature reserve in the Borough. This is located in one of the many disused cemeteries in Newham, and an interpretation centre has recently been built at the reserve. To the north of the Borough, Wanstead Flats retains some semi-wild areas, but the majority of open space in the Borough is managed for recreational purposes rather than nature conservation. The Council does encourage tree preservation, with some preservation orders and a considerable amount of planting on new developments.

Thus the County of Surrey and the Borough of Newham have many differences. Surrey is prosperous and a sought-after place to live, with much open space, and a policy of preservation. Newham is suffering badly in the recession, losing population and pressing desperately for redevelopment and renewal. Nevertheless, the two areas do share environmental problems, such as traffic congestion, housing, and preservation of the pleasant features of the environment. To a small extent, they are also beginning to use similar measures to deal with environmental problems, too.
CHAPTER 3

REFERENCES


CHAPTER 4
CHAPTER 4
ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN SURREY

Introduction

The problem of defining local environmental groups described in the Introduction becomes very complex in the initial stages of empirical research, as often little is known about groups other than their names. Taking the outline described in the Introduction, therefore, all groups listed by local authorities, Citizens' Advice Bureaux, and voluntary organisation directories as having an interest in the environment were contacted. Other groups were identified from local authority planning department contact lists, and the local press. Initial contacts with these groups revealed the existence of further environmental groups. The aim was to be as comprehensive as possible, so as not to exclude any particular type of environmentally-concerned organisation. The information-gathering process is described in the Appendix.

In this way, a list of potential environmental groups within the western half of Surrey was obtained, and all the groups on the list were contacted by a combination of letter and telephone. Responses were received from a large number of groups, full information from 131. Only a small number of the groups contacted felt that they were not, in fact, environmental groups and replied accordingly, although the proportion and scope of environmental activity varied between groups. Those groups with a relatively low level of environmental activity were retained within the sample for analysis in the interests of comprehensiveness, and as a test of any classification scheme derived.

The Surrey environmental groups used a wide variety of titles. Only one group used the word 'environment' in its name, calling itself an 'environment association'. The most popular name, used by 42% of respondents, was 'Residents Association'. The next most frequently used was the name of
the groups' locality plus 'Association' or 'Society'. The remaining groups used a wide variety of names. Only nine used the terms 'Conservation' or Preservation', and seven used 'Amenity' in their titles. There were two 'Action Groups'. All the groups used the name of their locality in their title, an emphasis of their local base.

Size of the Local Environmental Movement

It is impossible to be certain of the number of local environmental groups in West Surrey due to both definitional and practical problems. Voluntary organisations in Britain, unlike those in some other countries, are not required to register with any authority unless they wish to hold charitable status. There is thus no reason to believe that lists compiled by local authorities or other bodies are comprehensive. By their nature, however, many local environmental groups are likely to contact the local authorities or seek publicity. A comprehensive search for such groups had been carried out five years previously by the Surrey County Council as part of the Structure Plan participation process, and this was used to back up the lists obtained from other sources.

Voluntary groups of all types can be rather short-lived, and thus new groups formed and existing groups ceased their activities during the research period. Apart from the largest organisations, local voluntary groups tend not to have permanent headquarters. Instead, their address changes with each change in Secretary or Chairman. This rendered the County Council list in particular liable to be outdated. Some addresses obtained proved to be no longer applicable, and efforts to trace new addresses proved most difficult, especially as the population in Surrey is highly mobile (see Chapter 3). In some cases it proved impossible to trace addresses for groups thought to be still active.

Different sources gave different addresses for the same group in 40 cases. In 22 of these the second address tried elicited a response. In general, the older the source used, the less its value as a provider of accurate information.
From the various sources used, a list of 278 names and addresses were obtained. In the initial stages of research, 28 of these were interviewed in depth. Later, questionnaires were sent to the remaining 250 groups. The response received is described in Table 1.

As a check on the coverage of groups achieved, local papers were monitored during and after the period of research. Sixty-one local environmental groups were listed by name and 31 of these had given information in the form of interviews, questionnaire replies or other written information. Of the remainder, eight had been contacted without reply and six were short-lived action groups which were formed and dissolved within the research period. Information from the local press on the 30 groups not contacted by the survey was collected and used as a further source of data. It seems probable, in the light of this press coverage, that the survey covered at least half of the environmental groups in West Surrey, putting the total numbers of such groups as probably between 150 and 300 maximum.

The response of local environmental groups varied greatly between different districts of West Surrey (see Table 2). This may be due to an actual difference in numbers of groups, or to the quality of information sources. The lowest contact rates were from Woking and Surrey Heath, where it was not possible to obtain lists of groups from the local authorities, and much greater reliance was placed upon the older County Council list. In Guildford, Elmbridge and Waverley, a variety of information sources was available. Table 2a shows the number of groups contacted and replies received per 10,000 population for each district. Those districts with the lowest rates are not always those for which little data was available, so it appears that there may be real factors affecting environmental groups differently in different areas within West Surrey. These factors will be revealed by examination of data received from the environmental groups.
### TABLE 1

**GROUP RESPONSE TO CONTACTS**

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<th>Response</th>
<th>Number of groups (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reply to questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview information - no questionnaire sent</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other written information</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total from which full information was received</strong></td>
<td><strong>131 (47%)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brief information from now-defunct groups</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total from which information was received</strong></td>
<td><strong>151 (54.3%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not local environmental groups</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total response rate</strong></td>
<td><strong>166 (60%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply/current address unknown - groups which may no longer exist</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of contacts attempted</strong></td>
<td><strong>278 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Of the groups from which no reply was received, a small number are known to be active, but did not wish to co-operate with the research. Others could not be contacted, and may or may not be still in existence.)
No. of groups

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<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>60</th>
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<td>District</td>
<td>No. environmental groups per 10,000 population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Surrey Heath</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waverley</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woking</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The size of West Surrey environmental groups varies geographically from one road to the whole of the county, and in membership terms from 17 to 3,800. (See Table 3). The groups with most members were not necessarily those with the largest area, though there is a high correlation between low membership and small area. The group with the highest membership covered one small town. Two other high membership groups covered villages. Only three of the seven groups with highest membership were county-wide in area.

Few parts of West Surrey were not covered by any environmental groups, and several areas were covered by a number of groups. The town of Guildford, for example, had one town society, seven groups covering different wards or neighbourhoods, and was also covered by branches of county and national organisations. In general, this type of multiple coverage was restricted to town rather than countryside areas, relating to the density of population available for recruitment. However, some of the village-based groups had a very high proportionate membership, perhaps due to a stronger feeling of 'community'.

Judgement of both absolute and relative membership numbers is made difficult by the different ways in which groups treat membership. Five groups had no formal membership, stating for example: "all in our area are considered members" or "no registered members, all residents eligible". Some groups had individual membership, in others it was on a household basis. There were some federations with other groups as members, but some federations also had individual members.

By adding the membership figures given by the groups, and counting household membership as equivalent to two individual members, the figure of 52,000 members of local environmental groups in West Surrey is reached. This is approximately 8% of the population, and compares with the figure of 10% membership of national environmental groups estimated by LOWE et. al. (see Introduction). It also compares with the 1977 General Household Survey figures of 10% for
TABLE 3

WEST SURREY ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP SIZE IN MEMBERSHIP AND AREA (n = 131)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Area:</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small (1 road or small estate)</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (whole town or larger)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Membership:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 100 members</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (100 to 999)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 1000 members</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No information available</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Area and Membership Compared:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area:</th>
<th>Membership:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low (up to 100)</td>
<td>Medium (101-999)</td>
<td>High (over 1000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (whole town or larger)</td>
<td>4% (5)</td>
<td>14.5% (19)</td>
<td>4.5% (6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3% (4)</td>
<td>26% (34)</td>
<td>6% (8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small (road or small estate)</td>
<td>17.5% (23)</td>
<td>7% (9)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
attending clubs and societies of all types, and 8% for voluntary work of all types. It is possible that the number estimated for West Surrey group members may be an over-estimate, however, due to the overlap of membership between different groups. Whilst no survey of such overlap was possible during the research, it was a phenomenon widely mentioned during interviews with group secretaries and chairmen. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the possible incomplete coverage of groups and the fact that 'household' membership may cover more than two people, it is an impressive figure.

There is also evidence to indicate that potential membership of West Surrey environmental groups is even higher. One group, which at present covers half of a town, stated:

"The main reason why membership is restricted is because of organisational difficulties rather than lack of interest....recruitment potential is very large, but the Association hasn't the resources at present to service any more members, as there are barely enough people to collect subscriptions and deliver newsletters now....."
groups had more than one committee; either executive committees formed from a large general committee, or sub-committees to deal with specific issues or activities. Virtually all the West Surrey environmental groups had written constitutions. In general, the structure of the groups was very formal. This was to a certain extent forced upon the groups by external bodies, such as federations and local authorities, who demand formal organisation as a prerequisite to consultation or membership as they believe it ensures representativeness.

In theory, the democratic and representative nature of the groups is ensured by annual election of officers and committee members, and their questioning at the Annual General Meeting. As one group stated that its greatest problem was "attracting more than 10% of members to the AGM", it can be seen that this process does not work perfectly. In addition, amongst those groups observed in detail, 'elections' seemed to consist less of a process of elimination than a desperate effort to persuade enough people to fill the existing vacancies. Indeed, some societies stated that they had been unable to obtain a full committee, and one had even been unable to find a Chairman. Potential candidates were usually sought out in advance by existing officers, and assured of election. A shortage of successors meant that some officers served for a great many years, over 20 in some cases. The main reasons for people leaving office or committees were age and ill-health, pressure of other commitments, or moving away from the area. Few resigned due to clashes over policy or tactics. Thus although theoretically 'democratic', the groups were in fact in the hands of anyone interested enough to run them. This phenomenon is not unique to local environmental groups, and has been seen as a grave problem by researchers into community groups (see BUTCHER, TAYLOR). However, the fact that elections do not occur in practice does not mean that the committees of West Surrey environmental groups are necessarily unrepresentative of their members' wishes.
Group committees and officers are certainly powerful. Over 70% of groups said that decisions on their most important issues were taken by the committee, with major decisions being taken by officers only, in another 5%. For most other groups, current decisions now rested with the committee, but the major policy decisions had been made at the formation of the group by the founders or original members. 25% of groups said that the membership were consulted on policy matters; usually through the group newsletter or at a specially convened meeting.

The prominence of the committee in both making and carrying out decisions does mean that the figure of 52,000 does not refer to active members of West Surrey environmental groups. In effect, the relationship is more that of a football team and its supporters club. The football team (the committee) undertake most of the activity, but their existence depends upon the resources and legitimacy provided by the supporters (the membership). The degree of involvement of the supporters varies over time, and depends upon the importance of the matches (issues) with which the team are involved.

Active involvement in West Surrey environmental groups is not solely confined to the committee. Some groups have a second tier of activists to act as a link between members and the committee. Often these are geographically based, dealing with particular areas. One group described such a scheme:

"At the Annual General Meeting the society re-organised itself into approximately 26 areas, each with its own co-ordinator; initially appointed by the executive committee. Your own co-ordinator will be responsible for passing on information about the society's activities to you and other members in your area. He is your direct contact with the executive committee...."

The duties of such area-based activists include collecting subscriptions, delivering newsletters, and acting as initial recipients of members' queries or complaints. Only ten of the study groups mentioned a formal system of such local
representatives, although others had informal 'postmen', to by-pass expensive postage costs.

A few groups co-opted members onto subject sub-committees, but few groups had permanent sub-committees. Other groups formed them as the need arose. Thus although the membership of committees does not encompass all activists in West Surrey environmental groups, it gives a good indication of their numbers. In this way, a figure of 1,500 activists is obtained, 0.22% of the total population and 3% of total group membership.

Both the size of the committee and the proportion of active membership varied between groups. Committee size ranged from three to 42, and the proportion of activists from less than 1% to over 20%. Groups with the highest proportion of activists were all amongst the smallest in membership. Those with the largest committees all had high membership (nearly all having less than 5% active membership). Committee size relates loosely to membership size within upper and lower limits, presumably relating to efficiency. Too small a committee would place too great a burden upon members, too large a committee would become unworkable and unwieldy. Interestingly, the largest committees had more members than the smallest societies.

With a low proportion of activists, but the aim of obtaining a high level of potential membership to give groups legitimacy as a representative of local opinion, the committee must ensure that it uses all possible means to retain contact with, and support from the members. Newsletters and area representatives are two such methods which have already been mentioned. A large proportion of the societies produce printed information for members, although this is difficult to quantify due to the great variety in both format and frequency. Some groups produce printed material only for the Annual General Meeting or when a major issue arises. Others produce glossy magazines, with articles and paid advertisements, on a regular basis. Many groups produce duplicated sheets three or four times a year. Some groups had found regular production of
newsletters a strain upon their resources, and had reduced the size and frequency. Other groups were eager to expand their publishing, distributing the newsletter to non-members as well as members in the area, producing local guides and maps. The content of newsletters varied from simple lists of information and names of committee members, to articles of a more general nature on group activities and the environment at large.

Another method of involving members in West Surrey environmental groups was through the holding of social and educational activities. Over 30% of groups undertook events including talks and films on environmental issues, visits to places of environmental interest, and fund-raising social occasions. Most groups found such events very popular, although one group had ceased to organise them due to lack of support. In some cases social and educational events such as those described formed the main activity of groups for much of the time. Often the events were handled by a separate sub-committee, and almost took on a life of their own. For many groups, they were a major source of funds. Sample events programmes are shown in Table 4.

The existence of the various means by which committees and members could be kept in touch shows a recognition both of the importance of retaining members, and the division of those actively involved in the group and their supporters. One group newsletter, urging continued support for the committee, stated:

"You have, rightly, vested responsibility in your committee for exercising the vigilance that is necessary..."

This attitude, that the committee has been vested to act in the name of, but without the active involvement of the rest of the membership, is held generally both in Surrey and elsewhere.
TABLE 4

SAMPLE GROUP EVENTS PROGRAMMES

Saturday August 2nd
Visit to Park Hatch from 2.30 and Hascombe Vineyard 5 p.m. (Bring own drink and chair).

Thursday October 9th - 7.30 for 8 p.m.
Library.
Joint meeting with Godalming Trust.
Illustrated talk, "Lutyens, Voysey and their Contemporaries in West Surrey". Alfred J. Rowe, ARIBA.

Wednesday November 12th - 7.30 for 8 p.m.
Library.
Illustrated talk, "Farm House and Cottage in S.W. Surrey".
Miss Joan Harding.

PROGRAMME 1979-1980

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings will be held in the Guildhall, at 8 p.m.

1979
Thursday 8 p.m. Wine evening at Heal's, Tunsgate. Special welcome to new members.
Sept 20th
Thursday Urban Traffic and People - a discussion
Oct 4th
Thursday (note 2nd Thursday in month)
Nov 8th 'The Press and the Community' Mr. E.D. Adams, Editor of 'The Surrey Advertiser'


Craft Markets
For information concerning our Craft Markets, contact:
Jonathan Tatlow, 14a The Mount, Guildford, Tel: 36981

1980
Thursday 'The Covent Garden Piazza' A lesson in conversion and preservation, presented by the Society's Design Group.
Jan 3rd
Thursday An exercise in planning.
Feb 7th 'No one told George'. Short film & discussion lead by Guildford Society Committee.

April 3rd Report on Guildford

B.E. Twyford Esq., BSc(Eng), M.I.C.E., F.I.M.M.E., Chief Executive, Guildford Borough Council.

May 8th 8 p.m. Annual General Meeting at the Rectory, The Law School, Portsmouth Road. Coffee provided.

June Bring and Buy - Coffee Morning

End of June An Evening at Piccards Manor
Environmental Group Formation

Local environmental groups are generally thought of as a modern phenomenon, and indeed there has been a great increase in their numbers in recent years (see BARKER). Although over half of the West Surrey groups had been formed since 1960, there remains a large number with a longer history. The oldest environmental group traced was a natural history group formed in 1888. The oldest general environmental group formed around 1905, and altogether 14 still-active groups had been in existence since before 1940 (see Table 5). It is probable that other local groups in existence at that time have since ceased to operate, and their records have been lost.

All the study groups were asked how and why they had been formed, and almost all were able to give some information, although many details were undocumented, and forgotten by current activists. It is interesting to note that by no means all of the groups had originally been formed to deal with environmental issues. Some groups began solely with social, educational or recreational aims, including ramblers groups, natural history societies, and community associations. Some of these groups, indeed, still devote much time to these activities, but have been drawn into environmental issues and concerns.

The literature on environmental groups (see KIMBER & RICHARDS, GREGORY) and indeed on voluntary groups generally (see BUTCHER) describes how in many cases the formation of a group is triggered by a specific incident or issue of local importance. The West Surrey groups were asked whether this was the case for their formation, and 43 (33%) responded positively. In half of these cases, the trigger had been the threat of building development within the area. A further 11 groups cited the threat of a road development or an increase in traffic, and other triggers included the threat of gravel extraction, airport development, or the demolition of historic buildings.
TABLE 5

AGE OF SURREY ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-1900</th>
<th>1 group formed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1900-1909</td>
<td>3 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-1919</td>
<td>- &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920-1929</td>
<td>- &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-1939</td>
<td>10 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1949</td>
<td>7 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td>17 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
<td>40 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1974</td>
<td>34 &quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-1979</td>
<td>10 &quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the groups which were not able to cite a specific trigger which led to their formation, there is evidence in a further 22 cases (17%) that what led to their formation was a general fear that their locality was threatened by change of an unwanted kind. The evidence includes a coincidence of formation dates with periods of expansion within the area, and an original statement of aims of a protective nature (for example "to protect the character" of the area).

A third category, of 32 groups, formed initially on a self-help basis. This category includes groups formed for recreational purposes, community groups formed on newly-developed areas or immediately after the war, and associations formed for the upkeep of a private road or estate. There were 15 of the latter type of group, a reflection of the character of building development in West Surrey.

Other West Surrey environmental groups formed for reasons which can broadly be described as representational; the opposite of self-help groups in that they look to outside bodies for improvements. Such groups were formed because it was felt that the wishes of the area were being ignored, and that there was 'strength in numbers'. Reasons were seldom given to indicate the cause of such a feeling, although in some cases they were formed on newly-built areas where facilities were not fully developed. For one group, the cause of formation was the feeling that the area was being treated as a 'poor neighbour' of an adjoining town. Twenty groups (15%) were formed for broadly representative reasons.

The remaining 13 groups (10%) had been formed on the initiative of other organisations. They were either branches of national organisations (although with a high degree of autonomy), or federations of existing local environmental groups. Overall, however, almost half of the groups (65) had been formed to protect or preserve existing environmental conditions which members found pleasant; to maintain the status quo. The remaining groups were formed to achieve some
improvement in conditions, either by their own actions, or by lobbying the appropriate outside body.

Literature on local voluntary groups in recent years has described the role which outsiders, particularly community workers, can play in facilitating the formation and activity of such groups (see BUTCHER, TAYLOR, for example). This type of assistance was completely absent from the experience of West Surrey environmental groups. The closest which any group had come to professional intervention in its formation was one which had started after a letter in the local paper from the forerunner to the Surrey Amenity Council. Each of the federations had been formed at the instigation of existing voluntary environmental groups, or individuals from such groups, within the locality. For most groups, however, there was little evidence of outside assistance, although the Surrey Amenity Council is able to give advice to potential groups. The study groups mentioned only informal, personal advice as having been received. Several established groups mentioned being asked for advice on drawing up a constitution, or to provide a speaker for a meeting. Some groups mentioned personal friends in existing environmental groups who had given advice when their own group formed. For some groups, encouragement had been provided by the knowledge that other environmental groups existed. For one group formed in 1935, being made aware of other groups, both locally and elsewhere in England, had been the only form of outside assistance. Another group had been spurred into existence by the publicity surrounding European Conservation Year, 1970.

None of the groups appeared to have suffered from the lack of outside assistance, although obviously those which had been prevented from starting by lack of assistance would not be represented in the sample. Although few details of the early stages of formation are available, from interviews and the experience of groups forming during the study period, a general picture can be obtained. Generally, the first initiative tended to come from one or two people, often ones who were already active in local affairs. In many cases a
public meeting would be called, at which the group was formally called into existence. Often the instigators would become the first officers and committee members. (This process is well described by HALL, C. whose advice on persuading the meeting to follow a pre-ordained course would be of assistance to many political activists).

There appeared to be no shortage within Surrey of prominent local people willing to sponsor and chair such initial meetings. A group formed in 1935 to protect a local beauty spot had a public meeting chaired by a knight, who became chairman. Most of the meeting's sponsors were elected to the committee. Many wealthy people supported the society, and enabled it to purchase the threatened land. In 1946 a society was formed by a local ex-Home Guard officer, initially to maintain the social contacts which had developed during the war. Again a public meeting called the society into formal existence, and a committee was elected. At the first committee meeting the agenda consisted almost entirely of environmental issues. In 1979 an action group on traffic was instigated by activists from existing groups and the local Earl, and formalised at a meeting chaired by him. Indeed, almost all 'action groups' of this type in West Surrey, even when short-lived, tend to be formally constituted rather than ad-hoc bodies.

Thus when an environmental 'trigger', whether it be the immediate threat of a motorway or a general feeling that the area is at risk of change, seems to lead to the development of a very formally organised voluntary group. Such an approach is seen as the best way to 'get things done', and in the majority of cases was preferred to approaching existing organisations or representatives. It may be that this lack of interest in existing channels of influence, along with the ability to organise the initial stages of group formation, is an essential prerequisite without which no amount of 'triggers' will cause a local environmental group to form.
Aims of West Surrey Environmental Groups

The aims of an organisation, as described in its constitution, officially prescribe its activities. Constitutions, however, are usually drawn up in the early stages of a group's existence. Although they can be amended to reflect the development of the organisation, or an increase in the scope of its activities, this is a laborious process and rarely seems to occur. Sometimes the constitution must be set out in a particular way, for example to achieve charitable status or registration with the Civic Trust. All these factors tend towards making constitutions formal and historical documents, rather than a true reflection of the current activities of organisations. Nevertheless they are important as a written statement of group aims.

Each of the West Surrey local environmental groups was asked to specify its aims, and these were analysed for complexity and content and compared with the current activities of the group. Some aims were very brief and generalised, for example:

"To preserve the amenities of (town)"

Others were very complex, listing the objects, intended beneficiaries, means by which the objects were to be achieved, and the philosophy behind them, for example:

"To promote and protect the interests of (town) independently of political affiliations, particularly via.....District and Surrey County Councils. To keep watch on any developments which affect (town) and to maintain its 'village' character....."

There appeared to be no particular reason why the complexity of aims varied so greatly, other than the reasons suggested above, and the preferences of those who drew up the constitutions, perhaps using constitutions of other organisations as a model.

The question of content is more important. The first notable variation was that some groups had very specific aims,
covering only particular aspects of the environment. These could be termed 'specialist' groups, and there were 25 such groups, with varying interests (see Table 8). Seven of these covered the whole county in area and membership, with five extending beyond the county borders. Others covered smaller areas, towns or villages, although some drew members from further afield. Whilst the examples of aims quoted in Table 8 illustrate how groups concentrate upon particular aspects of the environment, they do not describe fully their concerns. Nature conservation groups are also concerned about footpaths and airports, as these affect wildlife. Waterways groups also care about the wildlife and historic buildings along river and canal banks. All the 'specialist' groups are concerned with planning and development control issues as they affect the sector of the environment in which they are particularly interested. Many 'specialist' groups also have other interests. The footpath groups organise walks and rambles for their members. Many of the groups concerned about historic buildings had a general research and educational interest in the history of their area. Nature conservation groups saw education of the public as a major function, and one waterways group was restoring a canal to navigation. For all, these other interests, which are not all strictly 'environmental', were an important part of their activities.

If 'specialist' groups have such broad interests, how much wider must be the concerns of groups which commence with wider aims. Analysis of the aims of non-specialist groups revealed certain elements which recurred frequently. Preservation or conservation of environmental features was part of the aims of 76 West Surrey groups, for example:

"To preserve the amenities of (town)"
"To oppose change in this valley"
"To retain the rural character of (village)"
"To conserve and where possible enhance the character of the locality"

This wish to conserve or prevent change is worded vaguely. Whilst the second example states that all change is to be
### Table 8

**Aims of Specialist Groups in West Surrey**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Number of Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature conservation</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footpaths</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building preservation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airports</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterways</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples of Aims**

- **Nature Conservation:** "To acquire, maintain and manage nature reserves for the conservation of wild plants and wild creatures living naturally within them."
- **Footpaths:** "To organise rambles. To protect and preserve rights of way. To maintain public access to the countryside."
- **Building Preservation:** "Preservation of buildings of architectural character and historic interest."
- **Airports:** "To contain the growth of Gatwick Airport."
- **Waterways:** "To preserve and extend amenities, to protect the natural beauty of the Thames and its whole environment."
resisted, others allude to those qualities of the environment which are seen as pleasant; the 'character', 'amenities' or 'rural' nature. It is not made clear upon what grounds a feature is to be considered worth preserving. This assumes either that such grounds are obvious, that everyone in the area would agree upon them, or that each threatened change will be discussed on its merits, the activities of the group being essentially reactive rather than active. Discussion with key personnel from the West Surrey environmental groups indicated that both these elements play a part. It is felt that all 'sensible' people would wish to see the same environment preserved, and that changes proposed from outside are what need to be opposed.

Another element often present amongst group aims in West Surrey was representation of their area. Forty-four groups mentioned representation of members' views, 20 specifying representation to the local authority. For example:

"To represent members to the district or county councils"

"To represent and advance the views of the Society to local, county and other official bodies...."

"To act in the interests of residents within the area by presenting a united local group to negotiate with the local council or other authoritative body"

Other groups aimed at a more general representation:

"To draw together the strength of feeling in the village on an issue and to present the case"

"To provide a medium through which residents may express their views on matters of local interest"

It is evident that a 'representational' aim is not necessarily an 'environmental' one. The examples listed above would allow representation of members' views on other issues, as well as the environment. In the case of groups specifying representation to local authorities it implies a political role, as a 'pressure group'. For this reason, certain umbrella bodies and certain authors (see for example ALLISON) have been inclined
to classify such groups as separate from the environmental movement. Indeed, only ten groups have both 'representational' and conservation aims. However, when the issues with which groups have been involved, and the actions they have taken, are considered, there is no significant difference between groups with the two types of aim. Both sets of groups had been involved in similar numbers of issues; and apart from 'representational' groups having a slight preponderance of 'self-help' issues, they had both been involved with the same types of problems.

Twenty-four of the sample of groups had what might be described as a 'self-help' aim, using the term similarly to that used to describe issues previously. They aimed to undertake themselves some action involving their immediate environment. In this, they could be described as the opposite of 'representational' groups. For example, some such aims included:

"To own and maintain a private road"

"To preserve and foster the amenities of (road) and in particular to make up the road"

"Maintenance of the road and common areas of grass and other plantings"

Again, this type of aim might not necessarily be called an 'environmental' one, although the groups in question are certainly concerned about their physical surroundings. However, all but five of the groups also had other aims, and all but two had been involved in a variety of environmental issues. Not surprisingly, most groups with 'self-help' aims cover a small area; all but 4 being limited to a single road or small group of roads. They are probably unusually common in Surrey due to the number of housing areas with roads unadopted by local authorities. However, not all private road associations had 'self-help' aims, four were instead lobbying for the local authority to take over maintenance. In addition, four 'self-help' groups covered larger areas, their aim being to provide or maintain a community centre. Nevertheless, 'self-help' groups covering roads or small groups of roads do
form a distinctive category of group, whose numbers may be unique to Surrey and similar areas.

The wider aim of educating either members or the public at large on environmental issues was held by 28 groups. Such aims included:

"Fostering of local interest in amenity subjects"
"To promote, organise and encourage study and research for a wider education in and appreciation of our countryside"

Thirteen of the 26 specialist groups had education as one of their aims, along with 15 non-specialist groups. However, as noted earlier, a large number of West Surrey environmental groups hold meetings for members on environmental topics which could be regarded as educational (see Table 4). Some of these meetings are also open to the general public. Some groups saw education as being of vital importance; the county nature conservation trust in particular felt that it was the only way in which long term progress in nature conservation could be achieved. The trust therefore worked closely with schools, having its own education centre. Few other groups had such close contact with educational establishments, although two had, in the past, held competitions on the environment for schoolchildren.

Co-operation with other organisations was listed as an aim by 13 West Surrey environmental groups. Examples include:

"...to co-operate with other Residents' Associations in matters of common interest"
"...to develop relationships with other similar organisations and local groups"

Federations, whose main aim was to facilitate inter-group co-operation, formed five of the 13.

The local environmental groups covered by the study thus have a wide variety of stated aims. Some of the aims are not particularly related to the environment, and yet all the groups have been included in the study because they undertake actions
relating to their environment. The aims do not necessarily reflect the current activities of the groups, and this discrepancy is mirrored in the difference between current activities and the purpose for which the groups were originally formed. One group, formed to co-ordinate opposition to an unsightly building development, has as its stated aim "To ensure just, efficient, local government". Its recent activities have been wholly concerned with the environment including preservation of open space, planning issues, and roads. Another 'Ratepayers' group has as its aim "to improve and preserve amenities", and has recently broadened its scope to include local social, as well as environmental issues. There were many such examples amongst West Surrey environmental groups, illustrating the need for in-depth study to reveal the true nature and activities of such groups.

Issues which concern West Surrey Environmental Groups

Earlier chapters have indicated the importance of which issues groups express concern about, and the paucity of information available on this point. The common factor shared by all the West Surrey groups, which defined them, was a concern for the physical environment outside the homes of members. Whilst most groups also undertook activities which would not be considered as 'environmental' (for example, arranging old people's outings, or lobbying for improved school facilities) all undertook activities concerned with the environment more or less regularly.

The issues which concerned West Surrey environmental groups were of a wide range, but a number of broad categories of issue are discernable. These are:

1) Opposing development, either of housing, industry or other types of building, or change of use of existing buildings. One group described this as "careful study of planning applications with a view to objections when required" (see Chapter 2, page 71), with the aim of "keeping a watching brief over the local authority" on planning matters.
2) 'Self-help' activity. Practical improvement of the immediate environment, including tree-planting, upkeep of verges and waste land clearing, and maintenance of roads. The activity is either undertaken by the groups themselves, or paid for by them.

3) Road and traffic issues, ranging from opposing new road schemes, lobbying for "restriction of traffic access", to opposing national Government plans to allow heavier lorries.

4) Air traffic issues, either opposing expansion of, or new development of airports, or lobbying for a decrease in noise from overflying aircraft.

5) Wildlife conservation, via purchase and upkeep of nature reserves, lobbying of local authorities to stop "indiscriminate cutting and herbicide treatment" of road verges, for example, and participation in national campaigns such as that to "Save the Whale".

6) Preserving open spaces, through resisting plans to develop common land and ensuring that it is registered, and endeavouring to "protect and keep open public rights of way".

7) Opposition to nuisance from noise, smell, litter, refuse dumping and other types of pollution.

8) Participation in the planning process through submission of views to the Surrey Structure Plan. (See Chapter 2, page 75, Chapter 3 page 103, and Chapter 4 page 148).

9) Preserving historic buildings against demolition and decay, through opposing planning applications, lobbying for 'listing' (see Chapter 2 page 72), purchase, and collecting information.

There is, of course, overlap between categories of issues. In particular, the scope of planning legislation (see Chapter 2 page 71), means that for a wide variety of topics, planning applications become part of the issue. Perhaps this is why,
as Table 6 shows, this was the issue most commonly cited by West Surrey groups as one which they had been involved in. Whilst involvement in any one of the above types of activity allowed a group to be included as an environmental group, most groups were involved in a number of different issues. The type of issues a group was involved with often varied over time with local and national circumstances (for example the stage of planning processes, or Government legislation on lorry weights), and also with the interests of activists. (See Chapter 7, page 286). It is interesting to compare this list of issues with that in Chapter 1 (page 36) of national environmental group concerns.

As might be expected of locality-based groups, most groups concentrated upon very local issues such as plans for a dozen new houses on the edge of the Green Belt, speeding traffic through a village, or threatened loss of a Tudor cottage. Table 7 shows items appearing on the agendas of groups observed in detail during the study. In contrast, the Table also shows items on the agenda of the Surrey Amenity Council, which acts as both the county branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England and a federation of environmental groups in Surrey. The issues covered by the local environmental groups are both more parochial and more specific, whilst those discussed by the Surrey Amenity Council are broader and of a more strategic nature. Local groups are more concerned with particular planning applications whilst the Surrey Amenity Council discussed policy for planning in the region. The issues discussed by local environmental groups also illustrate how groups' concern extends to issues which are not strictly environmental, such as the provision of schools and housing.

Seventy-three of the study groups had been involved only in issues arising within their immediate area in recent years. Obviously, the larger the area covered by the group, the greater the scope for issues to arise but some of the larger groups had been involved only in issues arising in parts of their area, for example in town centres rather than the whole
TABLE 6

ISSUES IN WHICH WEST SURREY ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS ARE INVOLVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>No. of groups</th>
<th>% of groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opposing development</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-help</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti roads/traffic</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti aircraft</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife conservation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserving open spaces</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti &quot;pollution&quot;</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in planning</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserving buildings</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n = over 131, as groups can be involved in more than one issue, and most West Surrey groups were involved in at least two).
TABLE 7

ISSUES DISCUSSED AT WEST SURREY ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP COMMITTEE
MEETINGS, 1979-1981

1. A village society in Waverley district:

- Planning applications (24), Tree planting,
- Loss of village name from telephone directory,
- Site for new doctors' surgery, Use of footpaths,
- Proposals for ceremony to mark opening of new public conveniences,
- Government legislation on sale of council houses,
- Traffic in the village,
- Scheme for 'litter wardens' (with Parish Council),
- Landscaping of local stream, New long-distance footpath,
- Government alterations to Surrey Structure Plan,
- Cancellation of joint meetings with another local society due to lack of support,
- Production of newsletter for distribution to all in village, Proposal to carry out a village assessment.

2. A town in Elmbridge, on the border with London:

- Election of sponsored councillors to local council,
- Closure of local schools, Aircraft noise,
- Closure of local police station,
- Redevelopment proposals for area of housing,
- Local traffic arrangements,
- Plan for a new housing estate,
- Proposals to develop open spaces for housing,
- Applications for gravel extraction from open space,
- Use of old tip for recreation, Proposed new road,
- Gatwick to Heathrow airports helicopter link.

3. A town in Waverley district:

- Many planning applications, including housing development on former school, new buildings on farmland, changes of use from housing to commercial purposes, building of new council offices,
- Restoration and repair of historic buildings,
- Attempts to obtain blanket Tree Preservation Order covering whole of town,
- Purchase of historic garden and building,
- Joint meeting with other local environmental group.

4. A ward in Runnymede district of several villages:

- Over 100 planning applications within the Green Belt,
- County Council's mineral subject plan, Gravel raising,
- Old people's housing, Development of industrial estate,
- Demolition of historic hall, Improved bus transport,
- Proposal for heliport, Development of a 'water park'.
TABLE 7 (continued)

ISSUES DISCUSSED AT MEETINGS OF THE SURREY AMENITY COUNCIL,
1979-1981

Expansion plans for Gatwick Airport,
Gatwick/Heathrow airports helicopter link,
Tree preservation and damage to trees by horses,
Instigation of a new, long-distance footpath across
the County,
Various plans for gravel extraction within the County,
Proposed development of a business jet airport at Wisley,
The Armitage Report on heavy lorries; submitting evidence,
Calls for the building of a Third London Airport at Maplin,
Changes by Government in development control legislation,
Meeting with County Council planners on Town and Country
preservation,
South East Regional planning.

(and via report back from Council for the Protection of
Rural England meetings:

Energy conservation in houses,
Exemption from Value Added Tax of repairs to listed
buildings.)
town. Other groups, on paper covering a smaller area, in practice had broader concerns.

Only ten of the groups listed participation in the Surrey Structure Plan procedure as being a major involvement in recent years. This is probably because the major participation process had been completed before the study began, in 1977. However, there did seem to have been considerable variation in the enthusiasm with which the County Council's invitation to participate had been received. Some, quite large, environmental groups had contributed little, whilst others had devoted considerable time and effort to their submission. Some of the smaller environmental groups had made lengthy submissions, on a wide variety of issues, both inside and outside their areas. Environmental groups' participation in the Structure Plan process seemed to depend more on the attitude of key activists than any other factor; often the submission had been prepared largely by one individual who showed a keen interest in planning. In other groups, lack of interest had meant that little contribution had been made.

Thirty-three of the West Surrey environmental groups listed issues outside their immediate area as being of major concern. In many cases, this was because one major issue had arisen; for example airport expansion, road-building plans or aircraft overflying; which would also affect the area covered by the group although its source was outside this area. Often action upon this issue would be taken by a number of groups, as in the case of Wisley airfield. Other groups took a more regular interest in issues outside their immediate area, realising that events outside affected frequently their members and local environment. Village societies, and those located in suburbs, were concerned about transport facilities in and to the town centre, and about town centre development, for example. Such groups felt it their duty, in the words of one secretary, to "put their oar in" on such issues.
Groups which took such a broader interest were aware, if the areas upon which they were commenting were covered by an environmental group of their own, that conflict of interest might occur. The Secretary quoted previously stated that in such a case, her group would contact the other group prior to making a comment as a matter of courtesy. However, the fact that the other group had differing views would not necessarily deter them from stating their own view. In some areas of West Surrey, there was evidence that groups 'divided-up' issues between them. Several of the town-based groups said that they left consideration of very local issues to suburb- or road-based groups. Some suburb- and road-based groups said, similarly, that issues concerning the town centre were usually dealt with by the larger groups. Whenever a major or controversial issue arose, however, it was more than likely that all groups within the area would comment. Again, the interests of the members, and particularly the committee, played the major role in determining just which issues a group concerned itself with, rather than there being an orderly division of concerns.

The local issues with which groups are involved vary with circumstances, but those listed in Table 6 describe their general scope, and the scope of interest in the environment as covered in the local media. Their general theme is that West Surrey has a pleasant environment, but is under constant threat of being absorbed into London by development of roads, houses and airports. Environmental groups fear that Surrey's open spaces, wildlife, and historic buildings may disappear. It is because of this perceived threat that the large number of environmental groups in the County have formed, determined to resist such a change.

Roads and traffic were a frequent source of comment within the local press, and in the east of Surrey controversy over the building of the M25 motorway continued. In the western half of the county, however, the route had been fixed and construction was underway when the study commenced. Only one group in the study described major involvement in the M25 issue.
Cuts in Government and local authority spending meant that little money was available for road building, and the major problem was of traffic congestion. There were also a number of public arguments between environmental groups and traders over car-park provision.

In the north-west of Surrey, the extraction of gravel provoked controversy both over the granting of permission to extract, and the use to which worked-out pits should be put. A major public inquiry during the study period concerned a proposal to extract gravel from common land with flourishing wildlife. Nature conservation groups worked closely with local environmental groups to oppose the application, and present evidence at the inquiry, after which permission was refused. Once gravel pits are worked-out, the problem remains of what use to put them to. The County Council had proposed in a number of cases to fill the 'holes' remaining with refuse, before reclaiming the land. A number of local environmental groups has been opposed to such plans, but had achieved little success. An alternative is to allow the 'holes' to flood, to create recreational areas. Whilst local environmental groups generally favoured this approach, they were concerned about the noise and traffic congestion resulting from one area being converted into an American-style leisure park.

**Major Environmental Issues in West Surrey**

In addition to the more localised issues upon which groups tend to concentrate, there arose during the study period a number of major issues which concerned many environmental groups in Surrey, and received wide coverage in both the local and sometimes the national media, although issues which achieve national, or even county-wide interest are the exception rather than the norm.

The issue which received the greatest national notoriety, including press, television and radio coverage and numerous debates in both Houses of Parliament, was a proposal to open a business jet airfield at Wisley. This area, in the heart of
Surrey and adjoining the site of the Royal Horticultural Society's famous gardens, had been in agricultural use until the Second World War. It was requisitioned to build a wartime airstrip, with the promise that it would be returned to agricultural land once the war was over. In fact, flying was allowed to continue there until 1972 as a test strip for the Vickers Armstrong aeroplane factory, on the grounds of national need. Plans were then made to remove the runways and buildings and return the land to agriculture, and the buildings were later removed.

In the summer of 1979, however, the previous owner of the land, a Lord Lytton, made a planning application to use the airfield for civilian flying. This application was subsequently withdrawn, but a similar one was made by a firm called Jenstate, with which Lord Lytton denied any connection. In February 1980, after the local authority had refused planning permission for a civil airport and Jenstate had appealed, the Government announced that Wisley airfield would be sold to Lord Lytton with its runways intact to prevent pre-judgement of the appeal. This development caused great local concern, and the local authority attempted to block the sale of the land. The Surrey Advertiser called the Government action "a shabby deal", especially when taking place "right in the heart of Conservative Surrey which will be wondering why it has received such shabby treatment from a Government it supports".

In July 1980 local people were informed in their local press that "Wisley's disused airfield has been sold - in a deal rushed through in one day under a veil of secrecy". A local councillor called the deal "quite disgraceful", and a local Conservative MP forced a debate on the matter in the House of Commons, and made an official complaint to the Ombudsman. Local people feared that the chances of a new airport being allowed at Wisley on appeal were greatly increased.

During December 1980 the issue was raised in the House of Lords by local peers, and according to the Surrey Advertiser a "barrage of abuse" was hurled on the "villainy" of the
Government's "breach of promise" over the matter. Opposition
to the airport proposals grew, with national media coverage,
and various environmental groups and other bodies announcing
their wish to give evidence at the public inquiry.

In January, shortly before the inquiry opened, Lord
Lytton revealed that he was a minority shareholder in Jenstate.
At the preliminary hearings to the inquiry, however, the
Inspector banned any evidence on the sale of the land in
question, as he felt this would prejudice the Ombudsman's
investigations. Opponents of the airport scheme felt that
this was a vital part of their case, and eventually some
evidence on the sale was allowed. The inquiry proper opened
on January 20th, to national press, radio and television
coverage. Two hundred and fifty protesters with banners and
stickers attended the opening, and the Inspector announced
that he had received over 3,000 letters objecting to the
airport proposal. Demonstrations outside the inquiry,
including a 'funeral march' with a coffin representing the
Green Belt, continued in the early stages of the inquiry,
which usually had full audiences. The audience clapped and
cheered opponents of the airport plan, and the Inspector
frequently had to call for quiet.

The inquiry finally closed after seven weeks, in early
March, and a decision on the appeal was speedily reached. In
mid-June, it was announced that the Secretary of State had
rejected Jenstate's appeal, and almost simultaneously the
report of the Ombudsman was published. The latter concluded
that whilst local people were entitled to feel "angry and
aggrieved" at the speed of the sale, this had been a political
decision, and thus not a case of maladministration. The Surrey
Advertiser reported on June 12th: "Euphoria swept Surrey this
week as jubilant villagers celebrated the rescue of Wisley from
an invasion of jets". Their celebrations were enhanced by the
strong terms in which the Inspector had argued against the
appeal. He had written that Green Belt policies "......seem to
me to set up what is in practical terms a complete bar upon
these proposals...." which would need "the most exceptional
circumstances..." to overturn. He did not find the Jenstate proposals to be "...anything like such a powerful case as that".

The Surrey Advertiser cautioned, however, that the issue of Wisley was by no means over. Already a planning application for a hypermarket on the site had been made, and the cost of purchasing the land, plus the costs of the appeal, had been almost £350,000 to Lord Lytton and Jenstate. The paper said: "It is inconceivable that such an expensive item will be written off as a gamble that failed."

The proposals for Wisley were not the only major airport issue to arise in Surrey. Heathrow and Gatwick airports lie just over the Surrey borders, but the planes using them overfly, and greatly affect the county. Prior to the commencement of the study period, permission had been granted for the development of a fourth terminal at Heathrow, despite much local opposition, involving some of the local environmental groups. During the study there was a public inquiry into plans for a second terminal at Gatwick, and whilst people to the east of Surrey were most directly affected, some of the West Surrey local environmental groups were involved via the Surrey Amenity Council or the Gatwick specialist federation. There was also considerable controversy over the initiation of a Heathrow to Gatwick helicopter link, which overflew much of the County. Several local environmental groups protested against this, but a further period of use was licensed after the trial period.

Whilst the issue of Wisley received national media coverage, it was in general only those local environmental groups covering areas closest to the proposed site which played an active role in opposing the application for an airport. An issue which affected every environmental group in Surrey was the drawing-up of, and alterations by the Secretary of State for the Environment to, the Surrey Structure Plan.
The plan-making process began in 1974, and involved two "massive publicity exercises", as the Council phrased it, at a cost of £30,000. All known local environmental groups in the county were asked to submit their views, although only ten of the study groups mentioned this as being an 'important recent issue'. The plan produced by the County Council called for an extension of the Green Belt to cover most of the county, and little expansion of housing or industry. The plan was criticised for being overly preservationist by some trade unions and industrialists, but generally found favour with the local environmental groups. The plan was submitted for approval by the Secretary of State for the Environment late in 1978.

The Secretary of State's report on the plan, published in October 1979, made a number of amendments. The proposed extension to the Green Belt was deleted, and, to quote the report:

"The Secretary of State proposes to modify the written statement by substituting, where appropriate, less restrictive policies so as to provide greater flexibility and more opportunity for residential and employment development".

(Surrey Advertiser, 9.10.79)

Amongst the 120 specific amendments suggested were deletion of statements opposing airport expansion as "not.....appropriate for inclusion in a structure plan" and the inclusion of specific figures for housing starts to be made within each district.

The report caused a furore amongst local environmental groups, especially in those areas which were now excluded from the Green Belt. On November 16th the Surrey Advertiser quoted a local councillor as predicting that ".....Waverley could be swallowed up by an urban sprawl", and a letter to the editor a week later commented:

"London is like a malignant growth, never satisfied unless spreading.....How long before one is hardly aware whether one is in Epsom, Leatherhead, Woking, Godalming, Guildford....." (Surrey Advertiser, 23.10.79)
Not everyone was critical of the Secretary of State's intervention. The Chairman of the Surrey committee of the Confederation of British Industry commented that the plan ".....has been opened up. There has been a certain amount of movement and this helps smaller industry".

The County Council, supported by the district councils and the Surrey Amenity Council, negotiated with the Department of the Environment to modify the amendments. It became clear that the housing proposals included currently-planned starts, so the effect of those amendments would be less dramatic than had at first been thought. In April 1980 the Surrey Advertiser reported:

"Green Belt-conscious Surrey councillors have won a minor victory against the Government. Environment Secretary Mr. Michael Heseltine has backed down over his unpopular demand for a 4,000 house development in Surrey Heath and agreed to let the county impose severe restrictions over development in rural land beyond the Green Belt."

This compromise was accepted and the plan was formalised in May 1980.

However, issues such as Wisley Airport and the Surrey Structure Plan are by their nature rare. The fact that only two major issues arose during the study period, and that they were listed by only a small number of environmental groups (less than 20%) emphasises that it is small, local issues which are the mainstay of the environmental movement in West Surrey.

Types of Environmental Groups

Chapter 1 (page 16) describes attempts in the literature to classify different types of environmental groups. As no classification appeared to fit the West Surrey data immediately, detailed analysis was undertaken. In order to check the apparent incongruity between aims and activities of some groups, described on page 136, and to assess whether groups could be classified into types not previously delimited, some
statistical analysis of the data obtained by questionnaire and interview was undertaken. In view of the small sample size (131 groups), and the wide variety of data obtained, sophisticated analysis was felt to be inappropriate. Instead, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used, first to sort the data and then to obtain coefficients of correlation between pairs of variables. These coefficients were ordered, using a McQuitty list system (see Appendix A), to indicate clusters of variables which appeared to be related. This form of analysis can only indicate that some relationship appears likely, and give some idea of the relative strengths of relationships. It does not measure the strength of the relationship, nor indicate causality. Nevertheless, it allowed previously unsuspected relationships the opportunity to be revealed, and could indicate gaps in previous analysis. Full results are given in the Appendix, and the methodology and terms used are described there.

The strongest relationship found was between the number of issues undertaken by a group, and their interest in certain types of issue. That is, the more issues a group is involved in, the higher the likelihood that, say, airports will be one of those issues. This is a statistical relationship rather than a meaningful one. However, this cluster of relationships also indicated that the more types of issues a group undertook, the more likely it was to achieve success. If correct, this indicates that specialist groups may have some grounds for pessimism.

The second highest-correlation variable cluster linked groups' opinions of local government, discussed below. Group aims appeared as the third strongest relationship, with a strong negative correlation between having preservationist and representational aims, which has been described previously. Interestingly, there is no further relationship between either type of aim and either group actions or issues of concern, at this stage. This indicates that the hypothesis that representational aims alone delimit a separate type of environmental group is not correct for the sample groups.
At a lower level of correlation, a large cluster of related variables was extracted. This appeared to delimit 'self-help' groups as a particular category, as indicated previously (page 134). These groups have self-help as a strong feature of both their aims and actual activities (see pages 134 and 137 respectively for descriptions). They also cover an area of one road or one small estate of houses, and were not formed in response to a particular local issue (see page 125). These characteristics appear to form a definite 'type' of group, which have been described as 'road associations' (CONNELL). The fact that a wide variety of other variables also link to the area covered by a group, indicates that this may be a key determining factor for local environmental groups. Groups covering a larger area are more likely to be specialist groups (see page 130), and also older - this may be because they have had more time to grow, or it may indicate that division rather than amalgamation is the pattern for local environmental groups over time. (This question is discussed in Chapter 7, page 289-). Larger groups are also more likely to have received outside assistance in their formation (see page 128). These correlations are again upheld by an examination of the data, as specialist groups do appear to cover larger areas, and be started with outside help. Again this question is discussed further in Chapter 7. It is notable that, apart from the link with self-help activity, differences in group characteristics are not connected to the issues they undertake.

The variable of specialisation also correlates with having a low level of member participation, that is the committee is small compared to the size of the group. This may relate to the size of the groups or their methods of action (see Chapter 7, page 301-).

The clusters described above absorb most of the higher correlations obtained by analysis. At a lower level, having complex aims is linked to having education as an aim (probably a statistical anomaly), and the latter correlates with having contact with non-environmental voluntary groups. The latter
seems reasonable, as giving talks to other voluntary groups was one way in which environmental groups carried out their educational aims.

Other clusters linked high membership with affiliation to federations (see below), and to consultation by the local authority, which again will be discussed below. The link between federation membership and involvement in litter and other anti-pollution issues relates to the fact that the only district level federation is in an area where refuse dumping is an important issue. Consultation by the local authority is also linked to an interest in historic buildings. This and the other clusters linking various characteristics with local government relations to environmental groups are discussed below.

Thus as far as classification of different types of environmental groups is concerned, only one type, the 'self-help' group, emerges clearly. Other types appearing in the analysis are related to one or two factors of a group's characteristics, so that a single group could be in different places in classifications based upon issues, physical characteristics or aims. No further overall types are apparent, and there are few links between other group characteristics and groups' issues, the latter reflecting what the groups actually do in practice. Taken along with the interview data, this appears to indicate that for many groups, the actual activities undertaken do not particularly depend upon their other characteristics. Similarly, the stated aims of the groups, apart from 'self-help' groups, are not necessarily an indication of current reality.

Two other types of group might usefully be distinguished, despite the fact that their classification does not cover all variables. "Federations" are different from other groups in having groups rather than individuals as members. Their non-appearance in the statistics might be due to the fact that there are so few of them. "Specialist groups" are distinguished by concentrating on particular aspects of the environment, and
are also more likely to have education as an aim. Neither type appears amongst the smallest size category.

In addition to the specialist groups described earlier, there were in Surrey a small number of what has been described (see Chapter 1) as the 'new-wave' environmental groups. All were branches of national organisations, but with a high degree of local autonomy. They were local groups of Friends of the Earth, the Conservation Society, Socialist Environment and Resources Association and the Ecology Party. All dealt almost solely with national and international issues rather than local affairs, reflected in the aims of their national parent groups. Locally, they aimed to gain intellectual, practical and financial support for the national group policies. All four had relatively low levels of membership and activity; with the same problems of lack of activists experienced by the other West Surrey groups.

There were no formal links at all between the four 'new-wave' groups and other environmental groups, and no indication of informal links emerged during the study. Although elsewhere in the county stronger branches of these groups existed, there was no indication there of any contact with traditional local environmental groups, and very little sign that the 'newer-type' groups were involved to any significant degree in local affairs.

This exercise indicates that, apart from the distinctions of 'new-wave' environmental groups, the classifications posited in the literature do not appear to hold true for West Surrey environmental groups. This suggests that in other areas of Britain, too, the picture of environmental groups given in the existing literature may not be wholly accurate. Chapter 6 re-examines this question in the light of available data from other areas of Britain.

Local Environmental Group Resources

The reason for forming voluntary organisations is that groups can achieve more by collective action than their members
could achieve individually (see OLSON). This is because they are able to gather expertise and use tactics unavailable to individuals. As illustrated in Chapter 2, environmental legislation in Britain is complex, and requires a high degree of understanding from citizens if they are to participate effectively (see SKEFFINGTON). Similarly, the organisation of local government with respect to the environment is complex, and needs to be understood if representations are to be made to the correct sections (see HALL, C). Thus for a local environmental group to be successful, a high degree of both organising skill and expertise is essential. The Civic Trust (Civic Trust News, July/August 1979) recommended that a successful local amenity society should have a 'planning team', environmental health adviser, transport adviser, librarian, legal adviser, historian and photographer as well as officers to take care of membership recruitment, meetings, outings, and social events.

Whilst none of the West Surrey environmental groups had achieved this complexity, lack of expertise did not seem to be a problem. Only nine of the 131 groups were unable to name any professional expertise available to the society. 30% of groups had a lawyer on the committee, 26% had people with financial skills, such as accountants, and 26% had planners or architects. Where such expertise was not contained within the committee, groups were often in close contact with professionals willing to give assistance when necessary. A wide range of other skills was also available to the groups, ranging from natural and physical scientists to a wide range of people with experience of national or local government administration. The breadth of expertise is illustrated by the appearance at the Wisley inquiry, for the Stop Wisley Airport campaign of many experts. These included a lecturer in business studies, a director of aircraft research, an air traffic controller, a commercial pilot and a naturalist as well as experts on planning and law.

Even when professional expertise as such was not available, few group committees seemed at a loss when dealing with the
authorities, and indeed some group committees felt that their understanding of environmental problems was far superior to that of local government officials. When groups did have professionals on their committees, the 'common-sense' views of other members of the committee were still regarded highly. In a number of cases during committee-meeting observation the views of professionals were challenged, especially over matters of architectural taste in discussing planning applications. The view was expressed a number of times that "architects are reluctant to criticise fellow architects' plans", and non-professional committee members were highly critical of many non-traditional designs. In general, whilst some groups stressed the difficulty they experienced in getting their views accepted, no group felt unable to put its case across, or to contact the right people.

On paper, most West Surrey environmental groups had very restricted financial resources; this might be one reason for the relatively low level of practical activity. Most of the groups had very low subscriptions compared, for example, to political parties. Few were over £2 per person per annum, and many were 50p or less. This was a deliberate policy to increase membership, particularly when subscriptions were collected door-to-door. As one Chairman said, people asked on the door-step will join, thinking "I'm not going to be a non-conformer for the sake of 25 pence". This achieves a high proportionate membership, which is vital for the groups to claim to represent the public view. Although the money incomes of many of the groups are low, they are assisted in many significant ways to keep their expenses low. Most groups were able to use typing and duplicating facilities free or at low cost, usually through a member's office or business. Sometimes printing and postage facilities were similarly available, and often hand delivery and collection of newsletters and subscriptions reduced postage costs considerably.

At certain times, however, groups were involved in higher expenses. This was particularly so at public inquiries, at
which 65 of the groups had appeared. Whilst some groups made a point of giving evidence on the basis of local knowledge rather than professional expertise, others had felt they needed to be represented by a barrister, which had involved very high expense. Even where a group took advantage of its own expertise and that of the local authority, a long public inquiry could be expensive. The Stop Wisley Airport campaign spent nearly £4,000, many years' average income for its member groups. On major issues such as Wisley airfield, groups had no real difficulty in raising the sums necessary from amongst their membership.

West Surrey local environmental groups therefore have access to considerable resources from within the ranks of their members. Most of the tactics undertaken by the groups rely upon these, rather than upon large sums of money, though certain activities, such as representation at public inquiries and purchase of land and buildings obviously require more money. The one resource of which groups did complain of a shortage was active manpower, as opposed to passive support. This, rather than a lack of finance, appeared to limit the scope of group activities, although many groups seemed satisfied by their achievements under current tactics. Thus the view obtained from the literature - that lack of resources was a crucial limiting factor on environmental group activity (see Chapter 1, page 25) does not appear to apply to groups in West Surrey. Whether this is unique to this particular area will be illustrated by comparison with the very different area of Newham (see Chapter 5).

Environmental Group Contacts with other Organisations

The resources available to any one local environmental group can be supplemented by contact with, and assistance from, other local and national groups. Amongst the West Surrey groups, contacting other local environmental groups was cited by 79 groups as one of the actions they undertook to resolve an issue. National environmental groups had been contacted for advice or
assistance by 27 of the West Surrey groups. This appears to indicate that the 'amenity net' identified by LOWE at national level, may also extend to local groups, providing both information and assistance.

The number of formal links between West Surrey local environmental groups, and with national groups, is low. Thirty-five West Surrey groups are affiliated to various national environmental groups, and only 14 of the groups were registered with the Civic Trust. Formal contact between local groups is confined to the federations, there were no groups affiliated to other local groups. Forty-two groups were affiliated to federations.

The Surrey Amenity Council was the largest federation with 65 members. It acts as the co-ordinating body for local environmental groups in Surrey, and is also the county branch of the Council for the Protection of Rural England. One of its major aims is:

"To assist and encourage the work and growth of local amenity societies throughout the county and in particular to assist member societies and support them on important local issues".

Amongst the study groups, 19 were affiliated to the Surrey Amenity Council (SAC); the largest number affiliated to any federation. The SAC was originally founded in 1952 by activists from a number of existing local environmental groups. It is now a sub-section of the Surrey Voluntary Service Council, assisted by the officers and using the premises of that body.

There are two other county-wide federations to which West Surrey local environmental groups are affiliated; the Surrey Local History Council (five affiliations) and the Surrey Federation of Community Associations (four affiliations). Three of the remaining federations covered specific topics; one was concerned with planning along the river Thames, and had three affiliates, the others were 'airport' specialist groups, sharing 11 affiliates. In addition to these, there was one active federation based upon a district, combining five groups
within the district. There had in the past been federations in three other of the Surrey districts, but whilst they had not been officially disbanded, they were no longer active.

Whether a group was part of, and played an active role in a federation appeared to depend upon a member of the committee having the interest and energy to initiate this action. The Surrey Amenity Council's policy is to have only one member group in each area, and this limits its membership to the larger groups. Data analysis showed that high membership correlated with federation affiliation. As has been explained, the Surrey Amenity Council, the largest federation, restricts its membership to larger groups. There is also a correlation between belonging to a federation and interest in 'pollution' issues. This is interesting, because the only successful district federation concerns itself with these issues, as does the Surrey Amenity Council. These types of issues are dealt with by the county rather than district councils, and perhaps they are issues which environmental groups feel less able to succeed with on their own.

Whilst some local environmental groups took an active interest in the federations to which they were affiliated, others rarely attended meetings. Together with the failure of several district federations, this indicates the extent to which local environmental groups are unwilling to take part in formal contact with each other. Its implications will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Occasionally, temporary alliances and federations would be formed between local environmental groups in West Surrey when a major issue arose. CONNELL describes how one such group formed in West Surrey to oppose a road-building scheme. Similarly the Stop Wisley Airport campaign (SWAT) played a major role in opposing the Wisley plans. SWAT was formed at a public meeting soon after the sale of Wisley airfield had been made public. It acted as a co-ordinator for the campaign against the airport, and was composed of people of expertise, and members of existing local environmental groups. It worked
closely with local environmental and other groups, holding joint meetings, for example. SWAT dissolved once the result of the public inquiry was known.

Informal contact between local groups is more common. Over half of the groups were in regular contact with other local environmental groups, generally within the same district. In addition, groups kept in touch via shared members and personal contacts. Despite this, the groups rarely acted together except over the most important issues, and other local groups did not form a major source of information for West Surrey environmental groups. Most contact appeared to be of a social nature, through holding joint events, or committee members visiting each other's meetings, but it is impossible to gauge the hidden effects of such contacts. The lack of mutual action may reflect both the localised nature of most West Surrey environmental group activity, and a tactical decision that a variety of activity has more effect than a single large campaign. However, it is interesting to note that groups participating in the in-depth study were most surprised to hear how many other environmental groups there were in West Surrey. Sometimes groups were unaware of others which operated in close proximity to them. Some groups had not heard of any national environmental groups, although this was rare.

The lack of co-ordination of environmental group activity in West Surrey is perhaps an indication of how localised many of the concerns of environmental groups are. This, after all, is the purpose for which most were formed. When a major issue arose, groups could and did comment and act upon it, either separately or through temporary coalitions like SWAT. Even at the Wisley inquiry, groups gave evidence separately as well as through SWAT. For the rest of their lives, groups felt no need to become involved in broader issues. The local environmental movement in West Surrey is less well co-ordinated than the literature might lead one to expect.
Tactics used by Local Environmental Groups

The literature on voluntary groups has laid some stress upon tactics (see Chapter 1, page 25), and they form the basis for some classifications. The majority of local group activity in West Surrey centred upon the various local authorities. Whilst this is partly a consequence of the control that local authorities have over the environment, it is also a reflection of confidence in both the ability of the authority to achieve results, and the authority's willingness to listen to the group's viewpoint. Putting the group's views to the appropriate authority was listed as a major form of action by 107 groups. (Table 9 lists the numbers of local environmental groups undertaking different tactics). Most of the groups put their views formally, writing to the officers of the planning department, or other local government department, most concerned with the issue. Occasionally the telephone was used instead of a letter, but this was not common. As much group activity was involved with the planning process (see Table 6), contacting the local authority was part of a legally-recognised procedure (see Chapter 2, page 75).

The first stage in dealing with an issue is to obtain information. GREGORY's case studies emphasised the importance of finding out about proposed environmental changes well in advance of a final decision. Thus it is vital for a successful local environmental group to have an efficient alerting system for environmental issues. The British planning system provides assistance in that lists of all planning applications received by a local authority must be published several weeks before a decision is made (see Chapter 2, page 76). As planning applications are necessary for many types of change to the environment, this is of great assistance to environmental groups. Beyond the legal minimum provisions, different councils vary in their practice. Some Surrey district councils inform all near neighbours of a proposed site about planning applications. Most make lists of planning applications available by post to local environmental groups, either free or for a small fee. Some authorities are willing to consult directly with specialist groups, particularly in the field of nature
TABLE 9

TACTICS USED BY WEST SURREY ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tactic</th>
<th>No. of groups using tactic</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submitting views to the local authority</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring planning applications</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacting other local environmental groups</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving evidence at a public inquiry</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacting a local Member of Parliament</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding a public meeting</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producing a leaflet</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing up a petition</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacting national environmental groups</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacting the local media</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holding a demonstration</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n = more than 131, as groups used more than one type of tactic).
conservation, or on contentious issues with other groups, although development control, as opposed to plan making, was excluded from the provisions of the Skeffington Report on public participation.

West Surrey local environmental groups made wide use of the information available. Seventy per cent of the groups undertook regular monitoring of all planning applications within their area. In many cases the plans themselves were consulted when a proposal appeared contentious, although this was difficult for some groups, as they are available at council offices only during working hours. Most groups, however, found retired or otherwise non-working people able to undertake this task. Twenty-eight per cent of the groups listed planning applications and other local authority sources as their main form of information gathering on environmental issues, indicating the importance of legislation making registers public to local environmental group activity (see Chapter 2, page 76).

Since 1960, full local council meetings, and some council committee meetings have been open to the press and public, although councils may still deal with business behind closed doors 'if it is in the public interest'. This provides an important source of information, but most local groups do not have the personnel or time to attend all meetings. The role of the local press, which has the resources to do so, is therefore important in the provision of information on environmental issues. There is a range of local papers within West Surrey, and most devote a considerable amount of space to environmental issues of this type. Eighteen per cent of West Surrey groups cited the local press as their major source of information. Other sources of information cited by local groups were other local environmental groups, and national environmental organisations.

Most groups, in pressing the local authorities to accept their views, stressed the importance of their local knowledge. The groups felt they were more likely to be aware of both problems in, and the effect of change upon the area than the
local authority. Not surprisingly, therefore, 24% of groups stated that their members' local knowledge was their major source of information. Thirty-two of the groups 24% had in addition carried out their own research or surveys to obtain further information on local environmental issues. These included surveys of traffic levels, footpath use, public transport efficiency; counts of wildlife and trees; monitoring the state of footpaths and old buildings, and an extensive study of Thames-side planning problems. Nearly all the research was carried out by the groups themselves, with the exception of technical research into aircraft noise, and an opinion poll over preservation of open space, which were contracted to consulting groups.

These tactics - putting a reasoned and well backed-up case formally to the local authority - were most favoured by local environmental groups in West Surrey. Where these did not succeed, and there was conflict with the local authority, groups are forced to use more public tactics to make their point; particularly use of the local media, contact with Members of Parliament and on a number of occasions referral of a local authority's behaviour to the local government Ombudsman. All but the last tactic were not, however, confined to cases of disagreement between environmental groups and local authorities, indeed some of the most public activity took place over the Wisley airfield issue, where local councils and environmental groups were in complete accord. Holding public meetings on an issue was also a tactic used both in support of, and opposition to, the local authority. On the whole, militant activity by environmental groups was notable by its absence. Apart from the Wisley inquiry, demonstrations of any sort were both rare and low key. SWAT had carried out a campaign of broadsheets, posters, car stickers and if possible "exposure on radio and television". In the period leading up to the inquiry into Jenstate's appeal, due to start in January 1981, many local meetings on the issue were held. In many cases these were sponsored by existing local environmental groups, addressed by the Borough solicitor, and publicised by SWAT. It had also conducted a mock funeral for the Green Belt
and held open-air rallies, and the appearance of placard- 
carrying demonstrators at the Wisley inquiry was unusual 

enough to attract national media comment.

Another publicly orientated tactic was the drawing up 
of a petition, undertaken by 37 of the sample groups. Other 
groups viewed this tactic with ambiguity; it usually ensured 
good media coverage, but some groups felt that it had limited 
effect:

"We also get members to write individual letters 
to the council, the weight of letters being of 
greater influence than the number of signatures 
on a petition."

Indeed, the validity of petitions had been challenged. At 
one public inquiry the case of the appellant was considerably 
weakened, when, in the words of the local paper, it was 
admitted that:

".....most of the signatures he had obtained on 
a petition had been the result of an evening at 
the White Hart pub....."

Thirty-eight of the West Surrey environmental groups had at 
some time produced a leaflet about a specific issue in order 
to obtain publicity. This, again, was mainly confined to 

major issues such as the Wisley airfield proposals.

Some groups also carried out practical activities to 
achieve their aims. These ranged from the planting of bulbs 
and trees to the purchase of historic buildings and open 
spaces. Some of the oldest environmental groups in the 
county had begun by purchasing areas of land to save them 
from development, often handing them over to the National 
Trust. In the late 1930's a local environmental group 
purchased nearly 70 acres of the Surrey Hills for the National 
Trust. In 1965 the same group collected £4000 to assist in 
the Trust's campaign to purchase threatened areas of coastline. 
The county nature conservation trust owns four nature reserves, 
totalling almost 200 acres, and manages another 12 reserves by 
agreement with the owners. Three local environmental groups
have purchased buildings of historic or architectural interest in order to preserve them; others have provided money for essential repairs to such buildings.

Other practical activities include the clearing of derelict land, tidying of public open spaces, marking of footpaths and collection of litter from public open spaces. Other groups install benches or statues in places of public interest, and publish maps, guides and descriptions of their areas. By far the most common practical activities, however, are the planting of bulbs and trees in public spaces, which achieve pleasing results with relatively little effort or expense.

The majority of West Surrey environmental group activity, however, was that of "pressure groups", trying to persuade the local authority to adopt their views. In that context, the relationship between the groups and their local authorities is of vital importance.

Relations between Local Authorities and Environmental Groups

The politics of local group activity has been the subject of a wide range of literature, including that of NEWTON, DEARLOVE and SAUNDERS. A detailed analysis of the political situation in the study areas is not part of the aims of this thesis. Nevertheless, groups' relations with their local authorities remain important.

The West Surrey environmental groups were questioned about their relationships with the various tiers of local government which formed such an important focus for their activity. The lowest tier of local government in Surrey is the parish council. There are 74 parish councils in the rural areas of the six West Surrey districts. Forty-six parish councils were located within the study area, and where an environmental group and a parish council coincided, there was generally a good relationship between the two. Parish councils
have many similar concerns to local environmental groups, for example the upkeep of footpaths and commenting upon local planning applications. As parish councils have statutory authority, have been democratically elected, and can raise finance, they have been advocated as an alternative to local environmental groups (see HUMBLE and TALBOT, ROWE). Indeed, the Surrey Voluntary Service Council has advocated the introduction of more parish councils within the county, and in several areas the Boundary Commission has been requested by local people to emparish areas (see UZZELL). In other areas, however, public meetings called to discuss emparishment have turned down the idea. People there felt that the functions of parish councils were satisfactorily dealt with by local environmental groups, without the need for another layer of 'bureaucracy'. Where parish councils and environmental groups did overlap, there seemed to be no such conflict, and in some cases parish councillors were also group committee members. The two types of organisation usually chose different approaches related to their different status, and were able to be complementary rather than competitive. However, comparative study of parish councils in areas with and without environmental groups might illustrate the influence of groups on council activity better.

Whilst parish councils have a duty to give their views on environmental issues, their actions only cause small changes to the environment. The decisions made by both district and county councils may have a dramatic effect upon the state of the local environment, and thus it is vital for local environmental groups to influence them. In development control, for example, whilst a developer who is refused planning permission by a local authority may appeal, and a public inquiry into the proposal may result, environmental groups have no right to appeal when the local authority grants planning permission to a development the group does not want (see Chapter 2, page 76). Thus groups must influence the views of local authorities in order to achieve their aims.
Table 10 illustrates West Surrey environmental groups' views of their district authorities, and the County Council. Where the groups had unfavourable views of their local authorities, the reason usually given was the "remoteness" of the authority. This was particularly so where an area which had had its own council prior to local government reorganisation, was now only part of a larger authority. This explains the relative unpopularity of Waverley district, where two fairly large towns lost their councils. There was no significant correlation between views of local authorities and group characteristics, except where groups had been involved in a particularly contentious issue in opposition to the local authority. Thus in Runnymede, the issue of refuse dumping in disused gravel pits had made the County Council unpopular with groups.

There was a strong correlation between those groups which had a good relationship with their district council and those which also had a good relationship with the County council. Conversely, having a poor view of the district council often coincided with having a poor view of the County council. It appeared that local government as a whole was regarded either favourably or unfavourably by West Surrey environmental groups - groups tended not to distinguish between the tiers, although there were exceptions relating to the different functions of local authorities.

Local environmental groups were also asked whether their views were actively sought by their district councils. (The data on this question for the County Council was distorted by the Surrey Structure Plan exercise and did not prove useful). Thirty-two groups (24%) claimed to be consulted regularly by their district council. Such consultation included, for example, being asked for their views on planning applications, requests to support the local authority at public inquiries, and being asked to suggest ways in which their local environment could be improved. The existence of such consultation was compared with group views of their local authority, to see whether consultation produced a favourable view (see Table 11).
### TABLE 10

**ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS' VIEWS OF THEIR LOCAL AUTHORITY**

#### a. District Councils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Groups with a favourable view</th>
<th>Groups with an unfavourable view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elmbridge</td>
<td>15 (47%)</td>
<td>8 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>13 (22%)</td>
<td>6 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runnymede</td>
<td>5 (56%)</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelthorne</td>
<td>7 (54%)</td>
<td>2 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey Heath</td>
<td>4 (44%)</td>
<td>4 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waverley</td>
<td>8 (40%)</td>
<td>9 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woking</td>
<td>5 (50%)</td>
<td>4 (40%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(District-based groups only)

#### b. County Councils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District where groups are located</th>
<th>Groups with a favourable view</th>
<th>Groups with an unfavourable view</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elmbridge</td>
<td>7 (22%)</td>
<td>6 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>13 (42%)</td>
<td>5 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runnymede</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
<td>5 (56%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelthorne</td>
<td>7 (54%)</td>
<td>5 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey Heath</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waverley</td>
<td>7 (39%)</td>
<td>6 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woking</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
<td>2 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County-wide groups</td>
<td>6 (67%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Not all groups replied to these questions, so percentages do not necessarily equal 100%)
TABLE 11

VIEWS OF DISTRICT COUNCIL BY DEGREE OF CONSULTATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Consulted</th>
<th>Not consulted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Favourable view</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfavourable view</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 131
"no reply" = 39
Chi squared = 6.7 with 1 degree of freedom
p = 0.01 to 0.001 - a significant relationship
The result, coupled with data from interviews, indicated that whilst groups appreciate meaningful consultation by their local authority, they will not be satisfied if the consultation has no practical effect on the authority's actions.

Several groups felt that they were consulted by local authorities only after a decision had been taken, when their views had little or no effect. Others felt that, whilst the authority might feel sympathetic to their cause, it was reluctant to take positive action. One nature conservation group said:

"The new district council has a countryside officer and it is easier to contact them than the old council. They seem more approachable, but, as yet, there seems to be a great deal of talk and no results."

A few groups felt that their local authorities were basically unsympathetic towards, and ignorant about, their aims. This was particularly so of groups in rural areas, who felt that town-based authorities did not understand the needs and problems of the countryside. Some nature conservation groups felt that district councils did not understand the ecology of local wildlife, and caused damage through such ignorance.

The statistical analysis (see Appendix), indicated that there was a correlation between being consulted regularly by the local authority, having high membership, and being concerned about the preservation of historic buildings. The latter connection is explained by the existence of Conservation Area Advisory Committees (see Chapter 2, page 77), which tend to draw much of their membership from local environmental groups.

For most local environmental groups, their contact tended, in the first instance, to be with paid officials rather than elected council members, although this varied with the issue and with the reaction of officials. 24% of groups claimed to have contact only with officials, 8% only with elected councillors. The use of officials as a channel relates partly to the
way the planning system is operated, but also to the groups' wish to be seen as 'non-political'. Contact with a councillor with a party affiliation is thus avoided where possible. Pragmatism was the major reason for working through officers, for it was generally felt that they were both powerful, and the correct channel to use, a feeling mirrored by some planning officers (see DENNIS, for example). Much work on both planning applications and plan-making is devolved to professional officers. Some asserted also that planners' opinions weighed so heavily with council planning committees, that planners virtually made the decisions. In addition, their recommendations to council committees often include a description of public reaction, and thus group views can reach councillors indirectly. The size of local authority districts means that many environmental groups are represented by only one councillor, and may form only part of a ward. Thus there is often more likelihood of group views getting a hearing through officers than elected representatives.

Only a small number of groups were actively hostile to their local authorities, one going so far as to comment upon them; "They are all b---- awful", whilst another felt that they had "firm evidence of lack of integrity" amongst district councillors. Those with the strongest views felt that way because they felt unable to get their case heard by the local authority, unable even to raise the issues that concerned them about their local environment. This process of failure by local authorities and others to recognise that an issue exists has been described by a number of authors, for example DEARLOVE, DENNIS. Certain West Surrey groups had taken positive steps to overcome it, by sponsoring their own candidates for election to the local authority. One group gave the following reasons:

"Whilst any amenity group can lobby any number of councillors on a topic, the one way that it can be sure that its arguments will reach the relevant committee(s) is by having its representative at the table concerned."

"The right of any councillor to submit any item for the agenda of any committee represents the most effective way of drawing attention to deficiencies in council policies."
Ten of the West Surrey environmental groups had successfully sponsored councillors at district level; five in Elmbridge, four in Runnymede and one in Spelthorne. One group in Runnymede and one in Elmbridge had also sponsored successful candidates for the County Council. All the groups sponsoring district councillors felt that this had been a successful move. In a number of cases the whole of a group's area was represented by sponsored councillors, and in one case, this had been so since the area had been created as a ward. Groups sponsoring County Councillors had done so to obtain information, as their isolated position meant that they had little influence. The Elmbridge group had failed to find a candidate when their first councillor's term came to an end. Some groups had also sponsored candidates for parish council elections.

The majority of West Surrey environmental groups, however, felt that their local authority was basically sympathetic to the group's aims, and were willing to work with them. Group comments upon the authorities included:

"...the society feel that in many ways their actions only coincide with those of all the councils. We feel that they are doing a good job and are also very keen on preserving the environment."

"The council is very amenable to discussion and consultation."

"The council is well-organised and helpful, within their national, county and political constraints."

The groups generally recognised that there were constraints upon the actions of local authorities. Financial constraints were mentioned several times, especially as several groups were in favour of restricting rate increases. These constraints were accepted if the groups felt that the local authorities had accepted the basic case for care of the local environment. When an authority appears not to listen, or to be out of sympathy with the aims of the group, some conflict occurs.
The Effectiveness of West Surrey Environmental Groups

The success of local environmental groups is extremely difficult to judge. Most decisions on the environment are affected by a complex mixture of political and economic factors and, as with national groups, it is difficult to see where these end and the groups' influence begins.

Presumably local environmental groups will only continue to be active if their members, and particularly their activists, feel that they are achieving something. The sample groups were therefore asked about their successes, failures and problems. Groups were first questioned about whether they felt that their interventions in what they saw as major local issues had been successful.

Eighty-three of the West Surrey environmental groups felt that they had achieved some success in a major issue. Forty-one of these groups pointed to some practical outcome which they had assisted, including preventing the demolition of historic buildings, altering or cancelling road proposals, or the refusal of planning permission for a development. A further 17 groups felt that, whilst they had not achieved the practical outcome they desired, they had produced a change in the attitude of the local authority. One society, for example, was "consulted by the local authority on current affairs" after their intervention in a major issue. Another group stated:

"A very successful meeting and constant pressure on councillors and local press has kept the issue and our views to the forefront. This has achieved us a position of consultation with the council."

Three groups felt that their action in appearing at a local public inquiry into an important issue had been an achievement in itself, in "being able to represent the village" or town they covered. Two groups admitted that they had only achieved success because they had worked with other organisations. A group which had prevented a golf club's plans to develop some
"The society was only one of a number (such as the local council) who put forward their views. However, active antagonism within the club probably did more than any action by the society (or council)."

Eighteen groups claimed to have achieved success in a major issue without giving any reasons why they felt this was so.

Of the remaining 48 groups, eight were still awaiting the outcome of a major issue in which they had been involved - generally, they were waiting for the result of a public inquiry to be announced. Thirty-one groups had either not been involved in a major issue in recent years, or gave no information on this matter.

Only nine of the West Surrey environmental groups felt they had been completely defeated on a major issue, and two of these were defunct as a consequence. Developments had proceeded despite the opposition of three groups, whilst three others felt that they had been totally unable to alter the attitudes of their local authority. One of these groups felt that the local authority officers "rate amenity and conservation factors as unimportant". Another said:

"To date the association has been totally unsuccessful in achieving major objectives - council is most un-cooperative and obstructive."

Whether the belief of the majority of West Surrey groups that they had achieved some success in a major issue is correct is difficult to assess. In many cases success had depended upon a group convincing a local authority to take a particular course of action. If a planned development is to be defeated, the local authority must be persuaded to refuse planning permission, for example. Some groups specifically mentioned altering local authority attitudes as an achievement.

Officers of four district council planning departments, and of the County planning department were interviewed, and
asked to give their opinions of the contribution of local environmental groups in their area to planning decisions. Requests for interviews were made to the planning departments of the other two districts within West Surrey, but they were unable to co-operate. Whilst such officers might be expected to underemphasise the role of local environmental groups, stressing their role as professionals, this would provide a useful counterbalance to the opposite tendency amongst the groups themselves.

The planners agreed that the main effect of environmental groups was upon the general climate of opinion on planning matters, rather than on specific issues. Most felt that on major issues, such as new development and Green Belt preservation, local authority and environmental group policies were similar. One planner described how joint efforts by groups and planners had gradually altered elected councillors' opinions to favour conservation rather than development. In the district with a number of group-sponsored councillors, the process had been more direct, and planners felt the environmental groups had benefited from seeing the realities of council life.

On specific issues, planners were less impressed by group activities. Two planners felt that environmental group views were predictable and unrepresentative of the majority of public opinion, but that they sometimes impressed elected councillors. There was a general feeling that environmental groups were not forthcoming enough in supporting the council when the opinions of council and groups coincided. On these occasions the planners felt that public support from the groups would have strengthened their case, at public inquiries for example. If the groups did not publicly support the council, the council could be claimed to be unrepresentative of public opinion.

Environmental groups were also criticised for not making positive suggestions, even when these were requested. One planner said:
Getting societies' opinions is useful to a planning department, as so many things, for example building design and landscaping, are a matter of taste.

However, although groups were ready to criticise designs they disliked, they were not willing to suggest alternatives.

It seems from this evidence that local environmental groups are right to assume some credit for the successful outcomes of major local issues. Local authorities are aware of the groups' views, and whether they criticise them or not, tend to alter their policies accordingly. In some cases planners and environmental groups work closely together, for example over Wisley airfield and the Surrey Structure Plan, and planners have a high enough view of the importance of local environmental groups to seek their support on issues of agreement.

Groups which have not succeeded in major issues may still justify their continued existence by success in other spheres, for example in education, or practical achievements (see page 134-). Groups were therefore asked what they felt to be their greatest achievement. Only one of the study groups felt that it had achieved nothing. It had formed as a single-issue group, and since 1967 had made no headway in altering the local authority's opinion on that issue. Nine groups which had not been successful in a major issue were able to cite success in another sphere of activity.

The majority of West Surrey environmental groups (82) cited a practical achievement similar to those listed as major issues (see page 135). These included refusal of planning permission for development (22), preservation of a historic building (8), and prevention or alteration of road proposals (6). Altogether, 43 cited as their major achievement the prevention of change to their area. Sixteen groups felt that they had achieved improvements in the amenities of their area themselves, for example by maintaining a road, or making a canal navigable. Six of these groups had contributed to improved social facilities by organising functions, or assisting
in building or maintaining a community hall. A further nine groups had improved local amenities by lobbying outside bodies, for example obtaining extra train services, or improving the cleaning of a shopping area. Most of these positive achievements were of social as much as environmental significance. Those achievements concerning only the physical environment were restricted to the prevention of change.

The development of relationships with other organisations was considered to be their major achievement by seventeen groups. In 12 cases this concerned relations with the local authority. Pride in this achievement is justified by the views of the planners on the influence that local environmental groups can have. Of these 12 groups, three cited the election of sponsored candidates to the local authority as a major success. Three groups felt that their greatest achievement had been in influencing public opinion; either in creating a 'community spirit' or a general awareness of environmental issues. This low figure may indicate orientation away from public activity, and towards getting things done directly through influencing the local authority. The remaining group cited establishing good relations with other local environmental groups as its major achievement.

The continued existence of their group was, in itself, felt to be a major achievement by 16 of the West Surrey environmental groups. One said:

"As we are a young organisation our survival to date is our greatest achievement in view of the general apathy which affects us - as others."

However, other newly-formed groups were able to cite practical achievements. Others cited sustained membership, fund-raising, or the programme of activities arranged for members. Interestingly, 12 of these groups had achieved some success in a major issue.

The West Surrey environmental groups were also asked about the problems that they experienced, obstacles in the
way of achieving their objectives. Again, these fell into the three groups of practical problems, relations with other organisations and problems internal to the groups. Again, practical problems were the most frequently mentioned with 14 groups listing proposed developments, 14 roads and traffic problems, and five aircraft nuisance as their major problem. Other problems listed included litter, vandalism, and the preservation of historic buildings. Most, once more, concerned resistance to change in the environment.

Relationships with other organisations and the general public were listed as a problem with 22 groups, ten feeling that the major difficulty was in overcoming public apathy:

"Even as a very effective organisation with extremely good support we find that the public at times are so apathetic to any issue, and it has taken us a long time to achieve even limited success in fighting this apathy."

The local authority presented the greatest problem to ten groups. In one case the difficulty was "... retaining our sturdy independence.....", but most groups felt that the opposite was true, citing:

"Insensitivity and autocratic nature of local government officials."
"Trying to get definite support for proposals from officers of councils - it's all too easy for them to plead poverty and 'it doesn't meet the regulations'."

Two groups cited the rapid turnover of the local population:

"To maintain continuity of outlook in the face of a massive turnover of population"

Despite the poor inter-group co-ordination found by the survey (page 156), no groups listed relations with other environmental groups as a problem.

Apathy amongst members, as opposed to the general public, was felt to be the major problem facing them by 22 groups. They had difficulty:
"...finding volunteer workers of adequate capacity, experience and time to spare...."

"...maintaining members' interest in our day-to-day work between major issues...."

"Notices in our newsheet urging members to contact appropriate secretaries on footpath or countryside matters bring nil response."

For these groups, although there were a large enough number of members, few were willing to take an active role in running the group or pursuing its aims.

Finance was a major problem for 12 groups. Some had specific projects which were difficult to finance, others had the more general problem of:

".....lack of funds to fight large concerns, e.g. gravel raising companies."

This question of unequal resources between developers and environmentalists is raised frequently in the literature, but apparently it is not commonly experienced by West Surrey environmental groups. It seems to apply more to groups faced with a series of inquiries than those faced with a single major inquiry, such as Wisley. However, not all groups wished to spend money on legal representation at inquiries (see Page 156).

Attracting young people was a problem for four of the groups, and indeed both interviews and meetings revealed that much of the environmental activity in West Surrey is carried out by older people. The exception to this is the four 'new-wave' environmental groups, which have a higher proportion of young people. Other 'internal' problems listed by the groups included setting up an efficient organisation, obtaining sufficient expertise, and merely ".....to exist despite problem after problem". One group raised the difficulty of deciding its attitude to planning applications made by members.

When an organisation becomes defunct, this might be seen as the most extreme failure to achieve its aims. On the other hand groups may become defunct because they have been successful,
and all their aims have been achieved. During the study 25 groups which had become defunct in the recent past were contacted to discover why they had become defunct. Six of the groups had been formed to deal with a specific issue which had now been decided. Three of these had achieved the outcome they wished for, the other three had failed in their objective but felt that further action would not be useful. Another group had folded because of failure to achieve any of its various aims.

A further four of the groups were inactive at present, dormant rather than defunct due to lack of contentious local issues. Respondents from each of these groups felt that they could be reactivated rapidly should the need arise, and indeed this did happen to one of the groups during the study period. A group was revived over the issue of Wisley airfield, and has continued to be active, with a new committee, ever since. The Chairman of that group had seen the parish council as the "first line of defence" on environmental issues, with the group "here when we're needed, as a longstop". The reason for the group becoming dormant was the election of a new parish council with views similar to that of the group, presumably the revived group feels that it now has a role, complimentary to that of the Parish Council.

District-based federations formed three of the defunct groups. They had been formed on the instigation of existing environmental groups, but had failed to achieve sufficient interest from their member groups to continue (see page 158). Respondents from each federation stressed the amount of hard work that had been needed to keep them functioning, and the reluctance of group activists to become involved. They felt that the groups had feared losing their autonomy through too close involvement with the federation, and had preferred to concentrate on very local issues. In two cases there had been a growing conflict of interest between the town based and country based groups within the district over transport, development policy and the allocation of resources. In the other case, the election of a number of group-sponsored
councillors had made the council chamber the place for co-ordinating group activities. Even when major local issues subsequently arose, the federations were not revived. The question of failure amongst federations is discussed in Chapter 7.

For 11 groups, a shortage of active members had brought action to a halt. In three cases the loss of a single activist, a Chairman or Secretary, had been enough for the group to become dormant. In others there were just too few activists to carry out the work of keeping the society going. Thus out of 25 now defunct groups, only three had disbanded because of their success. The others had all been forced to cease their activities due to failure, and especially to lack of actively-involved members.

If the groups which failed due to lack of support did so because they were not achieving their aims, or because there were no important local issues, this may not be entirely a bad thing. It might leave the way clear for the formation of a new, more active and successful group when new issues arise, and save the useless expenditure of resources in the meantime. This view is strengthened by the revival of one dormant group during the study period in a more vigorous form, and also the fact that a number of the now active groups were revivals of groups which had become defunct earlier. The dynamics of environmental groups are discussed in Chapter 7.

Nevertheless, the high proportion of groups becoming defunct due to lack of support places some doubts over the future of those groups which cited this as their major problem.

The wealth of data gathered on West Surrey groups points to some patterns in the local environmental movement. To put these into perspective, and to see how universal they were, research was also carried out in an area with very different environmental and social features. The contrasts between the two areas are discussed in Chapter 6.
CHAPTER 4

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CHAPTER 5
CHAPTER 5

ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN NEWHAM

Introduction

In contrast to the situation in West Surrey, tracing the existence of any environmental groups in Newham proved to be a problem. Initial contact with one group was made through a national environmental organisation. There is no Borough- or London-wide federation of environmental groups comparable to the Surrey Amenity Council, and the Civic Trust had only three groups registered as covering the Newham area, none of which were actually based in the area (or, during the study period, active there). The Newham Voluntary Agencies Council, which co-ordinates and supports voluntary group activity in Newham, rather like the Surrey Voluntary Service Council in that area, produced a directory of local voluntary groups which listed five environmental groups. Local authority lists contained no information on environmental groups.

Contact was initially made with the environmental groups listed by the Newham Voluntary Agencies Council. Two of the groups were found to operate only outside the Borough, and one of these was very inactive. Key personnel in the remaining three groups were interviewed, and meetings of the groups observed. Discussions with activists in these groups revealed that there were other environmental groups within or covering Newham, and after some difficulty, addresses for five further groups were obtained, and contact was made with them.

Local newspapers covering a period of several years up to the study period were scanned for evidence of the existence of other environmental groups, but none were found, although there was limited evidence of other voluntary organisations being occasionally interested in environmental issues. The planning department of the London Borough of Newham Council was contacted on several occasions for assistance in tracing organisations interested in planning issues, but the department stated that they were unable to provide any assistance due to
'pressure of work'. Within the Borough there were a number of organisations committed to community development and the assistance of voluntary organisations (see below). These were next contacted for information on any environmental groups they might have contacted. Again there was no evidence of the existence of environmental groups, but there had been some instances of other groups showing occasional interest in environmental issues.

During the study period, the planning department held a number of public meetings to discuss local plans, and these were observed on several occasions, as it was felt that any local environmental groups in the area would be likely to attend them. Again, this search proved fruitless. The social services department of the local authority had a community development section, and this was contacted for further information about local voluntary group activity. The result was the same as before – some interest in environmental issues on a sporadic basis, but no actual environmental groups. Finally, the minutes of the local authority Town Planning Committee and Development Control sub-committee were searched at a Newham reference library for evidence of environmental groups objecting to planning applications, which had been a common tactic in West Surrey (see Chapter 4, page 160). Once again no evidence of the existence of further environmental groups was found.

The small number of groups traced (seven) did have the advantage that it was possible to conduct interviews with key personnel from all of them, and attend meetings of most. Groups who had shown sporadic interest in environmental issues were also contacted.

Group Formation and Concerns

Although the number of Newham environmental groups was small, the groups covered a wide range of issues, several of which had not attracted the attention of West Surrey groups. The Newham groups were of recent origin, all having been formed since 1970. They were small in membership, with a combined
total membership excluding the federation, of under 500. As with West Surrey groups, the number of activists was much smaller, under 50 in total.

The oldest environmental group in the Borough was the local branch of Friends of the Earth (FoE) formed around 1970. Most of its members, and particularly the activists, were young people who had moved into the area comparatively recently. Its turnover of membership was thus high. The group had been formed by a person who was interested in the aims and activities of Friends of the Earth nationally, and the local group had concentrated upon national and international issues, such as protection of endangered species and the question of nuclear power production. During 1979, however, this latter campaign had taken on a local significance with the discovery that radioactive waste material from nuclear power stations was being transported through Newham by rail, and indeed spent some time in the railway yards of the Borough. The group had also campaigned locally on transport issues, lobbying the local authority to allocate money to road repairs which would benefit cyclists. As a small group, however, the choice of issues on which to take action depended mainly upon members' interests, and few had had local issues as their prime concern.

The discovery that potentially-dangerous nuclear waste was being transported through Newham had led to the development of an ad-hoc campaign, headed by a local councillor and a local political activist. The campaign intended to bring the potential danger such transport posed to public attention, and persuade Newham and other local authorities to oppose it. The group had acted with Friends of the Earth to some extent, but saw itself as quite separate. It sought to campaign through political bodies, such as the Labour Party and Trades Councils, rather than setting up a formal environmental group. The campaigners felt that damage to the vessels containing the radioactive waste, either accidental or through terrorist attack, could bring devastation and loss of life to a wide area of East London.
Danger caused by pollution was the reason why another of the Newham environmental groups had been formed. In 1978, a fire at a chemical plant had led to nearby residents being readied for evacuation from their homes, as firemen struggled to control the blaze. This was only the most recent incident involving the chemical works, which were close to homes and schools; indeed, the Chairman of the group had been lobbying the council about pollution from the plant for 25 years. On a number of occasions, workers at neighbouring depots had been overcome by fumes from the plant, and acid rain had fallen upon a local school. The group had no formal membership, but the public meetings it had held had attracted 50 to 60 people, and 90 people had answered a questionnaire the group had distributed on the effects of pollution. The group had taken a formal name, and had a Chairman and Secretary in order to be able to make contact with the local authority. The group had five main activists, and counted everyone living in the area of the chemical plant as a member.

The three other Newham-based groups were all more formally constituted, and again dealt with different aspects of the environment. One group concentrated upon nature conservation, and had begun with efforts by a Newham milkman to prevent youths from damaging birds' nests. He had approached the damagers, interested them in the birds they were harming, and encouraged them to take a more positive interest in wildlife. The converted youngsters had then 'policed' the birds' nests to prevent damage by others, although sometimes force rather than reason was used. When the milkman left the area, a group of adults interested in nature conservation formalised and civilised the group, with its main concern being to further the cause of nature conservation through education of young people. The group was involved in practical conservation work, and education of members and other young people rather than controversial issues. However, it had taken action on occasions when action by the local authority or other bodies had threatened wildlife unnecessarily. Membership of the group was not limited to Newham, but the majority of the membership came from within the Borough, and Newham and neighbouring Wanstead.
Flats were the main focus of activity. The group had approximately 150 members, and a formally elected committee and officers. Young people outside the committee were actively involved in practical work, giving a fluctuating group of 20 to 30 activists at any one time.

Another Newham environmental group had been formed to protect and improve the provision of allotment and other land for cultivation within the Borough, and to stress the psychological benefits which plant-growing could bring to inner-city residents. The group was formed in 1976, when the redevelopment of Beckton under Docklands planning, and particularly proposals for a lorry park, threatened a large area of allotments within Newham. The group felt that this land, which had been under cultivation on a 'temporary' basis since 1947, should not be developed when so much derelict land was available for building elsewhere in the Borough. When a public inquiry granted permission for the lorry park, the group became involved in the wider problem of relocating the displaced allotment holders, and monitoring local plans elsewhere in the Borough for their effect upon allotments. Its general concern with effective use of land and open space provision also led to involvement in the issue of a disused cemetery in the Borough which had been allowed by the owners to become derelict. The group lobbied for some of this land to be used for recreational and educational purposes. Later, this group also became involved in certain national issues, notably the setting-up of an Urban Development Corporation in Docklands, and proposals by the Government to repeal certain sections of allotment legislation which, the group felt, might lead to the loss of allotments to development.

Group membership was not limited to Newham, and stood at around 120. There was a formal committee of seven, including officers.

The remaining Newham environmental group was much more like those found in West Surrey. It was an area-based residents association, covering an estate of seven roads, with 165 members from that area. It had a committee of 20, including officers, and also a system of street wardens, although this
was not functioning efficiently at the time of the study. The group was concerned solely with issues arising within the area, concentrating in particular upon building conservation. The estate in which the group was located consisted of 615 Victorian houses, described by the Greater London Council planning department as "one of the finest examples of Victorian building in London". The group was formed originally by an individual who was concerned about the conversion of houses into hostels for ex-offenders and mentally ill people, and started a petition against change of use. In 1976, against his wishes, a group of residents called a public meeting to formalise the residents' association, as he had called his campaign. A constitution was drawn up, committee and officers elected, and regular meetings were held. The main issue with which the group had been involved was lobbying for the area to be designated as a Conservation Area, and encouraging the restoration of as many houses as possible to their original external style. The group has also been concerned with other planning and environmental issues arising within the area, such as tree preservation, parking and traffic problems, and the illegal use of houses for business purposes.

Amongst the larger area environmental groups claiming to cover Newham, only one had been active within the Borough in recent years. This organisation was a federation of environmental and other groups covering the whole of London's Docklands. It was formed in 1973, following the publication of the Travers Morgan plan for Docklands (Chapter 3, page 106). It began as an alliance of groups opposing particular local schemes, for example the proposal to turn St. Katherines Dock into a marina, with luxury housing and shops. Later it aimed to provide a united front of local people against the Travers Morgan plan. As the employment implications of the plan became more apparent, Trades Unions and local Trades Councils joined the federation, which now encompasses a wide range of organisations. Representatives of the groups form a governing council which directs the actions of the federation. Approximately 30 groups are affiliated to the
federation, only four of these, including the allotments group, coming from Newham. Once the Travers Morgan plan had been rejected, the federation organised voluntary group submissions to the new plan produced by the Docklands Joint Committee. In general the federation welcomed this plan, but continued to lobby for emphasis on jobs and homes for local people, and public transport, which it felt might be lost during implementation. It also campaigned against plans to close the upper docks to commercial use, and against local factory closures. When the Urban Development Corporation was mooted, the federation lobbied strongly against it, and for continued use of the Docklands Joint Committee Plan. After the UDC was appointed, it continued to campaign against changes in planning in the area, particularly the development of luxury housing rather than low cost housing for local people, and against a change of emphasis towards low employment warehousing rather than industry. The federation was also deeply involved in opposition to major road building which would disrupt the northern Docklands area, and in favour of public transport development. It campaigned for input from local organisations to the UDC, through the continuation of a consultative forum. Whilst many of the specific issues with which the federation was involved were located outside Newham, such as proposals to locate an 'Enterprise Zone', with reduced taxation and legislative control for industry, in the Isle of Dogs, many of these issues would directly affect Newham. In its overall aim of monitoring planning within Docklands, and the structures which controlled it, the federation was directly relevant to a large area of Newham.

Aims and Objectives

Not all of the Newham environmental groups had formally stated aims and objectives. The aim of the Friends of the Earth group was the same as that of its parent body, a commitment to ".....the conservation, restoration and rational use of the Ecosphere". The local group had no more specific locally-oriented stated aims. The eventual objective of the ad-hoc group on nuclear waste was to halt the use of nuclear power in Britain, but its immediate aims were to publicise the
dangers of nuclear waste transport through towns and to halt such transport.

Both the allotment group and the nature conservation group had education as part of their aims. The latter group concentrated upon young people, stating that "our aim is to educate through recreation". The allotment group aimed to educate allotment holders about wider environmental issues and the planning process, by "learning to use the channels offered for participation in planning more fully". It also aimed to educate the public about the value of allotments, both as a source of food and by stressing how they satisfy "quality of life needs". Both groups used practical work as part of the educational process.

The nature conservation group, Friends of the Earth and the residents' association listed conservation as one of their aims. The residents' association wished to:

".....promote and support the declared aims of conservation within the area and to maintain its residential character."

As with many West Surrey groups, the aim refers to the 'character' of the area rather than specifying more exactly what should be conserved. The aims of the allotment group are also conservationist, to "safeguard and increase opportunities for people to work a piece of land".

Representation is part of the aims of four groups. The residents' association stated that it would:

".....make representations to the Council of the London Borough of Newham and any other statutory body on behalf of members of the Association....."

whilst the allotments group aimed to:

".....serve as a channel for taking part in future policy-making....."

The federation aimed to represent the needs of local people in the redevelopment of Docklands, whilst the anti-pollution
group represented the interests of people:

"....suffering ill health, discomfort and
damage to property because of exposure to
pollutants, an exposure to which they never
consented."

All the groups except the nature conservation group and
Friends of the Earth are 'political', in that they aim their
representations at the local council and other authorities,
although like the West Surrey group, the residents' association
states that it is:

"....strictly non-sectarian and has no party
political associations."

It is part of the aims of all groups to encourage and
foster links with other organisations concerned with the
environment, although for the residents' association this is
of secondary importance to fostering links between residents
within the area to encourage a 'community spirit'. For the
allotments group contact with other organisations was
particularly important. It aimed:

"To welcome liaison with other gardening bodies,
and to encourage the use or development of local
federations."

and, more broadly:

"....recognising affinities with countryside and
wildlife interests....."

A major purpose of the federation was the co-ordination of
action by different organisations, and the anti-pollution and
anti-nuclear waste groups aimed to liaise with local trades
unions and trades councils. The nature conservation group
was in close contact with many natural history societies,
which it encouraged its members to join.

In the terms used to describe West Surrey environmental
groups, most of the Newham groups are 'specialists', dealing
with one particular aspect of the environment. The exceptions
is the docklands-wide group, which is a federation covering
non-environmental as well as environmental groups, and the residents' association. The latter is similar in many ways to the smaller Surrey groups. It is concerned with planning issues, with an emphasis upon building conservation; is based within a small residential area, and has a formal structure. It differs from a number of the small Surrey groups in that it is not based upon a private road or estate, and is not therefore involved in its upkeep. Indeed, the area it covers contains quite a high proportion of local authority-owned properties (about 25% at the time of the study), although fewer than the Borough as a whole (see Chapter 3, page 96).

Apart from the nature conservation group, Newham's specialist environmental groups had very different concerns from their counterparts in West Surrey. There are allotments in West Surrey, but no campaigning group concerned with them has emerged and they do not appear to be threatened in any way. The problems of pollution from factories and nuclear waste are not an issue within Surrey and so there are no groups dedicated to their solution. What was lacking in Newham was any group with a more general concern about environmental issues covering a substantial part of the Borough. Even the local Friends of the Earth branch, which could have adopted this role, had become by the time of the study, almost a single-issue group concentrating upon the problems of nuclear power generation, particularly waste disposal and transport.

Environmental Group Resources

Given the differences between Surrey and Newham outlined in Chapter 3, (page 85 onwards) one might expect the resources available to environmental groups in the two areas to differ. In Newham, there are far fewer professional and highly educated people, people are generally less wealthy and less likely to own cars and telephones. However, there are resources available to some groups in Newham to which Surrey groups do not have access.

Since 1968 Government funding has been available to assist voluntary groups in inner-city areas, under the Urban
Programme to revitalise these areas. Following the publication of the white paper on Inner Cities in 1977, the scope and scale of this assistance was greatly increased, particularly in seven areas of social deprivation known as 'Partnership' areas, of which London's Docklands was one. Whilst the majority of Government money allocated to the inner cities was to assist local authorities, the White Paper stated voluntary organisations and activities should also be assisted. In its financial programme for 1979 to 1983, the Docklands Joint Committee allocated £5.05 million, 5.6% of the total Urban Programme allocation, to voluntary sector initiatives. Whilst this is the lowest proportional allocation of any of the partnership allocations, it nevertheless represents a sum far beyond the scale of central Government funding to voluntary groups in Surrey. Two of the Newham environmental groups received funding under this process, the allotments group receiving £8,700 over three years to staff and run an allotments development project, and the docklands-wide federation receiving support from the Docklands Joint Committee over a number of years to fund a resource centre and employ full-time staff. Although this grant ended with the takeover of the Urban Development Corporation (see Chapter 3, page 105), the future of the federation seemed ensured at the end of the study period, by a grant from the Greater London Council.

The other Newham groups had neither received nor indeed applied for funding. Throughout Docklands, environment-related projects accounted for only a small proportion of aid to the voluntary sector. In a breakdown produced for the Docklands Joint Committee, leisure, environmental and arts projects together accounted for only 15% of funding. Most of this was spent on leisure and the arts, with the environment coming a poor third.

One of the Newham environmental groups was, however, in receipt of finance from other sources. The nature conservation group had received money from the London Borough of Newham social services department and a private trust to undertake "Intermediate Treatment" work with young offenders as an
alternative to custodial care. The money was used to buy tools and equipment to allow the young people to carry out practical conservation work, along with other young members of the group. No other Newham environmental group had financial resources beyond that contributed by the membership, either regularly through subscriptions, or through collections at meetings.

For the two groups receiving money via the urban programme, the existence of this resource meant that full-time staff could be employed. The federation had a resource centre, which provided a series of facilities for local voluntary groups and a collection of information on Docklands planning. Three skilled staff were permanently employed and based at the centre. Between them, the staff had a wide range of experience of planning and environmental matters, organisation and campaigning. Occasionally, community work students served short 'placement' periods at the centre.

The allotments group is theoretically separate from the project funded by urban aid. However, the project was initiated by the group and shares many of the same personnel. Indeed, they are so closely intertwined that the local authority has asked for clarification of the relationship between the two. The Secretary of the group was employed as a full-time co-ordinator with the project, and funds were also available for a second worker, but there were great difficulties finding a suitable person. Whilst the co-ordinator had little experience of the planning process before the Beckton inquiry, she had been a teacher and was an allotment holder of some experience. She had a long-standing interest in the environment and had personal qualities of persistence and perseverance in dealing with various authorities. After some initial difficulty, the project also acquired a base, in a greenhouse in a Newham park no longer needed by the local authority. This was available for practical use, and as a meeting place and office.

The other Newham environmental groups, whilst not employing staff, had members with experience or skill in
environmental subjects. The secretary of the nature conservation group was a trained biologist, currently employed by the local authority on duties including the creation of a nature reserve in a disused churchyard. The Secretary of the anti-pollution group was undergoing training as an environmental health officer, which included pollution monitoring. The Chairman was a trade unionist with a great deal of experience of the problem of hazardous materials handling at work. Several people in the residents' association had experience of looking at plans, and the activists in the anti-nuclear waste campaign were experienced in politics and organisation.

No groups besides those funded through urban aid had headquarters. Members' homes were used for meetings and to store documents, as with most of the Surrey groups. The Friends of the Earth branch was able to use a room behind the local book- and health-food shop on a more regular basis, as the owners were members of the branch.

The groups did not seem to experience difficulty in finding facilities for their limited printing and duplicating needs. Such facilities were offered by the Newham Voluntary Agencies Council (see page 183) as one of their services to voluntary groups, but only the allotments group made extensive use of these. The NVAC and other organisations within the Borough were also able to provide meeting places and advice for groups, but again only the allotments group took regular advantage of this support.

Environmental groups in Newham were also able to use a variety of organisations as sources of information by using outside sources such as Chapter 1 (page 25) describes. Within Docklands there was a Docklands Forum, consisting of voluntary groups, which provided input to, and received information from the Docklands Joint Committee. The federation played a major role in the Forum, and indeed kept the Forum going after the introduction of the Urban Development Corporation, until the Corporation decided to reconstitute
and fund the Forum as an advice-giving organisation of voluntary groups. The allotments group also attended the Forum regularly, and found it a useful source of information.

The allotments group, along with the anti-pollution group, was also able to obtain some advice and information from the local polytechnic, which has a campus within the Borough. The nature conservation group obtained speakers for its meetings through other natural history and nature conservation groups, and the Friends of the Earth branch received regular information sheets from its parent organisation. Representatives of the Victorian Society had been invited by the local authority to sit, along with representatives of the residents' association, on the conservation area advisory committee, but had not done so. However, the residents' association had received some advice on its constitution from a similar group in Kent.

The Newham environmental groups thus did not seem particularly to be lacking in resources of any type. It is interesting that, despite the existence in Newham of a number of agencies committed to assisting voluntary action, only the allotments group made extensive use of such outside assistance. In addition to the NVAC, there were three independent groups whose aim was to give advice and assistance to local individuals and groups to undertake action to help themselves. The aim of one of these, for example, is:

"To encourage and enable groups and individuals to understand and tackle their own problems and those of the community."

The groups provided meeting premises, facilities such as duplicating, advice and information on both issues and tactics. In addition, there were five church-related groups with an interest in community work of this kind, again something which was not encountered in Surrey. Indeed, activists from environmental groups and other organisations stressed the deep involvement of various churches in Newham community life. Although church attendance is low, the churches instigate and organise many activities. Again, they
are able to provide practical assistance to voluntary groups, and some advice, which are the types of resource advocated by writers such as BUTCHER and TAYLOR as being vital for inner-city voluntary groups.

In remarking upon the lack of use environmental groups made of the various 'community development' organisations, it is important to recall that the groups did have available within their membership a level of professionalism and expertise disproportionate to its level amongst the local population. The allotments group was the only one consisting predominantly of ordinary local people, and it was this group which made most use of the resources available.

Environmental Groups' Contacts with other Organisations

Despite their small numbers and close geographical proximity, there appeared to be little contact between Newham environmental groups. Some of the groups were not even aware of each other's existence before the study began. The group which had made the highest number of contacts with other groups, both inside and outside the Borough, environmental and otherwise, was the allotments group, although obviously the federation had, by its nature, a large number of contacts within its membership. All the groups except the residents' association and the anti-nuclear waste campaign were aware that the allotments group existed.

The federation had opposed the allotments group at the Beckton public inquiry, on the grounds that Beckton planning should take precedence. However, the two groups remained in contact through the Docklands Forum. The four other groups were aware of the allotments group, and identified it strongly with its Secretary. They were not, however, in close contact, and some expressed doubts about the relevance and usefulness of its activities. These views were to some extent reciprocated. The Friends of the Earth branch knew that the Residents' Association existed, but criticised it for being solely concerned with protecting property values. In turn, Friends of the Earth was criticised by three other
environmental groups for being reluctant to involve itself in local issues. This type of criticism has also slightly soured relations between Friends of the Earth and the anti-nuclear waste campaign, although the two had initially worked closely together. Although the local authority had set up a sub-committee to deal with the problems of both air pollution from factories and the question of nuclear waste transport, the two groups campaigning on these issues did not work together, and despite being close geographically, were unaware of each other's activities (and indeed, showed little interest in each other when they became aware). Thus the Newham environmental groups were very isolated from each other, each concentrating on specific interests, with little co-operation or combined action.

Although there is no Newham-based federation of environmental groups, there are various ways in which regular contact between environmental groups could have occurred. The Newham Voluntary Agencies Council (NVAC) is open to membership for all voluntary groups, and is consulted by the local authority on planning matters. Only the allotments group is in regular contact with NVAC, via use of its facilities. No environmental groups are represented upon the committee or amongst the activists of NVAC. When questioned about this, the groups indicated that they felt they would receive little benefit from membership, and did not have the time to play an active role in NVAC. There was also a Borough Liaison Committee, to facilitate liaison between the local authority and voluntary groups. Only the nature conservation group was represented upon this, and again the consensus amongst other groups was that it served little purpose.

Whilst not all of the Newham environmental groups covered the Docklands area of the Borough, the Docklands Forum could nevertheless have provided useful contact between them and other voluntary organisations; and the provisions of Docklands planning were likely to have a considerable effect upon the environment elsewhere in Newham. However, only the allotments group and the federation took part in the Docklands Forum.
The allotments and nature conservation groups had considerable contact with environmental groups outside the Borough. The latter group was regularly in touch with national and regional nature conservation and other environmental groups, including the Conservation Society and the Council for Nature (later CoEnCo). The allotments group's contacts included environmental groups such as the Conservation Society, Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA) and Friends of the Earth nationally. It had also made contact with the National and London Councils of Voluntary Organisations, the Countryside Commission, the Council for Sport and Recreation, and CoEnCo. During its campaign against changes in allotments legislation it had also contacted the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, the Council for the Protection of Rural England, and allotments groups and federations throughout the country. Activists in the anti-pollution and anti-nuclear waste groups had contact with the Socialist Environment and Resources Association, and the Secretary of the residents' association was a member of the National Trust.

The Docklands-wide federation was in contact with a number of national environmental groups including SERA and Transport 2000. It is notable that, with the exception of the nature conservation group, the majority of contacts at national level were with the 'new-wave' environmental groups, as described in Chapter 1 (page 31). The more traditional environmental groups had less relevance in an urban setting such as that of Newham. The nature conservation group's national contacts were with the more traditional specialist groups, despite the interest of organisations such as Friends of the Earth in urban nature conservation. The nature conservation group was also the only one with prominent national figures as patrons - David Attenborough and Sir John Betjeman.

**Tactics and Activities**

Newham environmental groups employed many different tactics to achieve their aims, and undertook a number of
practical activities. Whilst use of the traditional pressure group tactics of lobbying official bodies was common, this was in conjunction with a number of other approaches.

The major activity of the allotments group was the setting-up and running of an allotments development project funded under the Urban Aid scheme. This stemmed from the group's experiences at the Beckton inquiry, and became the main focus of group activity throughout the study period. The project aimed to improve the physical condition of the Borough's allotment sites, assist the process of relocation necessitated by Docklands redevelopment, and improve relationships amongst allotment holders, and between them and the local authority. Table 1 indicates the initial programme of the project. The project undertook a mixture of practical work, research and liaison. The practical work included general tidying-up of communal areas of allotment sites and obtaining cheap supplies of seeds and fertilizer for allotment holders. Research work included an extensive survey of the needs and attitudes of allotment holders, both towards specific local authority proposals and towards allotment gardening in general. Allotment groups and local authorities elsewhere in the country were contacted to build up a broader picture of allotments organisation. Liaison work included close contact with the local authorities and the societies which managed the allotment sites, the production of a newsletter and support of the Borough-wide allotment societies' federation which the group had helped to form in 1978. Once a base was obtained, the project provided space to grow seedlings, which was used by both plotholders and groups of local schoolchildren. The latter were contacted both individually and through the schools, and some schools held nature study lessons at the base. The base was also open to any member of the public to look around, use, and ask questions.

Part of the work of the project included keeping abreast of national developments which might affect allotments, through
### TABLE 1

**SUMMARY OF WORK IN PROGRESS OR ON PROGRAMME FOR SUMMER 1979**  
**NEWHAM ALLOTMENTS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, MAY 1979**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions from allotment societies:</th>
<th>Achieved by end of study period?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Feasibility of concrete huts for new allotment sites.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Methods to eradicate brown-tailed moth.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Investigate feasibility of providing a nursery for hedge material.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Search for derelict and unused land within the Borough which might be suitable for allotments.</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Clear ditch at one allotment site.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Find way to prevent fly-tipping on allotment site access road.</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Build hut on organiser's site to demonstrate use of recycled materials.</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project-initiated work:</th>
<th>Achieved by end of study period?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Locate source of cheap supplies, and develop resources bank.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Liaison with Council over use of demolition materials for allotment huts.</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Liaison with young people through schools and individuals.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Devise ways for young people to be active on allotments without antagonising plot holders.</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Prepare for an alternative project base, if not possible to use organiser's plot.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Survey and recording of the needs and experiences of older plot holders.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Investigate the possibility of publishing archive and oral history material on allotments.</td>
<td>some progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Develop information sheets on allotments problems and wider environmental issues.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Attempt to build trust of plotholders in local authority.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Encourage and support local federation of allotment groups.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Maintain contact with regional and national developments relevant to the local situation.</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
contact with outside organisations and scanning of relevant literature. Liaison with some allotment societies proved difficult, so from July 1979 onwards a regular newsletter was produced and made available to all allotment holders at the sites. This contained information on local and national developments, and tried to stress the links between allotment gardening and the rest of the environmental movement. The project worker attended the meetings of several of the allotment societies, their federation and local authority committees dealing with allotments. Additional tactics were adopted to deal with specific issues, particularly the threat of changes in allotments legislation. A petition against the changes was drawn up, and allotment holders encouraged to contact their local MP's on the matter. Contact was also made with other MP's, and with allotment groups throughout the country, in several cases by writing to local papers in different areas. Meetings of allotment groups throughout London were arranged and contact was made with a number of national environmental groups. Another issue in which the project became involved called for quite different tactics. This was the issue of the derelict cemetery, for which tactics were more locally based. After some initial practical work, local people were informed about the issue, and encouraged to form a 'Friends of the Cemetery' group. The local authority was also lobbied on the issue.

Whilst the allotments group was perhaps the most broad ranging in its activities and its tactics, other environmental groups also used a variety of means to achieve their aims. The nature conservation group also devoted much effort towards practical activities, seeing them as useful in themselves and a method of education. Activities ranged from practical conservation work in Wanstead Flats; tree felling, hedging, mending fences, clearing ponds; to observation and recording of wildlife both inside and outside the Borough. Other groups also carried out research and information gathering, but undertook little practical work as such. The Docklands-wide federation carried out a great deal of research, along
with its constituent bodies, into the likely social and economic effects of planning decisions, and also into alternative proposals, for example the feasibility of various options for public transport. It also carried out general monitoring of the Docklands Strategic Plan implementation. The anti-pollution group carried out a survey of local residents to determine in what ways they had been affected by pollution. It also used various published sources to identify the chemicals used in local plants, and their possible health effects. Similarly the campaign against nuclear waste transport gathered and disseminated information on the possible effects of a spillage of radioactive waste in Newham. The Friends of the Earth branch obtained similar information from its parent body and other local groups.

The information gathered by Newham environmental groups was disseminated in various ways. The Friends of the Earth group held an exhibition, various meetings, and assisted in arranging a film show on the hazards of nuclear weapons. Activists from the anti-nuclear waste group spoke at many meetings, both public and private, within Newham and elsewhere. The anti-pollution campaign held two public meetings, and addressed the local authority pollution sub-committee. The residents' association committee passed on to its members information from the local authority about Conservation Area legislation, and was available to assist with queries and problems, for example on the implications for owners of Tree Preservation Orders. The association produced a newsletter for members, as did the nature conservation group; the latter also produced the results of its wildlife recordings and its activists addressed schools and other voluntary groups on nature conservation topics. The federation produced many publications on various subjects, both alone and in collaboration with member groups. It held meetings and conferences, and its activities addressed gatherings of other organisations. Information gathered by the federation's workers was made available to member groups at regular meetings, and to the Docklands Forum. The residents' association had attempted to arrange meetings, visits and social events for its members,
but lack of support had halted this.

Some of the groups made extensive use of both local and sometimes national media to publicise their campaigns, although several groups were critical of the two Newham local papers, which tend to concentrate on lurid crime reports rather than planning issues. The anti-nuclear waste campaign achieved national and local newspaper and television coverage late in 1979 with an imaginative publicity stunt. Activists from the campaign and the Friends of the Earth branch, accompanied by reporters, entered Stratford railway station carrying a life-size replica of a bazooka gun. The activists were then photographed holding the replica gun inches from a nuclear waste container which was stationary on the track, to illustrate the danger of terrorist attack to the containers. The publicity was given extra impact when the station guard stated that he was unable to stop them entering the station, even though no attempt was made to conceal the gun, because the group all had platform tickets.

Whilst none of the other environmental groups used such enterprising publicity tactics, they did obtain media coverage. The federation's activities and findings were reported in the national press on various occasions and on several issues. The federation issued regular press releases, held press conferences, and helped to arrange several marches and demonstrations which gained a good deal of publicity. The allotments group, by contrast, only approached the local press over the issue of legislative change, although one national paper and several environmentalist journals visited and described the allotments project. The nature conservation group also achieved considerable coverage amongst environmental movement journals. The anti-pollution group had tried to use the local press for publicity, but had found its coverage incomplete and disappointing. Only the residents' association had made no conscious attempt to use the media, although the petition drawn up before the group was formalised had been reported in local papers.
Lobbying of organisations and individuals was also a tactic used by several of the groups. The allotments group had used this method extensively over the issue of legislative change, and to a lesser extent over the Beckton inquiry. The anti-nuclear waste campaign saw outside lobbying as essential, as decisions on nuclear power generation and waste transport are made at national level. The anti-pollution group had put their views both to local MP's and to the Alkali Inspectorate. The nature conservancy group had lobbied the Thames Water Authority to turn a disused sewage works into a nature reserve. The federation was in regular contact with regional trade union groups and had organised several mass lobbies of MP's. The anti-pollution, anti-nuclear waste and Friends of the Earth groups saw contacts with trades unions as of vital importance; the latter despite Friends of the Earth's reluctance at national level to take a political stance. The allotments group, which had come into conflict with local trade unions over demarcation disputes between council workers and project volunteers, also sought to improve its relations with trades unions.

Relations with the Local Authority

Like the district councils of West Surrey, the London Borough of Newham council plays an important role in determining the nature of the Borough's physical environment. For all the Newham environmental groups, contact with and influence of the local authority was an important activity, although in some issues the action available to the local authority was limited. Again, a detailed examination of the Borough's politics is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is important is the groups' perceptions of the local authority, and vice-versa.

The allotments group had needed the support of the local authority to obtain Urban Aid funding, and indeed in such cases one third of the funds are provided by the local authority. A condition of funding is that there is close liaison with the local authority, and in the case of the allotments project the third year's funding depended upon the local authority being satisfied with the project's progress. The main support
department with which the project had to liaise was that of the Borough Engineer, and the project was also in regular contact with the planning department, and with councillors on the allotments sub-committee. Relations were generally cordial, and the local authority was able to give advice and support to the project; for example by holding and chairing meetings, obtaining some information and supplies, and eventually through the appointment of a full-time allotments officer. Nevertheless, there were a number of disagreements between the project and the local authority, for which there were two basic causes. Firstly there were a number of administrative problems, including delays in making funds available to the project, difficulty in finding a permanent base, and a number of alterations amongst officers responsible for liaison with the project. Whilst these were not necessarily the fault of the local authority, for example it had originally been planned to have a base on one of the allotment sites, the delays did cause a considerable amount of frustration. The second cause of clashes between the project and the local authority was a difference of approach between the two, and the feeling of the project co-ordinator that the council was unable to give the assistance she needed. The project experienced a number of difficulties caused by resistance on the part of local and national allotment groups to its ideas. The co-ordinator felt, unrealistically, that this should be tackled by the authority intervening directly in these groups, as otherwise practical implementation of the project's proposals would be impossible. The local authority were reluctant to be seen as interfering with the internal affairs of other organisations, feeling that this would be harmful. They felt that once practical work began, allotment-holders' hostility would cease. This difference in approach also caused conflict over the involvement of the project in the issue of legislation. Whilst the project co-ordinator saw this as essential activity to protect the future of allotments, the local authority felt that Urban Aid money should be used for practical work within the Borough, and this broader activity should be left to the allotments group, rather than the project. The local authority also felt that wider activity
might increase the hostility of allotments groups to the project. In these ways, differences of approach and priority led to some dissatisfaction of the project and local authority with each other, but despite this, a reasonably good relationship was maintained. A series of meetings and discussions with individual officers improved communication, and the determination of the project co-ordinator to have her view heard played an important part in maintaining the relationship, although the project still found the administrative requirements of the council tiresome and irrelevant to the project's work.

The other Newham environmental groups had less close contact with the local authority, but still regarded the relationship as an important one. The anti-nuclear waste campaign persuaded the local authority of the importance of nuclear waste transport, and persuaded it to make public statements to this effect and initiate a sub-committee on the issue. Thus although the local authority was unable to take direct steps to prevent nuclear waste transport, the campaign gained valuable publicity. Contacting the council had not been a problem for the campaign; one activist was a local councillor, and another was active within the local Labour Party, to which the majority of councillors belonged. Contact was thus with councillors rather than officers, and was carried out on a party political basis. By contrast, the anti-pollution group, whose issue shared the same sub-committee, had no such inside contacts within the council, the activist employed by the local authority being in too junior a position to have useful influence. Their contacts with the local authority were by letter, and through publicity; local councillors having failed to attend their two public meetings. The group remained unsatisfied with the actions of the local authorities in answer to their demands, feeling that they had to some extent been offered a hearing by the sub-committee as a palliative. Neither of these two groups had felt an approach to local authority officers to be useful.
The Friends of the Earth group had little contact with the local authority other than through the anti-nuclear waste campaign. The group was not politically active within the Borough, although they did have contact with one local authority officer who was a member of another Friends of the Earth local group. Through this contact, they were able to exert some influence upon the road maintenance policies of the local authority. In general the group regarded the local authority, and particularly the councillors, as "not very environmentally aware".

The residents' association's relationship with the local authority was, like its other characteristics, much more similar to that of West Surrey environmental groups. Although the original petition drawn up by the group was aimed at councillors, the majority of the association's contact was with paid officers. The association felt that officers were more sympathetic to the idea of a conservation area; some councillors were reluctant to devote resources to a relatively privileged area of Newham. The association appreciated the advice and information given by the officers, and interceded in disputes between the planning department and residents. The association had clashed with the local authority over the number of places they were to have on the conservation area advisory committee, but this was resolved, especially as other organisations given places, such as the local traders' organisation, failed to take them up. The group attended committee meetings, and found them useful; the local authority also provided the association with two copies of all planning applications likely to affect the area. Up to the end of the study period, there had been no disagreements over planning policy between the residents association and the local authority, although the association Secretary did not rule out the possibility of clashes in the future.

The nature conservation group conducted its relationship with the local authority upon similar lines, its contact being almost solely with officers, apart from its participation in the Borough Liaison Committee. The Secretary was employed
by the local authority, but this job complemented his work with the group. Relations between the group and the social services and education departments were close and co-operative. Although the engineering and parks department was sceptical about the group's work, there was no hostility between the two, and when a difference arose over the treatment of pests, it was resolved amicably by the group Secretary contacting the relevant officer.

The Docklands-wide federation tended to be in contact with the Docklands Joint Committee rather than individual borough authorities, although this varied between boroughs. Relationships were generally good, although the federation did criticise certain aspects of both plan implementation, and the 'over-optimistic' financial and timing forecasts of the plans. Despite clashes over some issues, such as housing type and transport plans, the federation generally worked with, rather than against, the local authorities. The group was satisfied with the way that the Docklands Forum worked as a consultative body for voluntary groups. The federation worked almost exclusively through elected councillors rather than paid officers. This was partly pragmatic, as the federation felt that even if junior officers could be persuaded to their views, senior officers would block any initiatives from outside the councils themselves. The federation also felt that it was morally correct to work through elected representatives, as direct accountability of planning and redevelopment to local people was one of its goals. The federation felt that the limitations on democracy by a virtual guarantee of election to Labour Party candidates could be overcome by its influence, through trades unions and local Labour Parties, upon the selection of candidates, and influencing their views.

Thus Newham environmental groups were divided in their relations with the local authority between those groups who, like the majority of Surrey groups, stress an apolitical relationship and contact with officers, and those with an overtly political, and even party political approach. This
distinction between 'political' and 'non-political' groups is described in Chapter 1 (page 19). Whilst the former types stressed communality of interest between experts on environmental issues, the latter stressed the accountability of elected councillors to the environmental needs of local people. Despite these differences in approach, most of the groups were reasonably satisfied that the local authority had given their views a reasonable hearing, and were basically in sympathy with their aims. Whilst it was not possible to discuss this view with representatives of Newham Borough Council, the actions of the council indicate that the view is basically correct.

Successes and Problems

As with the West Surrey environmental groups, the Newham groups were asked to describe their successes and the problems that they faced. All the groups felt that they had achieved at least partial success, but most also faced major problems.

The residents' association had been successful in getting their estate designated as the first residential conservation area in Newham, and in getting representation upon the Conservation Area Advisory Committee. The nature conservation group had interested a large number of young people in the observation and conservation of nature, including those who had previously destroyed wildlife. It was the first environmental group in Britain to deal with nature conservation and young people in the inner city, and was pioneering intermediate treatment work with young offenders through practical nature conservation. The allotments group had founded the allotments development project and had persuaded the local authority to devote far more resources to, and become more concerned about, the problems of allotment holders than would otherwise have been devoted. The group had brought the problems of allotment holders to the notice of the public and a number of national organisations through its appearance at the Beckton public inquiry and elsewhere, and had succeeded in instigating an
allotment-holders federation in Newham. Friends of the Earth felt that it had been successful in persuading the local authority to devote more resources to road maintenance, which would benefit cyclists.

The Docklands-wide federation had, along with constituent organisations, achieved a number of practical successes; one of the major ones being a contribution to the rejection of the Travers Morgan plan for London's Docklands. It had set up and staffed a permanent resource centre, and had contributed a good deal to the success of the Docklands Forum. Within the Borough of Newham, the federation had been less active, but had given evidence to the public inquiry which helped to reject the Gas Board's refusal to release land for redevelopment.

The anti-pollution group had, through its lobbying, persuaded the local authority to invest a large sum of money in pollution monitoring equipment. The polluting firms had, at the time of the group's campaign, also spent money upon new pollution control equipment. The group felt that this was partly due to the publicity they had raised, and partly due to the increased interest of the local authority in pollution from the firms. In addition to these practical achievements, the group had persuaded the local authority to take the problem of air pollution more seriously, and set up a pollution sub-committee. The pollution sub-committee also considered the problem of nuclear waste transport, and was thus seen as an indication of a favourable local authority attitude by the campaign against nuclear waste transport. Along with changing the local authority attitude, this campaign counted as a success the widespread publicity about nuclear waste that their campaign achieved.

Other Newham environmental groups also considered influencing the local authority as one of their successes. The allotments group felt that before their intervention, the authority had been able to ignore allotment holders, but that this was no longer so. The nature conservation group felt
that nature conservation was beginning to be seen as a useful part of education, and a worthwhile pursuit for young people in an inner city for the first time. The residents' association believed that a local authority once very sceptical of the value of building conservation, was now to some extent in favour of such activity. The federation had succeeded in making both local authorities and trade unions and community groups more receptive to the idea of public participation in planning, shown by the success of the Docklands Forum.

The allotments group also saw improved co-operation between voluntary groups as vitally important. The federation of allotment societies which it had helped to form held regular meetings for representatives from all the Newham allotment sites. By the time the study was completed, the federation had become accepted by the local authority as the main channel of contact with allotment holders. The group also saw the gradual restoration of good relations between the allotments project and certain allotment societies, which had originally been hostile to its aims, as a success.

Only one group, the residents' association, saw perpetuation of the association as an achievement in itself. The other groups were very much orientated towards practical achievements, with improved relationships between groups, and with the local authority, being seen as a means towards a practical end.

Despite the high level of success claimed by Newham environmental groups, and backed up by their record of practical achievements, most of the groups felt that they faced major problems. The only exception was the residents' association, whose only problem was a shortage of sparetime amongst activists, which was limiting the number of members to those which the activists could service efficiently; again a problem which the association shared with a number of West Surrey environmental groups.
For five of the groups, problems were caused by the fact that practical aspects of the environment were controlled at a national level, beyond the influence of either a single local group or a single local authority. For the Docklands-wide federation the greatest problem was the decision of the Government to introduce an Urban Development Corporation, which would be free to abandon the Docklands Strategic Plan, along with all the proposals voluntary groups had fought to have included (see Chapter 3, page 105). In opposing the UDC, the federation had, at least initially, the full support of all the local authorities involved. It was the Government which took the decision however, and with its strong majority in the Houses of Parliament, there was little likelihood of the proposal being defeated. The introduction of a UDC meant that the federation had to look for another source of funding, and also threatened the funding of the allotments project in Newham (see page 193).

Other national legislative developments had also caused problems for the allotments group; notably the inclusion in the 1979 Local Government and Planning Bill of legislation repealing clauses which meant that local authorities could not sell off allotment land without providing alternative sites, unless they received permission from the Secretary of State for the Environment. Although this Bill was withdrawn, and its provisions divided into two new Bills for reasons of Parliamentary timing, the Government made no guarantee that the clauses on allotments would not be included in any new Bill.

For both Friends of the Earth and the campaign against nuclear waste transport the problem was that the generation of nuclear power, and transport of the waste this produces, were controlled at national level by the Government and the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, both of which were committed to the expansion of nuclear power generation. Thus persuading the local authority of the hazards of nuclear waste transport was unlikely to have real practical results. The Friends of the Earth group could arrange such national lobbying
as was necessary through its national parent. The ad-hoc campaign had no such parent body, and thus had to make its own contacts with similar groups throughout Britain to achieve efficient national lobbying. Some contacts were made through the Anti-Nuclear Campaign (see Chapter 1, page 33), although this organisation was fairly inactive at the time and able to give only limited support.

The anti-pollution group felt that pollution would always recur as a problem whilst the Alkali Inspectorate, who enforce legislation on factory pollution, had a closer relationship with industry than the victims of pollution, and were not accountable to local people. Thus persuading the local authority to use their limited powers to deal with pollution was only a partial solution.

For the Newham groups whose interests and influence was linked more or less firmly with the Labour Party and trade union movement, issues at national level were particularly problematic with a government in power which they were unable to influence, and which had quite different aims and policies to the Labour movement.

In contrast to such national-level problems was the difficulty, experienced by several groups, in persuading local people of the importance of environmental issues. Lack of knowledge of, and interest in, wider environmental issues amongst allotment holders proved a difficult hurdle for the allotments group to overcome. The leaders of one particular allotment society were very hostile to the project, withdrawing initial support and the offer of a base for the project, and even encouraging the leader of a national allotments group to condemn the project's proposals to the local authority. The project organiser was also given a hostile reception by two regional allotment groups. The main reason for such hostility seemed to be fear amongst existing allotment group activists that their long-held positions of authority were being challenged, and that the independence of the societies was threatened. The project introduced new ideas of which they
knew little, and had received support from the local authority, which many of the allotment societies saw as a traditional enemy. The activists were particularly hostile to the project's plans to invite non-plot holders, young and old, to visit the allotments and carry out some practical work. This seemed to be part of a general fear of disruption of the regular pattern of allotment life, which caused many delays and frustrations to both the allotment project, and the group's work as a whole.

The Friends of the Earth group saw Newham people's lack of awareness of environmental issues as a major obstacle to any practical achievement, whilst the nature conservation group felt that they were not attracting all sections of Newham's youth population, and were particularly concerned at the lack of black youngsters taking part in the group's activities. They were also concerned that members often only remained active for a short period of time, leaving to pursue other interests. They thus felt that members had to be made interested enough in nature conservation for the interest to reappear once ex-members became adults.

The federation felt that maintaining people's interest in the environment and planning between major issues was a problem, as was retaining interest and activism after the introduction of the Urban Development Corporation had been announced. The federation felt that whilst major developments did arouse interest, minor-seeming changes in implementation, such as building luxury instead of low-cost housing on one site, could have an equally important effect upon the nature of the Docklands environment. Their task was made harder by the fact that once the UDC was announced, the Docklands Joint Committee experienced a rapid and severe loss of staff, and support for the Docklands Forum was left solely to the federation.

The difficulty of interesting local people in environmental issues is illustrated by the leading role played by a large number of environmental group activists who had moved into
Newham fairly recently. The Friends of the Earth branch consisted almost solely of such 'incomers', who also provided much of the active involvement in the anti-pollution and nature conservation groups, although these also had local residents actively involved. The main activist of the allotments group felt that she was considered to be an outsider, although she had lived within the Borough for almost 15 years. The federation had relatively few activists within the Borough of Newham. Many activists within the residents' association had lived within the Conservation Area for some time, but appeared to feel little affinity with the rest of Newham. Only the anti-nuclear waste campaign had in both of its major activists people born and brought up in the Borough.

Newham groups thus faced two types of different problems - firstly the practical problems that control of decisions over issues that concerned them was often at a national level, so that influencing the local authority could only have a limited practical effect. This is something which discussions of local group politics have tended to ignore. The other problem was the unawareness of, and in some cases hostility towards, their concerns and aims shown, they felt, by many Newham people. Given these twin difficulties, it is perhaps surprising that the Newham environmental groups, were, on the whole, able to achieve as much as they appear to have done.

Other Activity on Environmental Issues

As the introduction to this chapter noted, one aim of practical research in Newham was to try and suggest reasons for the low number of environmental groups in the Borough. No evidence was found that more environmental groups had existed in the past and become defunct, although activists in the allotments group recalled that there had been some attempts to start environmental groups. These had failed to develop, they felt, because they had been started by outsiders who "didn't understand the way Newham people think". No evidence of such groups was found in the local press.
One possible reason for the lack of environmental groups might be that their function is performed by other voluntary groups, not necessarily calling themselves, or considering themselves, environmental groups. One type of voluntary group common in Newham, which might have been expected to undertake this function, was the tenants' association. Local papers and council minutes were thus scanned for evidence of tenants' association involvement in environmental questions, and the issue was also raised in interviews with environmental groups, other voluntary agencies, and the local authority.

Some evidence was found of tenants' association participation in planning, generally in the past, and particularly associated with the local authority's comprehensive redevelopment plans. Several tenants' associations had been formed just prior to redevelopment of their area, and included owner-occupiers and private tenants. Their aim had been to ensure good and speedy rehousing of their members, and some had participated in planning the areas they would be moved to. When redevelopment was completed, the groups had remained as associations of people who were now council tenants. The local authority had encouraged tenants' associations to form in other newly-built estates, and in 1972 the Housing Department had set up six area-based tenants liaison committees, where representatives of the associations met with council officers and members. By the mid-1970's, the authority was also, under central government instructions, encouraging the formation of residents' associations in areas which were to be rehabilitated rather than redeveloped.

As the majority of Newham's redevelopment outside Docklands had been completed, and the remaining programme was delayed by Government financial constraints, little participation of this type remained by the time of the study. There was little evidence of tenants' associations participating in the development of the various local plans for Newham (see Chapter 3, page 105) and no evidence of any real participation by residents' groups in rehabilitation areas beyond receiving information from council officers.
In the Docklands area, where large-scale redevelopment was continuing, four tenants' associations showed a more active concern in planning, both through pressing for improved facilities to be provided following redevelopment, and through participation in the planning process. Two tenants' associations were members of the Docklands-wide federation described earlier, and attended the docklands forum. One tenants' association had formed a trust to create a park on disused land, and another was concerned with pollution from scrap-burning gypsies. The main objective for all four groups, however, was to ensure the best possible facilities for their members after redevelopment, and to ensure that they received full information from the local authority during the upheaval.

Elsewhere in Newham, some tenants' associations had retained an interest in environmental issues after redevelopment of their area was completed. One group had achieved a considerable amount of skill in dealing with planning issues, and remained concerned about local roads, traffic and improvements to the layout of the estate it covered. Another tenants' association had expressed some concern over air pollution from lead in petrol, and through its Chairman, had become involved in the campaign against nuclear waste transport through the Borough. Very occasionally, other tenants' associations opposed planning applications, for example two such groups wrote to the local authority to oppose the setting-up of a component cleaning firm in a residential area.

Generally, however, Newham tenants' associations gave little priority to environmental issues. Indeed, in January 1980 a tenants' association opposed the provision of open space on an estate on the grounds that this would attract noisy children, and disturb nearby residents. Since the dramatic collapse of Ronan Point tower block in 1968, safety has been a major concern for Newham tenants' associations. Evacuations of tower blocks after the discovery of structural faults has continued up to the present day. In the early 1970's, one tenants' association led a campaign against rent increases proposed by the Government's Housing Finance Act, but few
others supported it. The same group had, in 1969, attempted to start a federation of tenants' associations, but had been told by the Chairman of another association that the purpose of tenants' associations was to concentrate upon "maintenance and the social side", rather than become involved in broader issues. This appears to have been the approach that most tenants' associations have adopted.

Environmental group and other activists, as well as local authority officers, suggested several reasons for this narrowness of scope amongst tenants' associations. Firstly, maintenance and repairs have caused many problems for tenants, particularly those in system-built tower blocks. Faults have ranged from damp, noise and cracks in walls, to continuous faults in heating and electric lifts. By 1979, the local authority was spending £1 million per year on tower block repairs. Complaints about repairs form a time-consuming and frustrating battle for tenants' associations, trying to liaise between tenants and the local authority, and several associations have collapsed under the strain. Even where associations remain in existence, lack of success over repairs often means that there are few activists, and little concern for outside issues.

By contrast, the social activities undertaken by tenants' associations are often highly successful, and a much more rewarding activity for activists. Many new estates are provided with community centres, and with a shortage of other entertainment facilities locally, become centres of social life. In theory, this should provide a useful base for the development of campaigning activities, including environmentalism, but this does not seem to happen in practice. One reason for this is practical. Whilst the local authority provides community centres, it rarely appears to provide finance to equip them. Local people who have just moved home will rarely have sufficient capital to fund equipment, but a ready source of loans is provided by the various brewery companies. These loans are usually to be paid back not in cash, but via sale of the brewery's products. Thus there is an emphasis upon social
events at which drink will be bought, rather than campaigning. Indeed, community centres can become ventures with a high annual turnover of money and are, according to a local authority officer, more likely to employ a bar steward than a worker to encourage community initiatives. Such practical difficulties provide only part of the reason for the lack of campaigning activity by tenants' associations, however. Other reasons are suggested by the experience of other voluntary groups in Newham.

There is little evidence that other voluntary groups in Newham have any regular concern about environmental issues. One of the biggest environmental issues in recent times has been Docklands redevelopment, with the inquiry into the lorry park and British Gas's refusal to release land as a focus. Various documents produced by the local authority on public participation in the area, plus documents associated with the public inquiry, were thus studied for evidence of voluntary group involvement in the issue.

A major submission to the inquiry had been organised by the Newham Voluntary Agencies Council, which had also shown a continuing interest in Docklands redevelopment and held regular liaison meetings with the local authority. The NVAC had encouraged many member groups to write to the inquiry, supporting the redevelopment plan. Amongst those providing evidence were social groups, groups which promoted community development, four church groups, and several groups representing ethnic minorities. Excluding the social groups, most of these had also made submissions to the local authority about the Beckton plan. The submissions of both the NVAC and its member groups were overwhelmingly concerned with social issues, rather than the environment for its own sake. Docklands redevelopment was seen as providing better facilities for housing than the Borough could otherwise expect, more jobs, and better recreational opportunities. These, it was felt, would help to ease social pressures, and reduce tension between races and age groups. Thus redevelopment was seen as a solution to the problems which most groups dealt with; social rather than environmental problems.
Thus although there was more activity on environmental issues in Newham than a study concentrating solely on environmental groups would reveal, the scale of such activity is still much lower than that in West Surrey, despite the fact that the environment in Newham is changing much more rapidly. Such contrasts in environmentalist activity will be examined more thoroughly in Chapter 6, in the meantime, activists in environmental and other voluntary groups were asked why they thought there was so little concern about environmental issues in Newham.

Activists questioned suggested two types of reason for low levels of environmentalist activity. One related to the problems and priorities of Newham people, the other to the difficulties of organising campaigning activity. Some have already been mentioned in discussing the experiences of individual groups.

The problems of Newham people are reflected in the most common types of voluntary groups; those dealing with personal problems of welfare, handicap or other disability. The agencies committed to assisting voluntary individual and collective action, described on pages 196 and 195, were consulted most frequently on similar issues. The organisations giving advice and assistance to individuals were most frequently asked about welfare benefits, housing, and immigration rights. People's problems were often overwhelming, with homelessness, poverty and unemployment high (see Chapter 3, page 93) and frequent cases of harassment by employers and landlords. Many people seeking assistance were unable to understand the rules and laws of local and national government, and had been unable to obtain assistance from officials. Often they felt reluctant to contact the local authority, and did not know the correct procedure.

The groups which the agencies assisted were most commonly those giving practical advice or support, for example disabled people's support groups, groups providing temporary relief for the homeless, or groups working to keep young people away from
crime. The organisations felt that people saw their problems as personal, rather than due to underlying causes which could be campaigned against, and often people felt very isolated by their problems. For this reason they encouraged sufferers to form self-help groups. The experience of these organisations shows that Newham people have pressing personal problems which seem far more urgent to them than concern with the physical environment.

Newham voluntary group activists also suggested a number of factors which would make the organisation of a voluntary group difficult, even if there was greater concern for environmental issues. The Voluntary Agencies Council saw lack of basic resources as a major problem, few local people having access to a telephone, typing or duplicating facilities. NVAC saw making these facilities available as a task of major importance, a view which other of the advice and assistance agencies shared.

Another obstacle to organisation was the fact that many local people were hostile towards the local authority, and indeed any authority, and felt wary of approaching the various authorities due to this and ignorance of the correct procedures. People felt that their views had been ignored by the authority. When NVAC was encouraging member groups to write to the Inspector at the Beckton Inquiry, many groups had to be given a great deal of advice and encouragement to take this step. In meetings arranged by the allotments project, visitors from outside the Borough expressed astonishment at the level of hostility towards the local authority amongst allotment holders, and the authority concurred. One environmental group activist felt that people blamed the local authority for decisions made by regional and national government, and this was one reason for hostility. Others felt that people had lost confidence in the local authority because of mistakes and unfulfilled promises over housing and redevelopment which were only partially due to the local authority's actions. Others felt that the council had been in fact very authoritarian in the past, and that local people's feelings were justified (CHAMBERLAYNE).
Several activists felt that a combination of physically tiring jobs, plus personal frustrations over housing, for example, discouraged people from spending their free time campaigning. The allotments group felt that when people were on their plots they wanted to 'escape' from everyday life, and not to be bothered by problems, even if they threatened their future 'escape'. One activist stressed the liking for privacy of Newham people, who would concentrate their activities inside their homes, and would, for example, be reluctant to hold meetings there. Others felt that barriers of racism, and physical barriers between different areas of Newham (particularly for people relying on public transport) also militated against collective action. A further disincentive was provided by the obvious failure of the strongest local organisations, the trade unions and the Labour Party, to prevent the economic deterioration of the area through loss of jobs. Several activists in environmental groups felt that the Labour Party locally was composed mainly of "careerists". CHAMBERLAYNE describes how the party whip was withdrawn from councillors who attempted to encourage participation by local people.

The Newham environmental groups saw an additional reason why they were so few in number; a lack of awareness of the importance of the environment, and of the ways in which it can affect people. Problems of traffic danger to children, noise, and pollution were seen as isolated difficulties, rather than symptoms of a generally poor environment. Two of the groups felt that local people saw environmentalism as either the rich striving to maintain property values, or the impractical idealism of the 'brown rice and sandals' brigade. Others felt that people saw concern for a nice environment as incompatible with increasing employment and housing, with the latter as the more important for them. One group pointed that perception of the environment depended upon culture and taste; a bad environment in Surrey might be quite acceptable in Newham, and a mixture of intermingled land-uses might well be preferred to single-use zoned areas. Three of the groups felt that the experience of local people, in being presented with a series of redevelopment plans since the war, few of which had been
fully implemented, had made them cynical of the importance of plans.

From the comments of activists, one might be surprised that Newham people undertake any form of voluntary activity. Nevertheless, such activity is growing, according to the Voluntary Agencies Council, which sees its own continued existence as an indication of the healthy state of voluntary activity. It is to be expected that advice agencies will come into contact with people with the worst personal problems, they may not be representative of the Borough's population as a whole. Despite the difficulties they face, a number of environmental groups do exist and thrive in Newham, and have achieved a fair measure of success.
CHAPTER 5

REFERENCES


CHAPTER 6
CHAPTER 6

LOCAL ENVIRONMENTALISM IN BRITAIN:
CONTRASTS AND COMPARISONS

It is apparent from the descriptions in Chapters 4 and 5 that there is a great deal of difference between environmentalist activity in West Surrey and Newham. What are the differences between environmental groups in the two areas, and how do they compare with environmental groups elsewhere in Britain? Such comparisons will indicate how far the study-data answers to the questions posed in Chapter 1 apply to Britain as a whole.

Chapter 1 indicated that there have been few detailed studies of local environmental groups with which to compare the study data. Nevertheless, some information is available from case studies, surveys by co-ordinating bodies of their members, and literature on participation in planning. Studies of other types of voluntary groups can also provide information on specific questions, such as organisation and relations with local government. In addition, a limited amount of comparative fieldwork was undertaken in another London Borough, Lambeth. However, this still gives only a partial picture of local environmentalism in Britain, and it is impossible to state categorically how representative Newham and West Surrey are of the country as a whole.

Scale of Environmental Activity

One of the most striking differences between West Surrey and Newham is in the number of active environmental groups. West Surrey has three times the population of Newham, about 700,000 and 200,000 respectively, but 19 times as many environmental groups, over 100 compared to seven. Table 2a in Chapter 4 lists the numbers of groups per 10,000 population in the districts of West Surrey, which averages 1.97. The equivalent figure for Newham is only 0.3. The difference in the size of the environmental movement in the two areas is
heightened by the fact that Newham groups are on the whole smaller, compared to West Surrey with 60% (78) of groups over 100 members strong, and 8.5% (11) having more than 1,000 members. It was calculated in Chapter 4 that 52,000 people, 8% of the population of West Surrey were members of environmental groups. For Newham the comparable figures are approximately 500 people or 0.22% of the population. In both areas the number of people actively involved with environmental groups is much smaller; 1,500 people (0.22%) in West Surrey and approximately 50 (0.02%) in Newham. The proportion of activists to members appears slightly higher in Newham, though the figures are not very reliable; this fits with the finding in West Surrey (see Chapter 4, page 122) that smaller groups have a higher proportion of activists than larger groups. Nevertheless, the size of the active environmental movement in Newham is very much smaller than that in West Surrey.

Few figures are available on the numbers of local environmental groups in the rest of Britain. As the research in Newham and West Surrey showed, obtaining accurate data is difficult and time consuming, and few studies have even attempted it. The figures which are available have commonly defined 'environmental groups' very differently from the current study. The most comprehensive figures are those kept by the Civic Trust of groups on its register. These cover the whole country but, as Chapters 4 and 5 show, only a small proportion of environmental groups are registered with the Trust. Nevertheless, if the proportion of groups registering with the Trust is fairly even throughout the country, their numbers can give some indication of the total numbers of groups, and trends in their distribution. Table 1 lists the current distribution of Civic Trust-registered groups in Britain. No recent figures are available on the size of Civic Trust-registered groups, but BARKER's 1974 study of 635 such groups found that 29% (184) had under 100 members, and 6% (38) over 900. He estimated the total size of the local environmental movement to be "several hundreds of thousands at least".

More detailed studies of particular areas of Britain have also given some estimates of the numbers of environmental
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel Islands</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>0.11</th>
<th>0.13</th>
<th>London</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>45</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>Linsns</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>Leics.</td>
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<td>W. Yorks.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>Lancs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.05</td>
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<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
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<td>0.06</td>
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<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.04</td>
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<td>0.08</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Sussex</td>
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<td>Du'mham</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>Derby</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Somerset       | 12 | 0.04 | 0.01 | Cumber.
| Dorset         | 18 | 0.04 | 0.01 | Cro'nwall |
| Oxon.          | 14 | 0.02 | 0.01 | Che'land |
| W'th'm's.      | 17 | 0.03 | 0.01 | Cheshire |
| Northants.     | 17 | 0.02 | 0.01 | Bucks. |
| Norfolk        | 17 | 0.02 | 0.01 | Berks. |
| Merseys.       | 13 | 0.02 | 0.01 | Beds. |
| G. Mchster.    | 18 | 0.02 | 0.01 | Avon |

*(source: Civic Trust Register, July 1881)*

**Location of Civic Trust Registered Groups**

**Table 1**
groups. FUJISHIN studied voluntary groups in Birmingham involved in planning issues in 1973, and contacted 52 groups, most of which would have complied with the definition used in this study. He found that, as with Newham and West Surrey (see Chapter 4, page 117, Chapter 5, page 184-) membership was hard to define. He estimated, however, that 23% (12) of the groups he contacted had under 300 members, and 53% (28) over 300. These figures indicate a proportion of around 0.5 groups per 10,000 population.

HATCH, in a study of voluntary group activity in three (unnamed) English towns, traced only 18 'environmental' groups, including "civic societies" and "branches of Friends of the Earth". However it seems likely from his description that some of the category "generalist neighbourhood groups" would have fulfilled the requirements of the current study. The maximum number of environmental groups would thus be 25 for an industrial town, 19 for a commuter-belt village, and 8 for a rural town. These would be respectively 0.95, 2, and 0.6 per 10,000 population. HATCH estimated that most groups had around 100 members, with less than 20 of these being actively involved.

BULLER, in his study of East Sussex, traced around 70 local environmental groups, defined somewhat more narrowly than the current study. This would give a figure of about 1 per 10,000 population. A brief survey of the Borough of Lambeth indicated at least 11 local environmental groups; probably an underestimate. This is equivalent to 0.4 groups per 10,000 population.

On the evidence available, it appears that the large difference in the scale of the environmental movement between West Surrey and Newham is repeated throughout the country. Table 2 summarises the figures from various studies, and together with the Civic Trust data indicates that there are more groups in the south of England outside large cities, especially in areas like Surrey on the fringes of cities. Wholly rural areas appear to have fewer groups except for popular tourist areas such as Cumbria, where LOWE (thesis)
## TABLE 2

**TOTAL NUMBERS OF ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS IN STUDY AND OTHER AREAS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>No. Environmental Groups</th>
<th>No. groups per 10,000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present study</td>
<td>West Surrey</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lambeth</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FUJISHIN</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1974)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HATCH</td>
<td>'Forgeham'</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1975/6)</td>
<td>'Anglebridge'</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Kirkforth'</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BULLER</td>
<td>E. Sussex</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1980)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
indicates that many group members live outside the areas in question. The smallest numbers of groups are in areas with declining heavy industry, such as Tyne and Wear. To this extent Newham and West Surrey appear to reflect the national pattern, although it must be remembered that within counties and even cities there may be striking differences in the numbers of environmental groups. This, according to the Civic Trust register, is certainly true for London, and SAUNDERS found that even within the Borough of Croydon, most environmental groups were confined to the southern half of the Borough. In Lambeth also, most environmental groups were in the south of the Borough. Table 2a in Chapter 4 illustrates the differences in group numbers between different districts of West Surrey. Although it is not possible to answer completely the question posed in Chapter 1 about the numbers of local environmental groups, they certainly appear numerous, although their distribution is very uneven.

What causes these marked differences in the number of environmental groups in different areas of Britain? Several authors, writing on environmental and other voluntary groups, have suggested a number of possible explanations. As Chapter 1 describes, various writers, for example HERBST, ALLISON, have stressed the importance of affection and concern for the countryside in the development of British environmentalism. This has traditionally been associated with dislike of and opposition to urbanisation (see WILLIAMS), and thus the historic tradition of environmentalism in Britain is for concern about the countryside and opposition to cities. However, since the 1950's an increasing amount of concern has been devoted to cities, particularly following the formation of the Civic Trust, and the 'environmental revolutionaries' of the late 1960's had as much to say about cities as the countryside. Since the majority of environmental groups seem to have been formed fairly recently, it seems unlikely that this traditional countryside orientation could account for much of the discrepancy in environmental group numbers in Britain today.

Another possible explanation for differences in environmental group numbers lies in the realm of environmental issues.
As Chapter 4, page 125 indicates, the importance of particular events and crises in triggering the formation of environmental groups has been described in the literature (see for example, C. HALL, HERBST, BARKER). If this is true, a lower number of environmental groups might relate to a lower number of environmental crises within a particular area. LOWE points out that many Civic Trust registered groups were formed to press for local implementation of building conservation legislation. Perhaps in areas with fewer environmental groups, local authorities implemented such legislation without the need for outside pressure. This explanation does not seem a feasible way to explain the shortage of environmental groups in inner city areas, however, as many of these have seen massive upheaval, changes in population, dereliction and redevelopment in recent years, and have certainly not all been eager to implement conservation legislation (see, for example, the case in Newham described in Chapter 3).

The explanations posited most widely in the literature for the variation in levels of environmentalist and other voluntary activity relate to differences in the type of people who live in different areas. These explanations assert that people in areas with few environmental groups are less motivated to express concern over environmental issues, and/or are less able to translate such concern into voluntary group activity. The implication is that those who desire a pleasant environment will, wherever possible move from inner-city areas to more rural areas, or to more desirable city areas, leaving behind them those who are not concerned about their environment or who are poorly placed to do anything about it. This might be described as a 'market theory' of the environment, and the trend of population movement from inner cities to the suburbs is well documented by the 1971 Census, and confirmed by the preliminary results of the one carried out in 1981.

Many explanations of this type relate to the social class of residents in the different areas. Inner-city dwellers are assumed to be mostly working class, whilst those in the suburbs consist of a higher proportion of middle-class and professional
people. According to MASLOW's "hierarchy of needs", concern for the environment is a "higher order" need, only expressed once more basic needs, such as employment, decent housing and food have been met. Working-class people are assumed to be less likely to have achieved these basic needs, particularly in inner-city areas, and are therefore unlikely to express a more general concern for their environment. Certainly community workers and others in Newham felt that this was one reason for the low numbers of environmental groups there (see Chapter 5, pages 221-224). By contrast, a number of authors have described the high level of environmental concern amongst people who move out of cities to more rural areas. PAHL, in his study of suburban 'commuter villages' pointed that many people moving to these areas had an idealised view of village life, which they strove to achieve and maintain. NEWBY identified similar views amongst incomers to villages in East Anglia. This 'village in the mind' often implied preservation of all the traditional physical features of the village against development. HIRSCH described such features as a pleasant environment as 'positional goods', which were valued because they were impossible for everyone to attain. Thus the good environment of the suburbs is only maintained because not everyone is able to live there, and the prevention of further development is an important means of maintaining the desirable status of the area.

Explanations of the obstacles in the way of working-class people wishing to form voluntary groups and influence local authority activity are found in a variety of literature upon voluntary group activity. They stress not the unwillingness of such people to undertake voluntary activity, but the resource and organisational constraints that prevent such activity taking place. That is, circumstances limit people's power to take action. Again, this explanation was given by community activists in Newham as a reason for low levels of environmentalist activity (see Chapter 5, page 224). GROVE and PROCTER describe how, in procedures for obtaining public participation in planning "the poor and inarticulate members of society tend to be under-represented". STRINGER and TAYLOR found that only
one third of people they interviewed at Crystal Palace Triangle had understood plans for the area, despite extensive publicity. Of those they interviewed, people of lower social class and educational standard were less likely to feel that they could exert any influence over their local environment. A number of studies have pointed out how poorer and less well-educated people are excluded from public consultation procedures. DRAKE found that even the new Structure Plan procedures (see Chapter 2) which were designed to allow general discussion of policies, were conducted at a highly technical level, incomprehensible to all but the most highly educated person. HAIN found that working class people in Covent Garden were less used to bureaucratic procedures, and that this worked against them in contact with the local authority. TAYLOR feels that a certain minimum of skills and resources are needed for a voluntary group to be successful, and that:

"Like most assets, these skills and resources are scarce in these (inner-city) areas, and so are opportunities to acquire them."

DEARLOVE and SAUNDERS, in studies of London Boroughs, show that traditional working-class organisations do not provide a channel for concerns about the environment, and that local authority attitudes may militate against other forms of activity on the environment. Thus, SAUNDERS feels, working-class people felt grievances but this did not give rise to action due to the lack of channels of influence, leading to self-perpetuating fatalism. If these social class-based theories are correct, the implications for the environment are profound, leading to situations like that described by CLIFFORD in Barnsbury, where working class people lose out to the actions of middle-class environmentalists.

There are thus a variety of different, but not necessarily conflicting, theoretical explanations for the geographical variations in environmental, and other, group activity. By examining data available on the nature and activity of local environmental groups, the validity of such theories can be assessed, and the qualitative as well as quantitative differences between local environmental groups in different areas examined.
Group Formation

An important question posed in Chapter 1 was "What causes environmental groups to form?" That is, what issues and which circumstances cause people to gather into environmental groups. The dates when and the reasons why environmental groups have formed may thus provide an indication of the reasons for their different numbers in different areas. Table 3 shows the formation dates of groups in West Surrey and Newham, and those covered by BARKER's survey. In addition, only two groups in Lambeth had not formed after 1970, these two having formed in the previous decade. HATCH found that the majority of groups he contacted had also formed since 1960. It is apparent from these figures that the majority of local environmental groups have originated quite recently, particularly in the last ten years. However, West Surrey has a considerably higher proportion of older groups than either Newham or the Civic Trust sample. Some of the older groups had been countryside-based, and involved with the early activities of the National Trust, but others have been town-based, in contrast to the notion that the countryside provided the focus for all early environmental group activity. Some of the older West Surrey groups were able to trace their formation to specific local events, such as the opening of the area through road and railway development, but few possessed records to confirm this. It does appear, however, that a number of these older groups developed in response to the growth of the suburbs and commuting, which was a phenomenon of the 1930's in the south east of England.

As Chapter 4, page 138 describes, only 33% (43) of West Surrey groups were able to name a specific issue which had led to their formation. The figure for Newham, at 57% (4) is higher. Overall, 50% (66) of West Surrey groups were found to have been formed to oppose change to the local environment. Only 28% (2) Newham groups had been formed to oppose change, whilst another wished to propose change taking a different form than that planned. A similar proportion of groups in the two areas, 10% (13) for West Surrey and 14% (1) for Newham, were formed as branches of existing national organisations. The
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When local environment groups were formed.

Table 3
remaining West Surrey groups had been formed either for self-help purposes, such as private road upkeep 24% (31) or to represent the interests of their members to outside bodies 15% (20). No groups had been formed for these reasons in Newham. The majority of Lambeth groups had been formed to oppose change, whilst others developed, as in Newham, to alter the course of proposed change to the environment. Others were branches of national organisations. BARKER found that 60% (381) of Civic Trust groups could trace their formation to a specific issue, 51% (194) of these due to the threat of change to the environment, either through planning applications and plan-making or the demolition of a historic building. Formation of groups over the wish to change the course of large development plans, such as occurred in Newham and Lambeth, has also been described in Covent Garden by HAIN.

Whilst it is difficult to draw conclusions from such sparse data, it seems that many more groups in West Surrey than elsewhere have not been formed in response to a specific threat, although comparison with the Civic Trust data is difficult due to differences in sample definition. This may relate to the 'village in the mind' concept outlined by PAHL (that is, a general ideology in favour of preservation); it does seem to indicate that the presence of environmental crises is not the only determinant of the number of environmental groups in an area. It is also apparent that far fewer inner-city groups are formed to press for preservation, and opposition to environmental change, which is perhaps to be expected. By contrast, this was a major reason for groups in West Surrey and Civic Trust groups to form. Two of the Newham groups formed over the threat or existence of environmental pollution. This was not a cause of group formation elsewhere, and is a reflection of differing conditions in the different areas. A group forming for a similar reason in a Welsh inner-city area is described in I. HALL.

It seems apparent that the different issues arising in different areas will affect the reasons why groups form, but there is little evidence to show how they might affect the
numbers of groups forming. Whilst preservation of a pleasant environment may be a scarcer motive for inner-city groups to form, other issues such as pollution are more likely to arise there than in the suburbs. What does appear to be different about West Surrey is the number of environmental groups which have arisen spontaneously, without the trigger of either a specific issue, or the intervention of an existing organisation. Certainly ALLISON indicates that concern for the environment does not appear to be proportional to the level of objectively-perceived environmental problems in an area. Forming an environmental group need not be a response to actual environmental degredation, although the number of groups formed to preserve the environment indicates that it is a qualitative change (perceived or actual) rather than a constant problem, which motivates group formation.

Research in West Surrey showed, however, that a group's past concerns may be very different from the issues which now concern it. To obtain an accurate picture of the issues or other factors which influence a group's current existence, as well as its formation, it is necessary to examine both the aims and activities of environmental groups in different areas.

**Aims and Activities**

Data from both West Surrey and Newham showed that a group's stated aims were not necessarily an accurate guide to its actions, and this is echoed in the literature. Some groups never properly formulate their aims, others do so only after they have been in existence for several years, for publicity or to conform to the conventions of bodies they are trying to influence (see for example PERMAN, BUTCHER, HAIN, I. HALL). Nevertheless, a group's formal aims indicate its initial intentions and priorities, and in addition are often the most accessible form of information on local environmental groups, though from the evidence, they are an unreliable basis upon which to classify local environmental groups.

Aims often delimit the scope of activity of a local environmental group. In both West Surrey (see Chapter 4, page
131) and Newham there were 'specialist' groups, which aimed to deal only with certain aspects of the environment. These formed 19% (25) of West Surrey groups, and 57% (4) of Newham groups. In Lambeth, the proportion of specialist groups was about 20% (2), and in Fujishin's Birmingham sample they accounted for about 12% (6) of the total. Barker's sample excluded specialist groups by definition, and there is little other information on the relative proportion of specialist and non-specialist groups. On the data available, however, the proportion of specialist groups in Newham is particularly high, which may perhaps reflect the importance of specific issues in group formation, but seems more likely to be due to the low numbers of general environmental groups.

In addition to their broad or narrow scope, there are various differences in the nature of environmental group aims. Table 4 compares the aims of West Surrey and Newham groups. Similar proportions of groups in both areas listed preservation or conservation, education, and self-help activity amongst their aims. In contrast to their reasons for formation, proportionately more Newham groups, 57% (4), than West Surrey groups listed representation of their members or area as an aim. The aims of groups in the two areas differed markedly in their wish to make contact with other environmental groups, with 86% of Newham groups (6), but only 10% of West Surrey groups (13) expressing this aim. This appeared to be due both to Newham groups feeling more isolated, due to their smaller numbers, and the fact that they recognised many of their problems as being nationally- rather than locally-generated (see Chapter 5, page 216). Groups in West Surrey had more opportunities for contact with other environmental groups, but they also tended to be insular (see Chapter 4, page 159). The other difference between group aims in the two areas was in the higher proportion of groups in Newham with aims reflecting what has been described in Chapter 1 as the 'new-wave' of environmental concern. Whilst West Surrey groups were overwhelmingly concerned with the appearance and 'character' of their localities (see Chapter 4, page 138), 43% (3) of Newham groups were concerned with other effects of environmental
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>( n = 635 )</th>
<th>( n = 131 )</th>
<th>( n = 10 )</th>
<th>( n = 7 )</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
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<td>14%</td>
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<td>(72)</td>
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<td>New</td>
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<td>Wave</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Aim</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NB** As groups may have multiple aims, the figures do not necessarily add up to 100%.

**TABLE 4**
problems, such as on health, or the depletion of natural resources. In ALLISON's words, for these groups environmentalism "is about survival" rather than "one of a choice amongst alternatives". In Newham 43% (3) of groups had aims of this 'environmentalist' nature, rather than what might be termed the 'amenity' concerns of West Surrey groups, where 'environmentalists' formed only 3% (4) of local environmental groups. The comparable figure for Lambeth was 20% (2). No doubt this relates to the nature of the areas and the different types of issue arising (see Chapter 7), although the global perspective of the 'new-wave' groups would not preclude their existence throughout the country. None of the classifications listed in Chapter 1 proved very relevant to the environmental groups studied, but there certainly are different types of groups within the 'environmental movement'.

Table 4 also gives data on local environmental group aims for Lambeth groups and BARKER's survey of Civic Trust groups. The majority of the latter stressed not representation of a particular area, but allegiance to 'good planning principles'. This, and the stress on civic pride, which BARKER felt was more marked amongst older groups, is probably a reflection of the style of the Civic Trust and its requirements for membership. Few groups, particularly the newer ones, mentioned preservation amongst their aims, but without access to the original statements it is difficult to know whether this is a real difference, or merely one of definition. No study area groups had aims of this 'civic pride' type, not even those registered with the Civic Trust. This strengthens the view that such aims are designed to impress, rather than representing working goals.

Whilst the stated aims of groups in different areas certainly show some marked differences, it is important to recall the relatively low importance which many groups put upon stated aims, and the necessity of looking at not only what groups say they wish to do, but also at their actual activities. Table 5 shows the issues which groups in West Surrey, Newham and Lambeth indicated were their major concerns, along with
NB groups are generally interested in more than one issue, so percentages do not necessarily add up to 100%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Registered Civic Trust</th>
<th>West Surrey</th>
<th>Newham</th>
<th>Lambeth</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues which concern local environmental groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 5**
Chapter 1 stressed the importance of issues in the study of the environmental movement. In discussing how far the ideology of environmentalism has reached the local level, it is vital to know just what issues concern local groups. In Chapter 4 (page 149), it was noted that issues of widespread interest, such as those described in the case studies of Kimber and Richardson, Gregory and others, are in the minority. Only 25% (33) of West Surrey groups had been involved in issues outside the range of their local area, and 56% (73) were concerned only with issues of very localised interest. This was despite the existence of a number of more dramatic issues during the study period. In Newham, by contrast, 57% (4) of the local environmental groups had been concerned with issues of major impact outside the immediate area covered by the groups. In all these cases, national legislation was having an impact upon the area, and thus the groups had broadened their campaigns to take this into account (see Chapter 5, page 199). Whilst there is little doubt that national legislation was affecting the environment in West Surrey, too, as Chapter 4 indicates, few groups campaigned on this basis. In Lambeth the majority of environmental group activity focussed upon very local issues, apart from a group concerned with the planning and development problems of the south bank of the River Thames. Other data on the scope of local environmental group activity is scarce, with little data available from Barker's study, or that of Fujishin. Case studies have almost invariably concentrated upon the rare major issues, rather than the everyday activity of environmental groups, and are thus unrepresentative of local environmental group actions as a whole.

Table 5 shows that a similar proportion of groups in the three study areas, and in Barker's survey rate opposing plans for development as a major activity (the Barker figure of 50% also includes participation in plan-making). Fujishin's study related only to environmental group activity in respect to planning, and this is also the type of activity stressed by
LOWE (i), and in the various case studies. The figures indicate that opposing change to the environment is a major preoccupation. Given the importance of opposing development plans which is apparent from these figures, it might be postulated that variations in environmental group activity relate to the numbers of applications for development planning permission which arise in different areas. Whilst one planning application can cover anything from an extension to a house to redevelopment of a shopping centre or indeed a large area of land, figures for levels of planning applications in different areas were obtained. Table 6 shows the numbers of environmental groups, planning applications made, and appeals against decisions on applications per 10,000 population for the study areas, and the areas with the highest and lowest numbers of Civic Trust registered groups. For the reasons described above, this table has limited statistical reliability, nevertheless, areas with fewer environmental groups do appear to have fewer planning applications. It is possible to speculate why this might be so. On the one hand, areas with few applications might have larger schemes covered by each application, perhaps indicating that, as is happening in Newham, comprehensive redevelopment is still taking place. (It is interesting to note that in 1978/79, there were no appeals against decisions in Newham. This may well be due to the fact that many applications there were in fact made by the local authority to itself for permission to undertake development). On the other hand, areas with many applications and appeals may, like West Surrey, be areas where many people wish to live, and developers are keen to build housing, but where existing residents and the local authority wish to restrict development. Whilst it is impossible to conclude from this table that areas with few environmental groups have less environmental issues arising, the existence of many environmental groups within an area certainly does not seem to restrict the pressure for development.

Similar numbers of groups in all the study areas were involved in roads and traffic issues, with a similar number of Civic Trust groups listing this issue. In the three study
TABLE 6
NUMBERS OF ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS, PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS AGAINST REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION IN DIFFERENT AREAS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>No. groups per 10,000 population</th>
<th>Applications per 10,000 population</th>
<th>Appeals per 10,000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Districts:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newham</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lambeth</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elmbridge</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildford</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runnymede</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spelthorne</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey Heath</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waverley</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woking</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Counties:</strong></td>
<td>(Civic Trust groups only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloucester</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Yorkshire</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyne &amp; Wear</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Yorkshire</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Midlands</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gtr. Manchester</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notts.</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


(The number of groups correlates + 0.35 with the number of planning applications, and + 0.41 with the number of appeals. The number of groups correlates + 0.52 with the proportion of appeals received).
areas the number of groups involved in wildlife conservation was low, such issues generally being limited to groups which specialised in nature conservation - none of the Civic Trust groups listed wildlife conservation amongst their interests. West Surrey has the highest proportion of groups concerned about access to open space, and also has the highest proportion of open space. Newham had no groups expressing this concern, and Lambeth had only one, which included in its area a large area of common land. In these areas, most open space is in public ownership, and much is protected by legislation from encroachment by development.

A similar proportion of groups in the three areas undertook social and educational activities, although the 'social' aspect was more common in West Surrey than Newham, with Lambeth in between. BARKER's survey did not list the educational activities of Civic Trust groups, although this is a strong interest of the national organisation. The level of social activity carried out by Civic Trust groups was very low, at only 1% of groups.

On other issues, there was a greater difference in interest between local environmental groups in the different areas. Pollution was listed as an issue by 43% of groups in Newham, with two groups devoting their energies wholly to this issue. In West Surrey far fewer groups showed concern about pollution; 9%, or 27% if opposition to airports and aircraft on noise grounds is included. In West Surrey concern about pollution was on the grounds of nuisance, from noise or litter and refuse, but in Newham concern was about the long-term effects of pollution upon health and the natural environment. This illustrates well the dichotomy between the 'amenity' and 'environmentalist' viewpoints described by ALLISON and discussed above. In Lambeth the proportion of environmental groups concerned about pollution was low, but such concern was of the 'environmentalist' type. Pollution was not listed as an issue concerning Civic Trust groups in BARKER's survey, and was only an issue in two case-studies (I. HALL and ATTENBOROUGH).
The proportion of groups citing the conservation of historic buildings as an issue also varied between different areas. The lowest level of interest, perhaps surprisingly in view of their commitment to preservation, was exhibited by local environmental groups in West Surrey. The level of concern was proportionally highest in Lambeth, with groups in Newham and Civic Trust groups in between, although the small numbers in Newham and Lambeth make comparison difficult. There are several possible reasons for this. In West Surrey, as Chapter 3 describes, there are a large number of conservation areas, and in addition, many historic buildings are owned by the National Trust. Preservation of historic buildings has a long history in the county, and in a sense, most of the 'battles' over the issue have already been won. Only occasionally do threats of demolition to historic buildings arise. In inner-city areas, by contrast, the concept of building conservation seems only recently to have been accepted. In Lambeth, local authority policy has changed in the recent past to provide a comprehensive conservation policy, and Newham, as Chapter 3 describes, has only two conservation areas, both recently designated. In addition, inner-city areas suffer problems of decay and disuse of historic buildings to a larger extent than in areas like West Surrey. Many Civic Trust registered groups were formed to press for declaration of conservation areas, and the high proportion of groups listing conservation as a major issue may reflect the date of the survey, 1974, when less had been achieved in this direction.

Another issue with varying levels of interest for groups in different areas was participation in plan-making. This was an aspect of group activity on which the literature put some emphasis. A major determinant of the number of groups citing this as an issue will, of course, be whether a plan-making process is currently taking place in the area in question. All the three areas studied were at a slightly different stage of plan-making. For Newham and Lambeth, their structure plan, the Greater London Development Plan, had been completed some years before the start of this study. In Newham, the Docklands Strategic Plan had also been completed
but was threatened with alterations due to changes in national Government policy. Local plans under both major plans were in the process of completion in some areas of Newham, whilst in others they had just begun. In Lambeth also, local plan-making was proceeding, whilst the local plans for several riverside areas which had been completed, were being challenged by large-scale planning applications. In West Surrey, as Chapter 4 describes, the Structure Plan consultation procedures had just been completed at the time the study commenced, and the local plan stage had not been reached. In Chapter 4 it was remarked that relatively few West Surrey environmental groups had made submissions about the structure plan, many groups feeling that its scale was too large, and remote from their activities, for them to make a useful contribution. Many who had not made a submission on the structure plan, expected to do so on local plans. Had the study been conducted later, at the local plan stage, the number of West Surrey groups listing participation in plan-making might well have been higher, and perhaps the figure of 29% (2) for Newham groups is low, considering the extensive plan-making processes taking place in the area. This seems to support the criticism described in Chapter 2, that the system of structure planning is too divorced from people’s experience for useful participation.

It seems clear, from the data available, that the nature of the local environment plays a major role in influencing what issues local environmental groups are involved with, and this is to be expected. Indeed, the amount of congruence between the interests of groups in the different study areas is perhaps more to be remarked upon. Issues such as opposition to building development, road and traffic problems, and even wildlife conservation appear to attract similar proportions of groups in areas with very different environments. The conclusion to be drawn from this evidence seems to be that in any environment, there are a variety of environmental issues around which local environmental groups might form and conduct campaigns. There are issues throughout Britain around which groups can and do organise. The reasons why some issues are
taken up and others not, and more groups form in some areas than others, is more complex than a simple ratio of the problems of a local environment to local environmental concern levels.

From the data on reasons for group formation, it was surmised that in inner-city areas there might be less spontaneous formation of environmental groups, on a self-help or representative basis, than in areas like West Surrey. When the aims of the groups in different areas were examined, the proportions of groups concerned with self-help and representation were less strikingly different. As Table 5 shows, the differences persist at the issues stage, but there is a less dramatic difference between West Surrey and Newham (little information was available for Lambeth). Perhaps the differences in numbers of local environmental groups between West Surrey and Newham may be partly that in the former groups formed for non-environmentalist reasons, for example self-help and representation, expand to take on board these issues, whilst similar organisations in Newham, for example tenants' associations, do not.

It seems from the evidence of group formation and issues of concern, that differences in the physical environment of areas cannot wholly explain the differences in numbers of groups, although they do give reasons for the differences in type of concerns. It is necessary, therefore, to examine the second set of theories for differences in levels of local environmental activity; those relating to the abilities of people to take action on issues of environmental concern. Whether or not local environmental groups are formed may thus depend on people's ability to perceive environmental problems, and their estimation of whether their actions are likely to succeed. This in turn may depend on such factors as education, and past experiences. By examining the resources of environmental groups, the ways in which they take action, and the problems they face, it may be possible to assess whether such factors play a part in determining whether local environmental groups are formed, and the mechanisms by which such influence could occur.
Environmental Group Resources

Chapter 1 described the formidable range of resources which the literature claimed was necessary for local environmental groups to succeed in their objectives, including expert knowledge, organising ability, finance, and access to decision-makers. Groups within the study areas possessed such resources in varying degrees. The resources available to environmental groups were expected to be important in determining their success or failure.

Amongst the West Surrey groups, all but 7% (9) of groups felt that they had amongst their activists people with expertise relevant to their activities. Many had lawyers, planners or architects, or people with financial skills amongst their members, and several had all these skills available, plus a wide range of other expert abilities. In Newham no groups had lawyers, architects or planners, a reflection of the low numbers of professionally-qualified people amongst the population of the Borough as a whole (see Chapter 3). Nevertheless, people with skills were to be found amongst Newham local environmental groups, sometimes of a highly relevant nature. The nature conservation group had as a secretary a professional biologist, the anti-pollution group had an environmental health officer. The Docklands-wide federation employed three experienced full-time community workers, and the campaign against nuclear waste transport was led by seasoned political activists. The residents' association, whilst lacking architects, contained people with experience of consulting plans, and of organisation. The Newham environmental groups contained a level of skills out of proportion with that of the general population of the area, but nevertheless less extensive than that of West Surrey groups. How vital is the possession of such skills in practice, though? It was noted that in West Surrey (see Chapter 4, page 155) local environmental groups tended to rely as much upon the 'common-sense' opinions of committee members as the views of experts when making decisions upon planning applications. In Newham, the allotments group began with little knowledge of how the planning system worked, but was able to obtain information and
become familiar with the legislation, with assistance from outside organisations. The campaign against nuclear waste transport underwent a similar process of education.

Other studies of local environmental groups have emphasised the importance of expertise. BARKER found that around 30% (190) of Civic Trust registered groups contained professionals with a background in planning, architecture or law. LOWE (ii) quotes a study in Yorkshire which found that 62% of amenity societies (74% within urban areas) could call on more than six of the following skills: teacher, architect, historian, lawyer, financier, planner, surveyor, estate agent, journalist, archaeologist, youth leader, forester. A 1968 survey of Kent Civic Trust groups (quoted by BARKER) revealed that most groups had at least one architect, nearly half a lawyer, 15% a surveyor and 12% a planner amongst their membership. Compared to these, all the study area groups were lacking in resources of expertise.

In Lambeth, with a population make-up between those of Newham and West Surrey in terms of professional skills, there was considerable expertise available to environmental groups. One group in particular felt that it was impossible for a group to achieve its objectives without considerable expertise, and had amongst its members planners, financiers, lawyers and historians. Other groups in Lambeth had geographers, housing professionals, and people with local government experience. There was a dichotomy between groups in the south of the borough, who had many professionals and those in the poorer northern half of the borough, who had relatively few. These latter groups, however, had partly overcome this disadvantage with the assistance of outside organisations; in particular local government-funded community workers.

As Chapter 1 describes, the literature deals quite extensively with the question of environmental groups' expertise. Case studies such as those of KIMBER and RICHARDSON, GREGORY, and SMITH emphasise the importance of expertise to environmental groups involved in major issues, particularly
in obtaining information about proposals at an early stage, and in challenging the views of experts retained by proposers of developments (often Government Departments). I. HALL describes how lack of expertise hampered a group campaigning against pollution from a factory. They mistrusted the views of professionals that the pollution was minor, but were unable to marshall evidence to disprove their assertions. A local group described by DENNIS experienced a similar problem over local authority officials' assessments of the condition of local properties, and the rate at which redevelopment could occur. As with the Covent Garden group described by HAIN, these two groups also felt that they suffered through lack of knowledge and experience of local authority procedures, which intimidated the groups.

Outside assistance to voluntary groups, such as that which some Newham environmental groups received, is also described in the literature. BUTCHER contrasts two residents' groups involved in redevelopment and representation of their members. One group had access to a considerable amount of expertise within its membership, whilst the other, lacking such skills, was able partly to overcome this disadvantage through community work assistance. Evidence of community work assistance to local environmental groups, though, is scarce, and appears to be limited to inner-city areas undergoing extensive redevelopment. (Indeed, TAYLOR relates the growth of community work partly to experience of the problems of slum clearance and redevelopment). In Lambeth, community workers had become deeply involved in planning and environmental issues in the north of the Borough, and gave a good deal of assistance to local environmental groups. In Newham, however, as Chapter 5 notes, few local environmental groups made any use of the outside assistance available within the Borough. Instead, community work concentrated on employment, housing and personal problems, generally in isolation from the planning process. Although outside agencies like community workers can provide assistance to local environmental groups, groups must be willing to seek such assistance. Outside agencies are unlikely to be able to prompt the formation of local environmental groups.
unless some prior interests exist, although they can, as the previous examples show, catalyse the formation of a group around existing grievances.

Another resource frequently mentioned in the case study literature as being necessary for local environmental group success is finance. There was, surprisingly, less area-related variation in this resource than in expertise. Indeed the availability of, and need for, finance depended more upon the special circumstances facing local environmental groups. As Chapter 4, page 155 indicates, most West Surrey environmental groups had very limited financial turnovers, and low expenditure. Subscriptions were kept low to attract the maximum number of members, and free use of equipment lowered costs. Only two of the largest groups received any outside financial assistance. Only 9% (12) of groups cited lack of finance as a major problem. Groups were faced with higher costs occasionally, particularly over major public inquiries. On these rare occasions, finance was more of a problem (to pay, for example, for legal representation), but usually sufficient funding could be raised from members by appeal or by holding fund-raising events.

In Newham, two groups received sufficient funding from Government sources, under special inner-city programmes, to employ full-time staff. Assistance was also available through cheap supplies and equipment from the Voluntary Agencies Council, but only one group took advantage of this. Most groups were like those of West Surrey, having low incomes and outgoings. No groups cited finance as a major problem. Similarly in Lambeth most groups were run on a low-budget basis, but groups in the north of the Borough received assistance from local authority-funded resource centres.

By contrast, FUJISHIN found that 25% (13) of his survey groups in Birmingham received local authority support in the form of cash, rent assistance, staff salaries, and provision of meeting places. He felt that such assistance restricted group activities in opposing the local authority, a point echoed in COUSINS' study of south London voluntary groups,
and mentioned by some West Surrey groups as a reason for not seeking local authority assistance.

Whilst finance could affect the activities of local environmental groups, for example by allowing them to hire expertise they do not otherwise have access to, it seems only to be a significant factor on major issues, where legal assistance and a high level of publicity are necessary. The latter, as the Newham campaign against nuclear waste transport showed (Chapter 5, page 204) can be achieved by imagination as well as finance. There is little evidence from the study areas of lack of either expertise or finance being the major problem for environmental groups that the case-study literature indicated it might be.

The existence of a large membership is an important resource for organisations, such as local environmental groups, which have no sanctions to impose upon authorities they are trying to influence other than public opinion. Chapter 1 described how important it was for environmental groups to prove themselves to be representative. How groups demonstrated this was important to their success. If a group is able to demonstrate that a large number of people support its views, it may well be able to overcome lack of expertise and finance. Many groups recognise the importance of a large membership, and this is one reason given by West Surrey groups for the low level of their subscriptions. BARKER felt that there was a dichotomy between groups stressing their mass membership as a reason why authorities should accede to their demands, and those who stressed their superior expertise and allegiance to 'good planning'. Most Civic Trust groups were in the latter category. In the study areas, however, groups used a mixture of the two approaches, depending upon the issue and circumstances they faced.

There were groups in both West Surrey and Newham which had no formal records of members, or subscriptions. The usual reasons given for this were that keeping and up-dating membership records, and collecting subscriptions, required a
great deal of time and effort. That this was so was shown by observation of various local environmental group committee meetings, where questions of membership took up an inordinate amount of time. Other groups which did have formal membership, particularly in West Surrey, felt that their membership would be much higher were they able to devote more resources to recruitment. Such groups proved the existence or extent of their local support at time of crisis by holding public meetings, or drawing up petitions.

The majority of groups in all the study areas, however, preferred to have as high a formal membership as possible, and to have a democratic structure, with an elected committee. Such a structure was held by 94% (123) of West Surrey groups, and 71% (5) of Newham groups. The groups in West Surrey tended to be more formal, with many having complex written constitutions and designated posts within the committee, and sub-committees. Fewer Newham groups had written constitutions. In neither area did the formal structure act as a barrier to potential activists, who were eagerly co-opted or otherwise incorporated into the organisation upon showing willingness to become actively involved. In Lambeth the situation was similar. BARKER found that 68% (431) of Civic Trust groups had their committee as the main focus of group activity, but that the formal structure of these groups was not necessarily a true reflection of their organisation. In FUJISHIN's study, 96% (50) of groups had committees, and these were the prime decision-making bodies. Such a structure is not unique to local environmental groups, but is a characteristic of all voluntary groups, as HATCH's study revealed.

Other literature, however, describes more informal group structures. I. HALL's anti-pollution group was run on much more ad-hoc lines, but found this a disadvantage in relations with the local authority. Similarly, lack of a formal constitution was used as a criticism of the Covent Garden Community Association at a public inquiry. TAYLOR felt that the fact that many official bodies required groups to be formally organised as a prerequisite of consultation served as
a deterrent, especially to working-class people who disliked bureaucracy. Certainly environmental groups in Newham, although having elected committees, were anxious to avoid the procedural formality of other local organisations, especially trades unions and Labour Parties, which can discourage active involvement by the inexperienced.

All the study areas shared similar characteristics of group organisation, and the general pattern was of a small group of activists, usually the committee, carrying out the bulk of the group's work. As BARKER say:

"Like all clichés, the joke about the British forming a committee to achieve almost any purpose is quite true."

and certainly appears to apply to local environmental groups.

**Environmental Groups' Contacts with other Organisations**

Whilst the resources of any one environmental group are likely to be limited, especially as the majority of its work is carried out by a small group of people, their chances of success could be increased by co-operation with other local and with national environmental organisations. In addition to increasing the number of activists involved in joint campaigns, such contacts could be a valuable source of information and advice. The question of the cohesiveness of the environmental movement at local level, and between local and national groups, arose in the literature. Some writings indicated that conflict rather than co-operation between groups might occur.

In West Surrey, contacts between local environmental groups were fairly extensive, although difficult to gauge as most were informal. About 60% (79) of groups had contacted other local groups for support over major issues, and 50% (66) were in regular contact with at least one other local group. Little of this contact took place through federations, to which only 23% (30) belonged, although short-term alliances over major issues did develop (for example the Stop Wisley Airport campaign). In addition, 27% (35) of groups were affiliated
to national environmental organisations, and 21% (28) had asked such organisations for advice and assistance.

In Newham there were fewer links between local environmental groups, with only 29% (2) having asked other local groups for support, all in the past. In one case, co-operation had been refused and two local groups actually opposed each other at a public inquiry. Indeed, the attitude of local environmental groups towards each other, when they were aware of each other's existence, was more indifference or outright hostility than co-operation. It is difficult to say why this was so; it appeared to be a mixture of personality clashes and the concentration of each group upon its particular activities to the exclusion of all else. There was some hostility between West Surrey groups, but it was seldom overtly expressed, and there were sufficient groups for it to have a negligible effect overall.

Perhaps to compensate, Newham groups had more extensive contacts with national environmental organisations, with 57% (4) having asked such organisations for support or advice. In addition, 57% (4) were in contact with environmental groups elsewhere in the London region. In Lambeth there was a local-authority instigated conservation co-ordinating committee upon which many of the local environmental groups were represented. Around 50% (5) of Lambeth groups were regularly in contact with other local environmental groups, and 50% (5) were affiliated to national organisations.

LOWE, concentrating upon the larger amenity groups, felt that most were in contact with national organisations of various types. All of BARKER's surveyed groups were registered with the Civic Trust, but only 17% (108) claimed regular contact with 'residents' associations' within their area. In FUJISHIN's study, 37% (19) of the sample of groups were themselves federations, with 19% (10) of the other sample groups as their members. In total, 46% (24) of groups were affiliated to some other organisation, 33% (17) to national bodies, with 31% (16) of groups having sought outside assistance over certain issues.
Other literature gives little information on links between voluntary groups. SAUNDERS describes the formation of a federation of residents' associations in South Croydon to give added strength over major issues.

From the data available, it is difficult to discern any pattern in relationships between environmental groups. Groups in Newham, and the Civic Trust groups, appeared to favour national level contacts to those with other local groups, whilst in West Surrey local contacts are more frequent. In Lambeth and Birmingham both types of contact are equally common. One reason for this might be the degree to which groups feel their interests are shared by others in their locality. A factor affecting degrees of contact with national organisations might be the degree to which local environmental groups feel that their problems are affected by national developments, or have a wider significance. The importance of national legislation to Newham groups has already been discussed, along with the more parochial outlook of groups in West Surrey. Contact with national and local organisations depends on knowledge of their existence, and as Chapter 4 points out, (page 159) not all West Surrey groups were aware of the range of national environmental organisations. The data indicates therefore that the 'environmental movement' is not as cohesive as might have been anticipated.

Contact with other organisations is undertaken by many local environmental groups, and can be considered as an addition to their available resources. How do local environmental groups in different areas use their resources to achieve their aims?

Local Environmental Group Tactics

How environmental groups achieve their aims was outlined as a major question in Chapter 1. A number of theories on this matter were traced in the literature (see Chapter 1, page 16) and some classifications based on it. Table 7 shows the use of different tactics by groups in West Surrey, Newham,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>50% (30)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>71%</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>74%</th>
<th>24%</th>
<th>66%</th>
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<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>71%</td>
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<td>5%</td>
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<td>6%</td>
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<td>50% (31)</td>
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<td>(4)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<td>(2)</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>22%</td>
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<td>4%</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
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<td>74%</td>
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<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>80% (50)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>69%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>(4)</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>82%</td>
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<table>
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<th>Use of tactics by groups in different areas</th>
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<tr>
<td>TACTICS USED BY LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS</td>
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TABLE 7
Lambeth and, where data is available, elsewhere in Britain.
Obviously, the type of issues encountered by local environ-
menta] groups will affect their use of tactics. The most
frequently used tactic in both Newham and West Surrey was
lobbying of, or putting the groups' views to, the relevant
local authority. In political science terms, then, the
majority of local environmental groups are 'pressure groups',
seeking to influence the policies of elected authorities
(although many of the groups themselves dislike the term).
As HATCH states:

"No doubt this reflects in large measure the
crucial part played in all environmental
issues by government decision, particularly
the way government uses its regulatory,
planning powers."

Lobbying the local authority is also a frequently used tactic
in Lambeth, although the figures here are incomplete. Within
the Borough there are, however, groups which, because of the
issues which concern them, limit their lobbying to the national
level. Similar groups exist in West Surrey, especially those
concerned with issues of the 'new-wave', but it is interesting
that groups of this type in Newham still felt it worthwhile to
lobby the local authority, and press for local action on
national issues. The group opposing nuclear waste transport
lobbied the local authority to oppose such transport through
the Borough, and the anti-pollution group also campaigned for
local action. The West Surrey 'new-wave' groups appeared to
feel that this type of action would yield them few results.

The concentration of West Surrey groups upon opposing
building development is illustrated by the high numbers of
groups which regularly undertook monitoring of planning applica-
tions. The figure of 69% (9)) of groups undertaking this
activity is exceeded by that for Civic Trust registered groups,
which BARKER put at 80% (508). The figures for Newham and
Lambeth are lower, partly a reflection of the type of issues
encountered. However, it also represents a difference in
tactics; in Newham, groups expected to hear about contentious
planning applications from other sources, and did not feel that
the effort of searching through applications yielded sufficient information to make it worthwhile. In West Surrey, by contrast, most groups would have agreed with BARKER's assessment that:

"A basic and traditional function of local amenity societies is the regular inspection of the public register of planning applications."

The difference in the numbers of groups monitoring planning applications between Newham and Lambeth, and West Surrey may also be a reflection of the different numbers of planning applications made in the three areas (see Table 6). This is also a likely reason for the differences in the number of groups appearing at public inquiries, for these in general result from appeals by developers against refusal of planning permission. When an inquiry is called on these grounds, a group will almost always be appearing in support of the local authority, and against the potential developer. In inquiries called to discuss local and structure plans (which were limited to Newham during the study period), environmental groups are more likely to be opposing the local authority. Only one Newham group had opposed the local authority at an inquiry, though. The higher level of appearances at public inquiries by West Surrey groups may be influenced by relations with the local authority, as several authorities urged groups to support them in opposing planning appeals, or it may be that people in West Surrey are less intimidated by the inquiry procedure than those in Newham. Certainly the allotments group, which had opposed the local authority at a public inquiry, had experienced some difficulty in understanding and complying with procedure, although the inquiry inspector had been very sympathetic. The case study literature on major planning inquiries certainly indicates that they require a high degree of knowledge for full participation, and DARKE has indicated how structure plan inquiries can be conducted at a level of technicality beyond most people's capability. Such inquiries, however, are in the minority, and only form a small part of group activity, however important they may be.
Whilst participation in the planning process, as outlined by these three types of activity, is a traditional activity of local environmental groups, it is by no means the only tactic used by the study groups. Groups in all three areas had contacted their Members of Parliament about particular problems. The level of contact was highest in Newham, no doubt reflecting the national aspect of many local problems. In addition, one Newham MP is well-known locally as an environmental activist. Levels of contact were lower in West Surrey and Lambeth, although full data was not available for the latter area. In all three areas, as FUJISHIN found in Birmingham, contact with MP's was limited to national issues, or to the few local issues where no agreement could be reached with the local authority. In West Surrey, in some of the cases, this was a prelude to a complaint to the local government Ombudsman. Again, however, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions as the numbers of groups in different areas varied so widely.

Other tactics used by local environmental groups were more oriented towards the general public, although sometimes as a means of obtaining sufficient support to influence the local authority. They have been described by DEARLOVE as 'outsider' tactics, and are regarded by him as evidence of failure to establish a satisfactory relationship with the local authority, and of a lack of power and influence. Contacting the local media, particularly newspapers, is a well-known pressure group tactic, and has frequently been described in the literature (see, for example, PERMAN, HERBST). Guides to local voluntary groups devote considerable space to use of the media (see C. HALL, Civic Trust News). By use of publicity, issues can be raised and support gathered for the actions of the group in question. It is also a method of increasing membership and hence resources, and publicising the general aims of an organisation. SAUNDERS describes how South Croydon residents' associations used the media, most efficiently, as an adjunct to their usual tactics on major issues; and West Surrey groups have used the media to support local authority actions, for example over the issue of Wisley.
Airport. Use of the media also has the advantage of convincing the public at large, and members, that a group is actually doing something; although misrepresentation may cause problems, as some West Surrey groups discovered. Indeed, fear of distortion and misrepresentation was a major reason why local environmental groups in all three areas did not make more extensive use of the local media. The press was seen as being sensation-seeking, wishing to emphasise conflict between groups or with the local authority, which could be disadvantageous in the long-run. Their reports were also seen as frivolous, concentrating upon minor details at the expense of the issues.

Groups in West Surrey used the local press least, perhaps because there was already a high level of reporting of environmental issues in Surrey local papers. In Newham, where education of the general public was a major aim of many groups, the press was contacted by a much higher proportion of groups, although it was widely criticised. Groups in Lambeth and Birmingham (from FUJISHIN's data) were in between, perhaps reflecting both the nature of the press and general levels of environmental consciousness in the two areas. COUSINS, in a study of South London voluntary groups found levels of press contact to be generally low. In all three study areas local environmental groups had also achieved national media coverage, including press and television, on major issues with which they had been involved. These issues included planning in Docklands and North Lambeth, the Wisley Airport controversy, and the transport of nuclear waste through London.

Another publicity-orientated tactic used by local environmental groups is the calling of public meetings to give information or to express support for a particular course of action. (Such meetings are also used by local authorities as part of public participation in plan-making). Many local environmental groups are initially formed at specially-convened public meetings, and C. HALL describes how this can be done. Public meetings were most widely used by environmental groups in Newham; it has been noted above that some groups used them, instead of formal membership, to establish popular support for
their policies. Similar use of public meetings has also been described by I. HALL and BUTCHER, and was the original tactic of groups in Covent Garden, until regular consultation by the local authority necessitated a more formal style of activity. Elsewhere, public meetings appeared to be confined to crisis situations, where it was necessary to mobilise wider support than was usually available. In West Surrey, public meetings were held on the few occasions when there was unresolved conflict between groups and the local authority, and over major issues such as Wisley Airport, where local authority officers and MP's shared the platform with environmental group activists. In Newham, meetings appeared to be used more generally to keep members informed of group activities, whilst in West Surrey some groups used time at social or educational meetings to fulfil this function. Public meetings amongst Lambeth environmental groups appeared largely to be limited to major issues.

Petitions are another method of making known public opinion on environmental issues, and again appear largely to be limited to major issues, or occasions of conflict with the local authority. Interestingly, more groups in West Surrey had drawn up petitions than had contacted the press, despite the views of some activists that their use was limited (see Chapter 4, page 164). Petitions drawn up in Newham, where 43% (3) of groups had used this tactic, had almost all been directed at national government, rather than the local authority (and indeed one petition received active encouragement from the local authority).

Perhaps the most extreme publicity-seeking tactic is an active demonstration of group members or the public in support of a policy. These were rare in all the study areas, and limited to major issues. In West Surrey the Wisley inquiry prompted marches, placard waving, and the mock funeral of the Green Belt (symbolised by a coffin). In Newham, the Stratford station 'bazooka' stunt received extensive publicity, and in Lambeth there were several marches on the issue of Thames bank redevelopment. In each case the demonstration achieved its purpose of attracting publicity, but the effectiveness of such
tactics lies in the fact that they are seldom used. In the literature, both JACOBS and THOMAS attribute the success of tenants groups, whose case had previously been ignored, to use of demonstrations which achieved widespread publicity. SAUNDERS and I. HALL also describe useful publicity generated for local groups by demonstrations, but stress the need for good timing and organisation to achieve maximum impact. Such action in a less urban setting is described by PERMAN and others as occurring during the various campaigns over the location of the third London Airport. It appears that whilst demonstrations could not, by their nature, be a regular tactic, local environmental groups are able to use them most effectively when the need arises.

A more long-term publicity generating tactic used by local environmental groups is the production of leaflets or books, either about particular issues, their local area, or about the groups themselves. They can have the dual effect of generating publicity and spreading the groups' ideas, and may also make a profit for the group. Several Newham groups produced leaflets, as a major aim of the groups was educating the general public about their ideas. In West Surrey several groups produced booklets describing the natural history or historic buildings of their locality, or describing countryside walks. Leaflets were used less to inform about issues, except for major campaigns, and general ideas on the environment were disseminated at the educational meetings which many groups held. Lambeth was again between the two other areas in the frequency of use of this tactic, whilst FUJISHIN found a high level of publishing amongst groups in Birmingham, although just what this figure includes is not clear.

As part of the information-gathering process, several local environmental groups in both West Surrey and Newham undertook their own research. This served two purposes; firstly to gather data on actual and potential environmental problems, and secondly to back up the groups' arguments and proposals with facts. The level of research was highest in Newham, due to shortage of available information that groups
encountered. This was partly because of the nature of their concerns, such as pollution or allotment provision, but also because little data had been collected on the area as a whole. In West Surrey, where environmental groups had been in existence longer, and the local authority also collected environmental information, there was less of a shortage of data. In addition, the issues which concerned groups, development control for example, required less research as more information on them was readily available. The majority of research that was carried out was undertaken by specialist groups, especially those concerned with nature conservation and access to the countryside. Groups concerned with noise nuisance from aircraft had also carried out extensive research, including contracting outside organisations to cover technical aspects. No figures on research undertaken by local groups were available for Lambeth, but FUJISHIN found a figure for Birmingham in between that of Newham and West Surrey.

Whilst there are some important differences in the tactics used by local environmental groups in different areas, these appear to relate to the judgement of groups about what is likely to be effective, rather than any shortcomings or lack of resources on the part of the groups. They certainly do not appear to be a basis for a static classification of environmental groups. In Newham the need to use outside sources and high-publicity tactics was widely accepted, but this was because of the nature of the issues, rather than inability to use more traditional tactics. In West Surrey, most of the issues that concerned groups could be settled using traditional tactics, but when this was not the case, groups were adept at using more publicity-seeking techniques. There was little evidence of groups being restricted to high-publicity tactics because they were excluded from decision-making by the local authority.

Local Environmental Groups and the Local Authority

In both Chapters 1 and 2 the importance for environmental groups of their relations with the local authorities was described. This is confirmed by discussion of the tactics used
by local environmental groups. Much of the literature on voluntary group activity has also concentrated upon the relationship between groups and local government (see for example NEWTON, DEARLOVE, CLIFFORD). Although environmental issues in the study areas were affected, often to a major extent, by national Government decisions, local councils nevertheless represent the tier of authority closest to the interests of local environmental groups.

The practical studies in West Surrey, Newham and Lambeth looked at how groups perceived their authorities and vice versa, and the form the relationship between them took. Local environmental groups in all the three study areas were asked whether their local authorities, at various levels, were helpful or unhelpful to the group in general, and whether the group was consulted by their councils about local environmental issues on a regular basis. (As Table 12, Chapter 4 shows, in West Surrey there was a significant correlation between groups having a favourable view of their district council, and those who were regularly consulted by that council). The responses to these questions are compared in Table 8. In all three study areas more local environmental groups had a favourable than an unfavourable view of their local authority, and most groups interviewed felt that they had achieved a reasonable, if not entirely satisfactory, relationship with the local authority. Fewer groups in West Surrey were regularly consulted by their local authorities; largely, according to the authorities, because there were so many groups. Several local government officials in West Surrey expressed the wish to consult only with one group for each area, whilst many areas were covered by more than one group. Some of the smaller groups were thus only consulted sporadically, although this did not prevent them from making their views known on a more regular basis. In Newham, not only were there fewer groups, but their interests seldom overlapped, and they were consulted individually, although for some groups this only took place occasionally. In Lambeth most of the groups concerned with historic building preservation took part in regular joint consultations with the
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**Table 8**

Relations between Environmental Groups and Their Local Authorities
local authority, via a borough-wide conservation areas committee. However, individual consultation of these groups by the local authority also took place.

Table 8 also gives data on environmental group relations with local authorities from the studies of BARKER and FUJISHIN. In Birmingham, the high proportion of groups consulted by the local authority is partly explained by the fact that his period of study overlapped with the consultation phase of preparing a new plan for the city. BARKER's study showed that the majority of Civic Trust registered groups had achieved a satisfactory relationship with their local planning department, but had less favourable views of other departments. However, as this survey took place before local government re-organisation, its results are not strictly comparable, and results of research in West Surrey (see Chapter 4, page 167) indicates that in some areas re-organisation increased dissatisfaction with local government. Overall, results indicate satisfactory relations between local environmental groups and their local authorities, with open hostility between the two comparatively rare.

The other data of Table 8 relates to the nature of contact between the local environmental groups and the authorities. Few of the study area groups had elected councillors sitting on their committees, and some West Surrey groups had constitutions expressly forbidding this. BARKER's figures for Civic Trust groups are much higher, but again relate to the smaller, pre-reorganisation local authorities. FUJISHIN's figure for groups having councillor committee members was boosted, he felt, by the local authority's insistence that any group receiving funding should have a council representative upon its committee. For all three study areas the number of groups having this type of contact with local authorities is low, despite the fact that authors such as DEARLOVE and NEWTON have regarded it as a measure of how 'established', or accepted by the local authority, voluntary groups are. The study groups felt that this direct type of link with the local authority would threaten their independence.
Indeed, some West Surrey groups' constitutions expressly forbid it. The groups instead preferred regular consultation through official channels.

There is considerable difference between West Surrey and Newham over how environmental groups contact the local authority. Although the majority of West Surrey groups contact both officers and elected councillors, initial contact is, as FUJISHIN found for Birmingham, often with officers. In Newham, by contrast, there is a much higher proportion of contact with elected councillors directly. In West Surrey several of the groups contacting mainly councillors were those who had promoted councillors for election to local authorities; a phenomenon not encountered in Newham, or Lambeth. Others had various forms of close link with particular councillors. For West Surrey groups contacting both officers and members, the latter contact tended to occur when officers had been unable to produce satisfactory results, or over major issues. Contacting local authority officers is seen as both the simplest and the most correct procedure. (DENNIS describes how in Sunderland officers greatly resented attempts by the residents group to contact elected councillors directly). The situation in Lambeth and BARKER's study is similar to that in West Surrey. In Newham, however, groups appeared far more willing to contact councillors at the initial stages of an issue, and some groups felt that it was both useless and improper to work through paid officers (see, for example, Chapter 5, page 209). One explanation for this may lie in the attitude of the local authority towards participation by voluntary groups in decision-making. CHAMBERLAYNE feels that during the early 1970's, the Council of the London Borough of Newham was hostile to participation, and excluded voluntary groups from decision-making. In the Borough:

"...outside groups were obstructed at every turn. Information, resources access to decision-making places and legitimacy were denied them, and the system of administration was inflexible and unable to cope with new demands."
This situation would make it extremely difficult for environmental groups to build up close relations with officers of the local authority, but whilst CHAMBERLAYNE claims that many elected councillors were also hostile to pressure group activity, a small number were more amenable to the demands of voluntary groups. Although the authority's attitude towards voluntary groups has now changed, with support for the Newham Voluntary Agencies Council, funding to voluntary groups under inner-city schemes, and the adoption of community work, several activists in Newham felt that the authority retained some reluctance to encourage real participation. For example, the Planning Department refused on several occasions to contribute in any way to the current study. In these circumstances, environmental groups who have established contact with a sympathetic councillor are likely to see this as the best way to contact the local authority. In both West Surrey and Lambeth the concept of public participation appears to have been accepted for much longer, and Lambeth was one of the first areas of the country to set up neighbourhood councils specifically to encourage participation. However, as COCKBURN describes, the encouragement did not extend to overt criticism of the local authority.

The other reason for the low proportion of Newham groups contacting the local authority through officers may lie in the types of issues which concern the groups. Far more of the groups were concerned with issues outside the remit of the Planning Department, particularly pollution, and other local authority departments tend not to have such well-developed systems for public consultation, nor is participation a statutory obligation (see Chapter 2).

The literature indicates that not all local voluntary groups are as able to develop satisfactory relations with the local authority as those described in Table 8. Whilst the case studies of KIMBER and RICHARDSON, GREGORY, and SMITH generally describe voluntary groups and local authorities battling together to overcome an environmental threat from outside, I. HALL, HAIN, BUTCHER and DENNIS describe groups
meeting with some hostility from their local authorities. This had serious consequences for the ability of the groups in question to achieve their objectives, although it provided in some cases a useful stimulus to increased cohesion of the membership. Some groups were eventually able to overcome local authority hostility, for example by providing their 'responsibility' at a public inquiry (BUTCHER), or because their support and publicity meant that they could not be ignored (DENNIS). These processes were lengthy and time-consuming and delayed the achievement of the groups' main objectives. The majority of local environmental groups interviewed in the study areas stressed the importance of establishing good relations with the local authority if success was to be achieved.

Environmental Group Achievements and Problems

Obtaining an impartial assessment of the success of local environmental groups in achieving their objectives is extremely difficult, given the many complex factors affecting decision-making on the environment. To obtain the subjective views of the groups themselves, those in each of the study areas were asked to describe what they felt they had achieved, and where possible the views of the local authority on the same question were canvassed. Table 9 compares the responses of environmental groups in the study areas, and data available from FUJISHIN's study of groups in Birmingham.

Very few groups, in any of the study areas, felt that they had achieved nothing at all, although more admitted failure over a major issue. Some groups were satisfied with a low level of achievement, however, such as simply maintaining their group's existence, or holding successful social activities. However, most West Surrey groups felt that they had been successful over an issue of major importance to the group, and had achieved some practical improvement to, or prevented deterioration of, their local environment. This high proportion, 63% (83), is almost matched by that of the Birmingham groups described by FUJISHIN. Fewer Newham groups claimed success
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<td>Form of achievement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical action by preventing change of form</td>
<td>West Survey: Newham/Lambeth/Birmingham Group Sample</td>
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**ACHIEVEMENTS OF LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS**

**TABLE 9**
over a major issue, or that they had made some practical change to the environment. As Newham groups were not only very recent in formation, but faced in many instances problems caused by or requiring national level action, this is perhaps not surprising. In Lambeth, probably for similar reasons, a similar proportion of groups claimed practical success. Comparative data from the rest of the country is sparse; BARKER feels that Civic Trust and other amenity groups have made a useful contribution to preserving towns from large-scale redevelopment whilst EVERSLEY, in criticising their actions, complains that such groups are having too much of an effect.

It is notable that 71% (5) of Newham groups and 60% of Lambeth environmental groups count a change in the attitude of the local authority as an achievement, both in acceptance of environmentalist aims by the local authority and an improved relationship between environmental groups and the local authority. These proportions are far higher than for West Surrey, and perhaps indicate how recently relations between environmental groups and local authorities in Newham and Lambeth have achieved their current satisfactory status. BARKER also feels that amenity groups have helped in changing the attitude of local authorities towards the environment, particularly over road-building and traffic schemes. That attitudes of the local authority in Newham and Lambeth have changed in the fairly recent past is confirmed by authority staff, opinions of local people, and a study of authority records. How large a part the environmental groups played in this process is more difficult to establish; certainly the move away from comprehensive redevelopment towards rehabilitation of existing buildings was very much influenced by financial considerations. Some changes, however, must be largely ascribed to group activities, such as Newham Borough Council's concern over nuclear waste transport, and its altered attitude to allotments provision.

Larger proportions of groups in Newham and Lambeth than West Surrey also count a change in public attitudes towards the
environment as one of their achievements. In Newham some
environmental groups felt that the level of public concern
about the environment was still very low, but that some
increase had been achieved in recent years, if only in
convincing enough people of the importance of environmental
issues to maintain a viable group. Both in Newham and Lambeth
environmental group activists felt that people in their areas
were only slowly realising that their area had things worth
preserving, and that elsewhere conditions could be improved.
Once more there is little evidence from elsewhere in the
country to compare with the study results, but if this
phenomenon is more widespread, perhaps both public and local
authority opinion in inner-city areas is moving towards a
greater concern for the environment.

In confirmation of their role as 'pressure groups', only
a small proportion of groups in each area listed as a success
action they had undertaken themselves, rather than persuaded
local authorities or other bodies to take. The proportions
were similar to those of groups counting the continued exist­
ence of their group as an achievement in itself.

Local environmental groups in all the study areas were
also asked what problems they faced in achieving their goals.
The results are shown in Table 10. Only in West Surrey did
the highest proportion of groups see their major problems in
the practical issues they faced. For the majority, this was
the high and increasing pressure for development within their
area, which led to a series of planning applications being
made for the same piece of land, with battles having to be
re-fought every few years. Several groups listed this type
of issue, others simply listed the issue which was facing
them at present. In Lambeth and Newham, groups appeared to
consider the process by which issues were generated, rather
than just the issues themselves. Thus higher proportions of
groups in these two areas than West Surrey felt that public
attitudes towards the environment constituted a major problem.
The major problem which Newham groups considered that they
faced was the action of national government, and for some
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**Table 10**

**Problems Facing Local Environmental Groups**
Lambeth groups this was also a major source of difficulty. Equal proportions of groups in West Surrey and Lambeth considered local government attitudes and actions a problem, whilst these proved less important to Newham groups. In both Lambeth and West Surrey a shortage of members willing to take an active role in environmental groups caused concern, Newham groups appeared for the moment to have sufficient activists for their current campaigns, with a dearth of sympathisers rather than activists their main concern. Despite the statements of the literature (see Chapter 1), only a small proportion of groups were experiencing financial problems, perhaps because the number of large-scale issues with which they were involved was low. The groups in Lambeth experiencing financial difficulties were outside the area of funding from inner-city programmes, but had a less wealthy population than West Surrey. This may have been the source of their problems, and in this they may be more representative of the rest of the country than Newham or West Surrey, and financial problems for environmental groups more widespread than the bulk of research in the study areas suggests.

Contrasts in Local Environmental Group Activity

Data from the two main study areas, along with that from Lambeth, illustrates some of the contrasts in the scale and type of activity undertaken by local environmental groups. From the limited data available on the rest of the country, it appears that these contrasts may be repeated throughout Britain to a varying degree. It seems likely that not only are there fewer environmental groups in inner-city areas, but that their concerns will be very different from those of groups in more rural areas. The environmental movement in the inner cities may also be more recent, and involve smaller groups than the suburbs and countryside, although evidence on this point is less clear.

From the study data it appears that whilst groups in all areas are similarly concerned to prevent or limit change to their environment, the precise issues and processes which this
involves are very different. In the inner cities environ-
mental changes are often large-scale, and associated with
national government decisions and economic processes.
Problems such as pollution are more common, and all these
require understanding of complex processes if the aim of
protecting the environment is to be achieved. Groups in areas
like West Surrey, by contrast, are more concerned with
preserving the character and appearance of their locality,
a concept which is far easier to grasp than that of danger
to health and the environment generally through pollution,
particularly when a pollution problem has existed unrecognised
for many years. West Surrey groups concentrated in particular
on planning issues, where there is a well-established set of
procedures for public consultation and information provision.
Issues of pollution, on the other hand, are unfamiliar to
many local authorities as well as environmental groups. They
are also complex in that areas experiencing pollution often
have residents who depend for employment on the same factories
that cause pollution. This conflict of interests was
encountered by the Newham anti-pollution group, and described
in Swansea by I. HALL.

Whilst the issues which concern inner-city environmental
groups may be complex, their populations, at least in the
study areas, are less well-equipped than those of the suburbs
to cope with such complexity. Whilst the Newham environmental
groups had experienced little difficulty in gaining access to
the expertise they required, their activists were atypical of
the population of the Borough as a whole, and many had moved
to the area relatively recently. It is interesting that in
both West Surrey and Lambeth planners maintained that it was
incomers to the areas who were most enthusiastic about the
environment. Longer-established residents had become used to
the problems, and blind to the pleasant features of their
environment. Whilst in inner-city areas there are more likely
to be resources available to assist organisations lacking in
expertise, such as community development organisations, in
Newham at least these were rarely involved in environmental
issues.
A major difference between West Surrey and Newham was that in the former several groups formed for non-environmental reasons, such as road maintenance and residents' representation, had later taken an interest in environmental issues. The comparable organisations in Newham, tenants associations, had not done so, for reasons discussed in Chapter 5, page 219. SAUNDERS has encountered a similar phenomenon in Croydon, and concludes that none of the organisations generally claiming to represent working-class people in inner-city areas are able to deal with issues such as those represented by concern for the environment.

The literature on environmental groups, and local voluntary groups in general, has stressed the importance of establishing a good relationship with the local authority. Although groups in all the study areas had done this, it appeared to be a far more recent achievement in the inner-city areas. In these areas, too, groups felt that the level of public interest in the environment was low. This again may relate to the types of issues encountered; preservation of the environment, such as that encountered in West Surrey, is the traditionally accepted form of environmentalism, with which few inner-city dwellers would be likely to identify. The concept of pollution having a deleterious effect on health, or the tie-in between planning and the local economy are part of the 'new-wave' of environmental concern, which is less familiar to many people.

Looking beyond the data on environmental groups to more general information gathered in the course of the study, the theories of how differences in population affect the numbers of environmental groups in an area can be assessed further. The personal problems encountered by people in inner-city areas such as Newham; unemployment, poverty, and poor housing, for example; are undoubtedly more daunting in aggregate than those facing the residents of West Surrey. The hierarchy of needs, as described by MASLOW, would maintain that concern for the appearance and character of the environment would be unlikely to be of major importance for most people. If however, as the 'new-wave' environmental groups maintain,
concern for the environment is essential for survival, this
would not be so. The 'new-wave' groups are, however, still
very much in the minority.

Other explanations of the lack of environmental group
activity amongst working-class inner-city residents related
not to the wish, but to the ability to take action. The
study data shows that all local environmental groups had
access to a certain amount of expertise, and this was necessary
to recognise environmental problems as well as to combat them.
Certainly where such expertise is less readily available, it
is to be expected that fewer local environmental groups will
form. Unfortunately no comparable figures for the number of
voluntary groups in Surrey and Newham are available. When
groups do form, however, the data appears to indicate, and
common sense would suggest, that at least a measure of success
is needed to sustain them. SAUNDERS, indeed, feels that failure
or powerlessness in other spheres of people's life will
preclude them from taking action on issues such as the environ­
ment. Developing a good relationship with the local authority
appears to be vital for environmental group success, and the
two inner-city authorities studied had, until recently,
discouraged this in their areas through both their attitudes
towards public participation and to the environment. Authors
such as DEARLOVE have described how councillors' opinions on
issues and the style of approach which is proper can decide
which voluntary groups are accorded a good relationship, whilst
HAIN and DENNIS describe how working class groups can be
hindered by councils' insistence on the rigid application of
procedure. Activists in Newham described how the local
authority there had taken such action, and the level of mis­
trust of the local authority which existed, not entirely due
to its own actions.

The very concentration of community work and voluntary
group development in city areas, together with literature such
as that by HATCH, TAYLOR, and BUTCHER, suggests that working­
class inner-city dwellers are less well placed to undertake
pressure group action than their counterparts in areas like
West Surrey. Whilst assistance, in the form of community work and other developments, is available, it has contributed only a little to the formation of local environmental groups, at least in the study areas.

The main difference between Newham and other inner-city areas, and suburban areas like West Surrey, remains the difference in numbers of traditional, general-interest environmental groups. Both types of area, as far as the study considered, had similar numbers of specialist and 'new-wave' groups, but the inner-city areas have far fewer of the general groups than suburban areas.

The experiences of Newham's environmental groups do not provide clear answers to why this should be so. Those groups had achieved sufficient expertise and access to local government to ensure some success, and had found plenty of issues around which they could organise.

The explanation most frequently cited, as Chapter 5 describes, by Newham people for the low numbers of environmental groups in their area related to a 'hierarchy of needs' theory, such as MASLOW propounds. COTGROVE has questioned whether MASLOW's theory provides an adequate explanation of the behaviour of 'new-wave' environmental groups, concluding that personal ideology is the main driving force behind their members. However, as Chapter 3 shows, many Newham people face a struggle to satisfy their basic needs for food and shelter, at a level which the 'new-wave' group members studied by COTGROVE are unlikely to have faced.

A study of voluntary action in the inner-cities by KNIGHT and HAYES, which drew on data from areas like Newham, concluded that voluntary group activity was very sparse. The researchers found very little social life of any kind, with many people leading very private lives, mainly based on their homes. This again was a characteristic mentioned by several voluntary group activists in Newham. People in inner-city areas were reluctant to join voluntary groups, and even more
reluctant to become involved in organisation of the groups. The data from both West Surrey and Newham has illustrated the importance of committed activists for the success, and indeed continued existence, of local environmental groups.

However, the 'hierarchy of needs' only explains the lack of general environmental groups if having a good environment is seen as a 'higher order', aesthetic need rather than a basic one. It is at this point that the difference between 'new-wave' and traditional environmental groups becomes apparent. Whilst the latter would agree that the environment is a 'higher order' priority, 'new-wave' groups argue that a decent environment is a basic human need, and thus people in inner-cities, with many environmental problems, should form more local environmental groups.

The data from both the study areas and the literature indicates that the 'new-wave' groups are in the minority. Most local environmental groups are concerned with conserving pleasant environments. KNIGHT and HAYES' finding that nearly half of the inner-city residents they interviewed could not name one positive attribute of their area illustrates why few such groups are found in the inner-cities.

At another level, too, the 'hierarchy of needs' plays a part. As discussed above in relation to pollution, the wish for a pleasant environment may conflict, or at least be seen to conflict, with the wish for employment. Table 1 illustrates that low numbers of environmental groups are found in areas traditionally relying on heavy, dirty industry. These areas are also at present experiencing severe economic decline, and so the fact that a source of employment may harm the environment is unlikely to be seen as a cause for rejecting it. Indeed, new industry may harm the environment less than the traditional heavy industries of the area.

Several 'new-wave' groups, including some in Newham, have disputed whether concern for the environment and creating new jobs are mutually incompatible. Indeed, the national
Socialist Environment and Resources Association was founded, and campaigns, on the premise that the two must go hand in hand. Nevertheless, whilst inner-city residents see employment and a good environment as incompatible, they are unlikely to choose the latter.

Thus the present preoccupation of the local environmental movement with preservation and aesthetic qualities means that concern for the environment is likely to remain low in the hierarchy of interest of inner-city residents.
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CHAPTER 7
IS THERE A LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT?

From the data listed in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 there seems little doubt that the number of what have been defined in this study as 'local environmental groups' is high and growing. Chapter 6 has illustrated some of the diversity found amongst such groups. The question now to be considered is whether these groups form a coherent movement, whether their concerns are truly 'environmental', and what impact the groups have had and are likely to have in the future.

Environmental Group Dynamics

One question posed in Chapter 1 concerned the organisation of environmental groups, and the ways they change over time. The data which illustrates the size of the 'environmental movement' at local level also indicates that both the numbers and activity of local groups are far from static. In West Surrey it was possible to observe both the birth of new groups, and to obtain information on the recent demise of others. One group became inactive and then revived during the course of the study (see Chapter 4, page 180). In Newham, as Chapter 5 illustrates, the majority of the groups were recently formed. Similarly case studies such as those of PERMAN, and KIMBER and RICHARDSON show how groups can form in response to a particular issue and cease their activities when the issue is decided. At a less extreme level, many of the groups studied had had varying levels of activity. At some periods they would be involved in many issues, and have many active members, at others one or two people would only just keep the group going. That this is true for West Surrey is illustrated by the fact that CONNELL's research, carried out less than five years before the present study commenced, identified as extremely active a group which is now reduced to near inactivity, mainly due to a change in key personnel. Other groups described by CONNELL no longer exist. Similar impressions can be gained from the archives of the various local groups, such as minutes of
meetings, which in the same group can range from lengthy and frequent to sparse and very irregular in time. In this matter BUTCHER's model of group goal succession and replacement certainly applies to local environmental groups.

The groups themselves gave a number of reasons for these changes in levels of activity. The most obvious reason was variation in the number of issues facing a group; as well as new groups forming in response to a crisis, existing groups can be revitalised. Conversely, keeping up group activities between major crises can, as the Docklands-wide federation found, be very difficult (see Chapter 5, page 215). The rise and fall of single issue groups, described in the case-study literature (see HERBST, PERMAN for example) confirms this view. However, another reason cited by local groups for the variations in their activity was the problem of finding active personnel. The literature confirms the finding of the fieldwork that in most local environmental groups, activists form a small minority of the membership (see Chapter 6, pages 227 - 231), and are thus vital to their well-being. Several West Surrey and Newham groups had experienced difficulty in finding members willing to accept active responsibility. In West Surrey the high mobility of the population meant that activists could be lost through moving to another area. In Newham, redevelopment also meant people moving away from the area of a group, and in addition many people seemed insufficiently confident of their own abilities to accept responsibility. Shortages of activists have also been described in the literature on other voluntary groups, for example community groups (for example by BUTCHER and TAYLOR).

Whether these variations in group activity are beneficial or harmful is difficult to decide. The West Surrey group which revived in response to the Wisley Airport Inquiry had felt that it was quite acceptable for the group to remain dormant whilst there were few major local issues, and that during this period minor environmental issues would be dealt with by other organisations, particularly the Parish Council. Keeping the group going between issues would involve much time and effort by activists, and they felt that the results might not justify
this input. For other environmental groups, the continued existence of the group had become a goal in itself (something BUTCHER also describes), and to become dormant would have been regarded as a failure. Thus one West Surrey group cited "keeping the group going" as its major success. The tendency for organisations to develop inertia in this way, where system maintenance rather than goal achievement is the main aim, is described by DEARLOVE in the context of local authority activity. Keeping a group in existence means that the structure and expertise to react immediately to a major issue is maintained, and it also allows for positive rather than merely reactive action. A group which is dormant is not always revived in response to a new issue, a new group may form instead (as GRANT describes in Billericay). The new group may be vigorous, and attract a great deal of support, but will have to go through the process of assembling expertise and developing relations with the local authority afresh. On the other hand, people who consider themselves too busy to participate actively in a voluntary group on a regular basis, may be willing to devote a great deal of effort over a shorter time-period. (PERMAN and HERBST describe how this was the case when Cublington was threatened with being the site for the third London airport).

The choice of whether to disband once an issue is resolved is one which groups must make in the light of their local circumstances. Whilst there are sufficient willing activists, a group is likely to remain in existence; most groups in the study areas which had disbanded had gradually declined, rather than taking positive action to disband. Such groups may either broaden their interests, as had been the case with many West Surrey groups, to increase the scope of potential issues, or may concentrate on member-orientated activity, such as education and social events. Some groups combine these activities, and are thus able to maintain a general programme of activities, along with action on a changing group of issues.
An 'Environmental Network'?

In addition to maintaining expertise and the ability to undertake rapid and pre-emptive action, keeping a group in existence can have other advantages. A major one of these is the possibility of increasing resources through links with environmental and other voluntary groups, at both local and national levels. Such links are essential if a coherent local environmental movement is to exist, rather than a mass of un-coordinated activity. LOWE (i) gives a picture of a closely linked network of overlapping personnel between local amenity groups, which results in a closely coordinated movement. Chapter 1 posed the question of whether such a network existed in practice. In West Surrey there was indeed considerable contact between local environmental groups, with sharing of information and mutual support. Over half of the groups were in regular contact with other local environmental groups. In Newham there was much less contact between groups, however, and some groups were quite hostile to an another. Contacts between groups were generally informal; and both the experience of the study groups, and the literature, indicate that more formal alliances and federations of local environmental groups are less successful. Within West Surrey for example, at least four district-wide federations of environmental groups had become defunct or were inactive.

Groups who had belonged to now defunct federations gave several reasons for their failure, and these were echoed by members of federations which still existed, but which member groups felt were achieving little. The West Surrey district federations had all been formed by activists in existing local environmental groups, who had seen a need for improved co-operation between groups, to make more forceful representations to the local authority. In one case a group had formed specifically to ensure that consultation with environmental groups continued after local government re-organisation. The federations hoped that by pooling resources and information, environmental groups could achieve more collectively than separately, and would also be able to respond to district-wide
issues more effectively. All the defunct federations had found that keeping the federation going had required a great deal of work, to which people active in existing groups were unable to devote sufficient time or energy. The field of activity of the federations had been limited by the need to minimise conflict between groups; for example between town and countryside-based groups over parking facilities in towns, or over the location of unwanted developments. Groups were unhappy about other groups commenting upon issues within 'their' areas, and were anxious not to lose their identity by taking part in activity under the banner of a federation, feeling this could lose them influence and local popularity. One West Surrey federation had involved outside researchers in investigating these problems, and had concluded that activists and members only identified with their area at a very local level, and that the views of groups on organisation and tactics were too different for a federation to be successful (private communication).

Federations which were still in existence had also experienced problems. In particular, the autonomy required by groups afraid of losing their identity meant that the concept of a majority-verdict binding on member groups, when there was not total consensus on an issue, could not be countenanced. Delegates to the federations were often not mandated to vote on behalf of their group, so that decisions could only be reached after a lengthy process of referring-back to their groups. Some federations attempted to get around this problem by treating attendants not as delegates, but as individual activists in the federation. This meant that decisions could be taken at meetings, but effectively divorced the federation from its source of power, which lay in the membership of individual groups. Finance was also a problem for several federations, member groups being reluctant to pay anything other than a nominal fee for membership, especially if they thought that the federation was of little direct benefit to them.

The major problem for West Surrey federations, however, was that few local environmental groups, as Chapter 4 shows,
(page 156), showed interest in issues outside the immediate area that they covered. They were therefore unwilling to devote resources to a federation, and saw interest by other groups in 'their' area as interference, and a likely source of conflict. Given their claims to represent their localities, and their hostility to the 'remoteness' of district level and County government, it is unsurprising that they refused to surrender any of their independence in the cause of achieving a united stance for environmental groups.

The federations which had survived had been able to do so because they had advantages not available to their member groups elsewhere. For some this was access to information, expertise, finance and communication with local government; for others, it was the strength through collective action to tackle an issue which covered more than one group's area, for example the problems caused by gravel raising and disused gravel pits, (see Chapter 4, page 144). Other federations and coalitions arose temporarily to deal with major issues such as the Wisley Airport, or particular road proposals. These were dissolved once the issue was decided, and the groups reverted to individual action.

A similar picture of the problems of federations arises from other areas. The Docklands-wide federation in Newham suffered conflict and suspicion between different member groups (see Chapter 5, page 197-), but survived because it had expertise, resources and finance, without which the groups in the area were unlikely to be successful. Nevertheless, Newham groups which could have belonged to the federation did not. In Lambeth a co-ordinating committee of groups concerned with building preservation had survived because the local authority treated it as the Conservation Area Advisory Committee for the borough, but several member groups were doubtful of its effectiveness. SAUNDERS found that a federation of South Croydon residents was only active on major issues, where groups' usual methods of action had failed to achieve their objectives. TAYLOR felt that federations could easily become preoccupied with procedure and maintenance of their own
existence, rather than the objectives for which they were set up; for this reason some community workers had advocated loose alliances rather than formal federations. BUTCHER's research indicated that the federation he studied had only been able to survive by limiting itself to the most broadly-agreed objectives, or by delegating action to sub-committees of interested members as a means of avoiding conflict. Conflict-avoidance was also shown by the way that the federation constitution had had to be stated in very broad and vague terms to be acceptable to member groups.

Chapter 4 describes how, in West Surrey, most groups restricted their concerns to issues arising within their area. When groups did comment upon issues arising in other groups' areas, this was occasionally welcomed as an additional form of support, but was often resented as 'interference', especially if consultation between the groups had not taken place. The alternative to local emphasis would be through co-ordinated action on issues, with groups having an overall strategy for influencing local authorities on environmental issues. As the experience of the local federations has shown, this has not really been successful within the study areas. Even at an informal level, at which, for example most contact between West Surrey groups took place, co-ordination seems poor. In Newham, the remit of the local authority Pollution sub-committee covered both air pollution and the problems of nuclear waste transport. However, not only did the two environmental groups covering these issues not co-ordinate their submissions to this sub-committee, there was virtually no contact between them at all. Similarly in West Surrey, groups were so anxious to preserve their 'independence' that joint submissions to the local authority were extremely rare. Thus although overt hostility between local environmental groups is rare, they do appear to compete rather than co-ordinate their activities in seeking to influence the local authorities.

The difficulties experienced by federations mean that they undertake little action; this was a major criticism directed at them by both members and non-members. In the
study areas, only the Docklands-wide federation undertook a substantial amount of action, and this was probably because of the resources available to it, including skilled, full-time workers and its semi-official relationship to the Docklands Joint Committee (see Chapter 5, page 193). In West Surrey, where federations did undertake action, members' groups did not rely upon this collective activity to achieve their objectives, but undertook their own action in parallel. Where federations did have a valuable role was as a discussion forum, where broader ideas and issues could be introduced. This was particularly useful in West Surrey, where, as Chapter 4 shows, many environmental groups were very narrow in their interests. Table 4 (Chapter 4) shows the difference in scope of local group and federation discussions. Major submissions of the environmental viewpoint on the Surrey Structure Plan were made by the Surrey federation of amenity groups, and it had much closer relations with the County Council in general than other environmental organisations in the county (see Chapter 4, page 141). The Docklands-wide federation was similarly able to participate in the initial policy stages of Docklands planning, whereas most other groups became concerned only during the implementation stages (see Chapter 5, page 209). Nevertheless, the fact that many environmental groups show little interest in, or support for, federations render them vulnerable.

Federations have no direct members, but rely on the membership of existing groups for their power. The importance of appearing representative was discussed in Chapter 1 (page 24). If the existing groups show little concern for them, federations are easily open to charges that they are 'unrepresentative', which are hard for them to refute. This is particularly so when member groups fail to support their actions, or indeed oppose them, as the basis for their power is that they claim to speak for a number of environmental groups.

The question of 'representativeness' is an important one for all environmental groups, not just federations. Environmental groups have few sanctions available to them in their dealings with authority, although in certain circumstances they are able to force long and expensive public inquiries,
on the major issues which are comparatively rare. They thus
depend for their power on their ability to claim that they
represent informed local opinion, and are knowledgeable about
their subject. This is why many groups concentrate on
achieving as high a membership as they reasonably can.
Groups with a limited catchment area obviously have a limited
membership, and the strength of such groups on particular
issues would be increased if they could claim support from
other local groups and federations, who represent a much
larger number of people. Such demonstrations of unity amongst
environmental groups would increase their overall influence,
as well as allowing for improved use of resources of
information and expertise. Certainly several planners in
West Surrey and Lambeth indicated that they wished to be
presented with a unified environmentalist viewpoint, and the
Covent Garden Forum, according to HAIN, was seen by planners
as a means of contributing such a view to the planning process.
BARKER also saw increased liaison between local environmental
groups as vital for their future progress. In the absence,
for the most part, of strong local federations, how do local
groups achieve such liaison, if indeed, they do? How do
they achieve a working relationship, and minimise conflict
between themselves? There is evidence that conflict avoidance
does take place; BARKER found, for example, that only 10% of
Civic Trust groups claimed that they had been opposed by other
local environmental groups. Obviously, if an environmental
group is opposed by similar groups, it has less chance of
success, as its claims to 'representativeness' are diminished
in the eyes of those it seeks to influence.

Competition between Groups - the 'niche' theory

In theory, local environmental (and other voluntary)
groups are likely to be competing with each other for limited
resources: membership (and hence money and 'representative'
status) and access to influence local and other authorities.
Whilst individuals may be members of more than one local
environmental group, and in West Surrey there appeared to be
considerable overlap in members between different environmental
groups, time and energy must nevertheless be expended to ensure
that a high proportion of potential members join a group. Similarly, where different groups' demands upon local authorities are incompatible, or require a share of limited resources, they will be forced to compete for influence with the local authority.

These conflicts can be resolved by environmental groups in several ways. One of these is through local emphasis; concentrating upon issues within, and drawing members from, a limited geographical area. As Chapter 4 shows, this appears to be a common strategy in West Surrey (see page 138), with few groups commenting upon issues outside their immediate area of interest, thus minimising the possibilities for conflict with other environmental groups. Specialisation by groups in particular types of issues also reduces inter-group competition, and was found in all the study areas, where it appeared successful.

Competition for members and resources is minimised by a number of strategies besides localism, and the results are seen in the patterns of group membership and activity. The descriptions of Chapters 4, 5 and 6 show how groups vary in both the geographical area and the issues that they cover. Both BARKER and CONNELL describe, amongst groups with an interest in planning and amenity issues, as forming 'hierarchy' small road associations with narrow interests at the bottom, moving up to larger groups with broader interests (of the type who would register with the Civic Trust), with a natural link to national environmental organisations. Although several groups would cover one area, competition for members would be minimised because people would join different groups for different purposes; very local groups for minor issues, and larger-area groups for broader issues. At the national level, by contrast, LOWE traced different sub-grouping of organisations covering different types of issue, for example nature conservation or building preservation. Within these sub-groupings each organisation's concern would be slightly different, for example Victorian buildings or Georgian buildings, but the groups would be in close contact and share
expertise. Within the study areas, groups were differentiated on both area and issue grounds. Groups which failed to differentiate their 'territory' on either basis; either local concern or special issues, and which thus failed to avoid conflict and competition with other local environmental groups, faced serious problems.

In West Surrey towns and villages, groups with a general interest in the environment did appear to fit a 'hierarchy' pattern, although not necessarily an active, as opposed to a natural one. In these areas the lowest tier is usually provided by road associations, often formed to make up a private road surface, and thus are very localised and usually have a very high proportion of residents as members. As Chapter 4 describes, they have, in many cases become involved in environmental issues within their road, such as planning applications. Other very localised groups were found on small private estates, where negotiation with a common landlord or provider of services again means that a high proportion of potential members join.

On a slightly larger scale, some groups covered larger sections of a town or village. These groups generally covered areas which for some reason were recognised as 'neighbourhoods'; perhaps being built at the same time, or being geographically separate from the rest of the town or village. As they do not have a practical purpose, such as road associations, they tend generally to have a lower proportional membership. Few in West Surrey appeared to overlap with road associations; perhaps there are too few very localised issues to support both types of group. Beyond these groups in the hierarchy were those covering a whole town or village, generally relating to the boundaries of the settlement, sometimes to previous local government boundaries. These groups deal with town-wide issues, and might be expected to have a proportionally lower membership, although this is difficult to decide from the data. It is amongst this level of group that contact with federations and national environmental organisations is most common. Organisations such as the Civic Trust and the
Surrey Amenity Council prefer to recognise only one group as representing each area, and thus tend to choose groups from this level. Thus local group relationships could become a hierarchy of influence as well as area. As many groups pay little regard to federations, though, this tendency is minimised. Generally each local environmental group, of whatever size, negotiates directly with the local authority regardless of any other local environmental groups in the area. Sometimes in towns an ostensibly town-wide group will in fact concentrate mainly upon the town centre, leaving smaller groups to deal with issues in the suburbs. Such arrangements vary a great deal in time and in different places, and are very informal. In general, larger groups would not wish to comment upon such detailed issues as more localised groups. Thus the hierarchy exists in a physical form, and the groups' level in the hierarchy to some extent determines the issues they choose. The hierarchy does not describe groups' relations with each other or the local authority, however.

Beyond the area of a town or village, groups with a general concern about the environment are rarely successful. The experience of district-wide federations suggest that at this scale there is insufficient interest in general issues to generate the support and resources a group requires. Groups which claimed to cover an area wider than a town were found in practice to cover a smaller area, or else they became very weak, with a very low proportionate membership, taking little action, and with their role overtaken by more localised groups. This means, following local government reorganisation, that very few groups cover the whole of a local authority area, except for those groups who covered a Parish Council area. Allied to the comments of several environmental groups on the 'remoteness' of local government, this appears to indicate that in West Surrey, the areas with which most people identify are much smaller than the majority of current local government units. Few people seem to identify strongly with areas larger than a town, and many with areas much smaller than that.
In Newham, there was only one general environmental group, and that covered a small, homogeneous estate. More general groups had existed in the past, related to areas being redeveloped by the local authority. Only the Docklands-wide federation dealt with more general issues elsewhere in the borough, and it was relatively inactive. In Lambeth, there was no evidence of very small-scale groups; the majority covered recognised neighbourhoods, sometimes pre-reorganisation local government areas, and all smaller than the current Borough.

The maximum viable area for a general environmental group appeared to be that of a town - often relating to previous urban- and rural-district boundaries. Specialist groups could thrive at a much larger area.

Groups in all three study areas were also differentiated on the basis of issues, with the existence of specialist groups (see Chapter 6, page 239), which dealt with only particular types of issue. In Surrey, many of these covered a larger area than more general groups. The nature conservation group, in line with practice throughout Britain (LOWE ii), was county-wide, and divided into district-wide sub-groups. Anti-airports groups also covered a large area, as did many countryside access groups; groups specialising in building conservation were more variable in their size. It seems likely that fewer people will be interested in specialist issues than are concerned about the environment as a whole, so covering a larger area both allows a group to recruit sufficient members, and gives sufficient scope in the issues arising. Some specialist groups' activities are related to a geographical feature, for example an airport or a particular common, and their areas will be restricted by this. Their membership, however, need not be so restricted, as their constitutions and recruiting literature show. Unlike more general groups, they tend to draw members from outside their immediate geographical area.
In Newham, where the majority of groups were specialised, they varied more in the area that they covered. Some claimed to cover the whole Borough, others only a small area. Again some were limited in their size to a particular geographical feature or group of features, such as a polluting factory or a series of allotment sites. Not all groups had formal membership; of those which did, most did not restrict their membership to a particular geographical area. In Lambeth, specialist groups were not tied to geographical features, and drew their membership from the whole Borough.

Thus local environmental groups can differentiate their constituencies in two ways; either by covering only a specific area, or only a particular type of issue. Whilst the fact that some area-differentiated groups are small, others large, and they overlap indicates that a 'hierarchy' of groups exists, this is not confirmed necessarily by relationships between the groups. Groups simply deal with issues within their areas, and try to avoid competition and conflict with other groups to make themselves more viable. They act quite separately in their dealings with the local authority, and beyond a certain size groups with a general interest in the environment seem to be non-viable.

Thus local environmental groups, in their choice of issues and area, appear to conform with a type of 'niche theory', similar to that developed to describe natural ecosystems. Ecological niche theory explains how organisms within an environment are able to co-exist through exploiting different sets of resources in that environment. A woodland ecosystem, for example, will contain some animals eating vegetation at the tree tops level, some at ground level, and others under the ground. Other animals may feed on the same types of vegetation, but at different times of the day or year to minimise direct competition.

The environmental groups in the study area minimised conflict between themselves in different ways. Some limited their search for members to a special geographical area where
there was no other environmental group. Specialist groups sought members from areas which overlapped with those of other environmental groups, but appealed to different interests amongst the people in the area. Similarly, groups sought to influence the local authority either by claiming to represent views of people within a particular area, or with a particular, knowledgeable, interest.

In an ecosystem, competition occurs when organisms' niches, that is the particular sector of the environment they exploit, are not sufficiently differentiated; for example when two types of plant require the same light and soil conditions, at the same time. Similarly for environmental groups, when two different groups claim to represent the same population, or the same range of interests and expertise, conflict is likely to occur. In the study areas some groups had encountered this problem, and their usual response was to stress the differences between themselves and their competing groups, often on the basis of their ability to 'get things done', or on the tactics they used. Perhaps the Civic Trust groups studied by BARKER were attempting such a response when they stressed the difference between themselves and residents' associations.

In the study areas, whilst this type of response to conflict had allowed groups to remain in existence, it had had little value in obtaining influence with the local authorities. The result of such conflict between local environmental groups was usually the exclusion of one of the groups at least from meaningful participation and consultation. In several West Surrey cases, one of the conflicting groups had ceased to exist.

Where conflict between environmental groups had occurred in West Surrey, it was on several occasions due to a split in an existing group, leading to the formation of a rival, breakaway group. In several instances, the conflict was resolved by the two groups re-merging; on other occasions the conflict had continued, eventually resulting in the demise or dormancy of one of the conflicting groups.
The application of a 'niche theory' to environmental groups would suggest that in any one 'environment' of public and local authorities, there is a limited number of local environmental groups which can successfully co-exist. Of course, not all 'environments' are equally conducive to environmental group activity, as Chapter 6 has shown. The nature of a local society restricts the interest of people in their environment, and their capacity to take action on environmental issues. Similarly, the policies and nature of a local authority may place a limit on the number and type of groups allowed meaningful consultation (as NEWTON showed for Birmingham).

Although the use of 'niche theory' in this way gives an over-simplified view of environmental groups and their surroundings, it does indicate the necessity of studying the whole of environmental groups' 'environments' in order to understand their activities. Whilst concentrating upon one area, for example relations with the local authority, extends knowledge in that sphere, it cannot provide a full explanation of how environmental groups work. To obtain a full picture it is necessary, as this study has done, to look in some depth at all aspects of the environmental groups under study.

In practice, though, is this how the situation appears to the local environmental groups? How do they, in attempting to recruit members, differentiate themselves from other local environmental groups?

Methods of Differentiation: types of local environmental groups

Given the importance to groups of establishing their separate identity, how do they achieve differentiation between each other? And how do their methods of differentiation fit in with the classifications outlined in Chapter 1?

As Chapter 4 illustrated, many West Surrey environmental groups stress their local representativeness in recruiting members, often in contrast to local authorities who are seen
but were aware that they were competing for council resources. In Newham, too, the residents' association was aware that making its area a conservation area involved costs, which had to compete with other demands being made upon the local authority.

Many West Surrey environmental groups maintained the approach criticised by GREGORY as a cry of "anywhere but here". Campaigners against the Wisley Airport proposals were jubilant when it was suggested that the developers were considering Farnborough as an alternative site. Environmental groups in Farnborough were less delighted. During the closing stages of the study, local papers carried stories that environmentalists in Stanstead, threatened with being the third London airport site, were advocating that Gatwick and Heathrow airports be expanded instead. Conversely, some West Surrey groups decided to support the proposals for Stanstead to counter that threat (Surrey Advertiser). Other groups saw such open conflict as harmful, and did not comment upon where development should be sited if "not here". However, the fact that groups do not suggest other locations for development they do not want does not mean that their actions have no effect elsewhere. As SAUNDERS found in Croydon:

".....the stringent application of zoning regulations, density provisions, conservationist policies and the like may provide a highly significant tool by means of which existing imbalances between the facilities and desirability of different residential areas may consistently be reinforced."

In Croydon, this meant that the low densities and Green Belt of the south of the Borough were maintained at the expense of over-crowding and lack of open space in the north. Croydon planners had argued, at a public inquiry, that they were simply unable to cope with extra development in the south of the Borough to provide for overspill from inner-London boroughs. A similar argument was used by Surrey planners when the Secretary of State for the Environment allocated additional quotas for house building to the draft Surrey Structure Plan. A letter to the Surrey Advertiser (1979) at the time of the
furore over the Secretary of State's decision commented:

"As I read the moans...in letter(s) to the Surrey Advertiser...especially of the 6,500 houses expected to sprawl out 'over the green fields of Clandon', my first action was one of anger at his seeming utter selfishness."

The writer continued to describe the overcrowded housing conditions in inner London, and ascribe some of the blame for them to Green Belt policy.

Other writers have described how the actions of preservationist environmental groups can affect different types of people within their area. CLIFFORD described how, in Barnsbury, London, the actions of a residents' association meant that the local authority spent money upon improved street furniture instead of taking action upon the poor housing conditions of private tenants in the area, and how a traffic scheme made owner-occupied streets traffic-free by making main roads of streets occupied by tenants. NEWBY describes how the actions of newcomers to rural areas in Suffolk, keen to preserve the villages to which they have moved, limited job and housing opportunities for existing local residents. In Surrey, TROPP and TROPP found that working-class residents of villages were far from satisfied with the result of environmental groups' preservationist activities, which meant fewer, poorer facilities for them. Some groups, as described above, are already realising that their activities may have unforeseen consequences. One further indication that some West Surrey environmental groups are not, in fact, catering for the whole community is in statements several have made about their lack of members from local authority housing. One group stated:

"One of the most baffling problems in this area is to find support from the large council estate. Our minimum level of membership is from this sector of the community."

Other groups, in towns and villages have commented upon the same phenomenon with equal puzzlement, indicating their firm
belief that preservationist policies are in the interest of the whole community. In areas like Newham and Lambeth, the conflict between preservation and improved facilities has been more open. The attempts of the allotments group in Newham, for example, to preserve their sites, were opposed by many local organisations on the grounds that the industrial development which was to replace them would create much-needed jobs. Similarly the anti-pollution group was not supported by local trades unions, as they felt that calls for improved pollution control from the factory in question might lead to its closure.

The preservationist activities of local environmental groups can have other unforeseen costs, too. A planner in Lambeth explained:

"...the majority of inquiries we receive about conservation areas are from estate agents."

who are anxious to make a profit from the increased price that Conservation Area status confers on local housing. This means a profit to existing residents and estate agents, at the expense of future residents. As GREGORY comments:

"If there is one persistent and blindingly obvious motif that runs through all amenity disputes it is clearly this: what we are not prepared to pay for we cannot have. But who are 'we'? And how do 'we' decide what is to be spent on preserving or enhancing amenity and the natural environment?".

Criticisms of Local Environmental Groups

Authors such as EVERSLEY, LOWE, and SAUNDERS have criticised local environmental groups for the costs that they impose upon others. EVERSLEY describes conservationists as:

"A tiny minority of self-appointed arbiters of taste (who) dictate what the living standards of the rest of us shall be."

but is this necessarily true? Not all authors are so critical, BARKER, by contrast, comments:
"Amenity societies have....been in the vanguard of those pressing for a more selective surgery in place of the comprehensive destruction of urban tissue that comprehensive redevelopment has meant."

Certainly unrestricted development, whether of town centres or in the building of tower blocks, has rarely been entirely successful or popular with local people. Not every London borough echoes the experience of Croydon, and in Lambeth the local authority has ensured that provision of housing and open space in the north of the Borough can be combined with conservation throughout Lambeth, and the activities of conservation-conscious environmental groups. Had it not been for the actions of early environmentalists, many open spaces in cities as well as countryside would no longer remain, and historic buildings would have disappeared.

Some of the consequences ascribed to local environmental groups could equally be seen as due to outside factors, such as the movement of population from city centres, the rising price of land, and the increasing centralisation of industry. The study data indicates some of the ways in which national Government policy can affect the local environment. HAIN describes how, in Covent Garden, local people defeated comprehensive redevelopment plans in a wish to preserve their way of life, but still faced change as rising prices brought in different residents, shops, and other uses. Much of the criticism of local environmental groups relates to the fact that their activities are unevenly distributed geographically, and in terms of social class. Thus the 'pluralist' system is not felt to work correctly, as some sections of society are effectively disenfranchised (hence attempts by community workers to redress the balance by assisting voluntary groups in deprived areas). Thus it is not environmentalism which is being criticised, but the effects of concern for the environment being unevenly expressed, which induces hostility in authors such as SAUNDERS to environmental groups. He criticises South Croydon groups for being successful whilst North Croydon groups are not.
The 'new-wave' environmental groups, and indeed some specialist environmental groups, would criticise those groups concerned with preservation for another reason: the narrowness of their outlook on the environment, and their ignorance of the long-term consequence of their actions. The least extreme form of such criticism is voiced by specialist groups, especially those concerned with nature conservation. These groups are aware that demands of preservationist groups, based solely on visual criteria, may be damaging in the long run. Calls for regular mowing of road verges may reduce the diversity of wildlife. Prevention of repairs to historic buildings on aesthetic grounds may result in the eventual collapse of the building. In West Surrey in particular, nature conservation groups felt that preservation-conscious groups often made harmful suggestions, but were attempting, through education, to improve matters. In Newham, the nature conservation group criticised a campaign by allotment-holders against the brown-tailed moth on the grounds that many other species could be destroyed by accident. Overall, however, specialist groups welcomed the 'instinct to preserve' exhibited by more general environmental groups, and felt that, with education, it would provide the basis for longer-term action on the environment.

The criticism provided by 'new-wave' environmental groups is more extreme. In many cases the activities of preservationist groups were seen as irrelevant to the major environmental issues. Whilst Friends of the Earth and similar groups wish to preserve open space and wildlife, this is part of a wider campaign to reduce resource depletion and combat pollution on a wider scale. What is important is not the density of housing development, but that houses are built to conserve energy. Fighting motorway development is useless if it results only in a slightly altered route; what is important is to reduce resource consumption and pollution through reducing private motoring, and promoting public transport. The two Surrey anti-airport groups could state in their literature that "no-one is suggesting we can do without airports..." and "We like to fly too". Friends of the Earth have argued, on
the contrary, that the amount of flying should be reduced, along with the fuel consumption of, and pollution by aircraft. This basic dilemma, that a wish for improved living standards is difficult to reconcile with a wish to preserve the environment, is described by GREGORY:

"An expanding population insists upon higher standards of material comfort and convenience. To satisfy these demands a limited supply of land must be developed or re-developed to provide both the apparatus of production and distribution. The result is a well-known catalogue of developments. Necessary and desirable they may be, but, often as not, these developments interfere with the amenities of the locality chosen for the project. Indeed, their impact is often felt far beyond the particular patch or strip of land on which they are situated."

'New-wave' groups would go further than GREGORY, and say that the repercussions of such developments are felt world-wide, and that they cannot be tolerated for much longer. Local environmental groups are concerned with the externalities of development within their immediate area, and thus success is counted as prevention of that development locally. 'New-wave' groups tend to view externalities on a world-wide scale, and success is thus only achieved if the bad effects of developments are removed or reduced altogether.

Some environmental groups criticised preservationists for the same reasons as the authors quoted earlier: for the naivety of their belief that their actions were for the good of the whole community. Such groups took a specifically sectional approach, aiming to improve the environment for working class people, and were thus explicitly political, often siding with Labour Parties and trade unions. Such groups were found in Newham and Lambeth, and one such group also existed in West Surrey although its activities were limited. It, together with the local Trades Council, condemned the Surrey Structure Plan for benefiting wealthy owner-occupiers at the expense of local people needing jobs and local authority accommodation. In Newham, the Docklands-wide federation favoured the building of homes for rent, rather than for sale,
and the provision of jobs for working people along with its wider environmental objectives. The anti-pollution group in Newham saw pollution as a problem mainly encountered by working-class people, and called for expenditure by the firms concerned, and by the authorities to combat it. In North Lambeth local environmental groups called for public expenditure to provide rented housing and jobs for local people, instead of luxury accommodation and office space. These groups, in direct contrast to the preservationists, saw the question of the distribution of environmental costs and benefits as vital. Instead of seeing the improvement of the environment as uncontentious and low-cost, they demanded public expenditure to reduce the burden of externalities born by particular sections of the community.

Thus not only do different local environmental groups have different ranges of interests, but their actions can be mutually incompatible. West Surrey generalist groups believe that their activities are low-cost and to the benefit of the community as a whole, but inner-city groups feel that they are being forced to accept a high burden of externalities in the form of unpleasant developments rejected by the suburbs. The stress of generalist groups on the visual may be incompatible with the aims of specialist groups for a more long-term campaign of conservation. The insistence of West Surrey groups that they do want the benefits of modern life, as long as the necessary developments are elsewhere, conflicts with the global views of the 'new-wave' environmental groups. Not only do local environmental groups not co-operate in a comprehensive way, they may indeed be acting in opposition to each other. Even within the sector of the environmental movement which is by far the most numerous, the traditional preservationist groups, there can be conflicts over the siting of developments which are believed to be necessary, as the arguments over airport location show.

These differences in the concerns groups have, and the costs of their activities, will affect their relations with local government.
Local Environmental Groups and Local Government

Both the data, and the nature of the legislation (see Chapters 6 and 2) indicate how vital it is for traditional local environmental groups to achieve a good relationship with the relevant local authorities. Much of these groups' activity is concerned with planning and development control, where the legislation contains well-established procedures for public participation. Although development control, as opposed to plan-making, was specifically excluded from the legislation (see Chapter 2), local authorities are obliged to make public applications received, and most consider representations from environmental groups. Both the study data and the literature indicate that many traditional environmental groups have achieved a good working relationship with their local authorities. However, the stress of some groups on local opinion and local activities led them to criticise some local authorities as being too large, and not responsive enough to local people's needs.

Most of the traditional groups, as described above, see protecting the environment as a common good, and are keen to stress their a-political nature. They tend to work through paid officers rather than elected councillors, both to stress their political neutrality, and because they feel this is most effective. These characteristics were found in traditional groups in all three study areas. Groups are obviously at an advantage in such relationships if their aims are similar to those they are trying to influence, they are familiar with the channels and procedures for contact and they 'talk the same language' as council officers (see DEARLOVE). It is important to these environmental groups to maintain good relationships with the local authority in the long term, and they may modify their demands to achieve this, for example by limiting their opposition to a proposal which the authority is determined to carry through. It is at this point that the basic policies of the local authority can have an effect; demands which directly contradict this ideology (for example a call for increased industrial expansion in Surrey) are unlikely to be considered. SAUNDERS describes
how Croydon Borough Council's reluctance to increase its expenditure meant that many local group schemes were discounted from the outset on the basis of cost.

Maintaining a relationship over time is also seen as important by planners. One in West Surrey distinguished between 'responsible groups', who could disagree with the local authority on a particular issue, but would maintain good relations, and 'irresponsible' groups, who allowed any disagreement to lead to a breakdown in co-operation. Throughout the study, planners made similar distinctions between groups, and welcomed co-operation with 'responsible' ones. If groups limited their representations to major planning proposals, supported the local authority at public inquiries when planning permission was refused, and used the correct procedures (including working through officers rather than councillors), their co-operation was welcomed. If, on the other hand, they contacted planners over what the latter considered as 'minor' points, used high-publicity, confrontational tactics, and failed to support the local authority they were unlikely to be consulted so closely. Few cases were found in the study areas of groups failing to achieve success because they used the wrong tactics. Most groups knew what tactics were likely to be acceptable to the authority and acted accordingly.

Although some planners described pressure from local councillors for increased public consultation, more planners described a joint campaign by themselves and environmental groups to increase the awareness of local councillors. The impression was given (though no direct evidence is available), that officers had a great deal of influence upon the way local authority decisions on the environment were made, with many decisions going through "on the nod", as one planner put it, on the basis of planners' recommendations. ELKIN similarly found that local authority officers had a great deal of power, although they frequently denied it. NEWTON found that 'established' local voluntary groups dealt directly with officers, whilst less established ones were directed by officers to their elected representatives. On these grounds
most local environmental groups are well 'established', but as Chapter 6 shows, they have a number of practical reasons for contacting officers, including the nature of the planning process.

Both DRAKE and HAIN describe the different forms that 'participation' can take, from a complete transfer of power to outside organisations, to a simple input to the authority's decision-making process. Planners and traditional environmental groups, in all three study areas, appeared agreed upon the latter format. Indeed, some environmental groups relied heavily upon the local authority, even attempting to persuade it to deal with neighbours who had untidy gardens. Some planners complained of the unwillingness of traditional groups to undertake responsibilities; in one area, for example, a local environmental group in West Surrey was most reluctant to accept reclaimed gravel-pit land offered to it free by the gravel company to construct a nature reserve.

Political Views of Local Environmental Groups

In Chapter 1, the different approaches of national environmental groups to politics were discussed, and the question of whether their attitudes were reflected at the local level raised.

The specialist traditional environmental groups also tended to maintain an apolitical stance in their relations with the local authorities. This was in line with their claim to recognition through their expertise, rather than their representation of any particular group of people. Their contact was even more likely to be with officers than members of the local authority, and none had ever considered sponsoring candidates for election.

Not all local environmental groups shared this apolitical attitude towards their local authorities. As described above, there were groups in both Newham and Lambeth who saw the environment as very much a political issue, and were intent
on redistributing environmental costs and benefits to the advantage of particular sections of society. Chapter 5 describes the close links which some Newham groups developed with the local Labour Party and trades unions in this context. Both the inner-city areas described in the study were Labour Party controlled, and thus the local authorities might be expected to be sympathetic to the aspirations of such groups, and the expenditure that their demands required. They also were more likely to contact councillors rather than officers, again for both practical reasons and because they felt it the correct way to proceed. The one environmental group in Surrey of this type, which was a branch of the Socialist Environment and Resources Association, also had close links with local Labour Parties and trade unions, but as both District and County councils in Surrey are Conservative controlled, they made little impact upon the activities of local authorities.

At the national level, as Chapter 1 describes, there were specific environmental groups associated with the Conservative and Liberal, as well as the Labour parties. There was no evidence of local branches of these organisations in any of the study areas. Only one group in West Surrey admitted to being in close contact with the Conservative Party, and none were in regular contact with the Liberal Party, although several groups said that they had been approached by the Liberals. Another national group not found within the study areas was the Ecology Party, although candidates of this party had stood in elections in the eastern half of Surrey, without success.

The 'new-wave' groups in the study areas had had varying attitudes towards their local authorities. Many of the issues which concerned such groups were beyond the remit of local government, requiring action at a national or even international level. In West Surrey there was virtually no contact between 'new-wave' groups and the local authorities, but the groups in Newham and Lambeth had become more involved in local issues, and thus had more contact. This was no doubt partly because the type of issues involving these groups, pollution for example, are more likely to manifest themselves in inner-
city areas. Nevertheless, inner-city groups had achieved some success in their contacts with their local authority, whilst groups in West Surrey appeared to have made no attempt to develop such a relationship. 'New-wave' groups in Surrey were content to limit themselves to education and support for action at the national level, rather than becoming involved in local issues.

Environmental Groups as Representatives of Local People

In some areas of West Surrey, planners complained that groups sometimes acted as if they were a lower tier of local authority, feeling that they had a right for their views to be accepted, and carrying out inspections of sites where development was proposed, shadowing the actions of the local authority. As described above, some traditional groups place a great deal of stress upon the aim of representing local people's views, in contrast to more specialist groups whose emphasis is more on expertise. Most groups stressed a mixture of the two aspects, but some groups in West Surrey laid such emphasis upon representing local people's views, in competition with local authorities, that they supported their own candidates for election as councillors.

This phenomenon was only encountered in West Surrey, and had not been described in the literature on environmental groups (see Chapter 1), but has a bearing on the question of local groups' representativeness. In West Surrey, however, the phenomenon was not new, with one area having been represented by an environmental-group sponsored candidate continuously for over 30 years (see Chapter 4, page 172). The majority of candidates, though, had been proposed within the last ten years, many since local government re-organisation. Candidates had been elected to all levels of authority, from Parish to County councils, though the majority were at District level. Some stood as candidates specific to the local environmental groups, others as 'Independants' with their endorsement. The candidates had achieved a high rate of success, although opposed by all three main political parties. The groups which
took such a step saw in it three main advantages. These were increased power through direct access to decision-making, refutation of claims that they were 'unrepresentative', and for many, the removal of party politics from local government.

The idea that party politics is inappropriate for local government is allied to the traditional environmental groups' view of their local communities as having unified aims and needs, one of which is a pleasant environment. Party politics is thus seen as irrelevant and divisive, in contrast to the views of other environmental groups described above. Such a view of 'non-political' local government, and its consequential support for independent and 'local party' candidates is not confined to West Surrey environmental groups. GRANT, in a study of independent local politics, and KING and NUGENT in studies of middle-class participation in politics, have described similar phenomena throughout Britain. KING and NUGENT relate the development of local parties mainly to the 'rates revolt' of the late 1960's where groups throughout the country protested at rate increases by putting up Ratepayer candidates. Interestingly they describe how one such group, under pressure from members, broadened its concerns to include local environmental issues. GRANT describes a number of organisations which supported candidates under the organisational name or as independents. In 1976, he says, there were 384 'purely local party' councillors on district councils in England and Wales, 36 of these in London boroughs. In Newham, too, there was a history of Ratepayer councillors, who during the late 1960's had held the balance of power in the Borough. By the time of the study their power had diminished considerably, and there was no evidence that they had ever been involved in environmental issues. GRANT described several groups which expressed concern about environmental and planning issues, one having been formed due to a local planning crisis.

These studies confirmed that, as in West Surrey, groups putting up candidates see local government as apolitical, concerned only with common-sense policies based upon local
Many also see the role of local government as small, to be run with low income and expenditure, much as their own groups are run. The emphasis on the importance of low rates varies between groups, but illustrates their view of environmentalism as a low cost activity. The feeling that local government is remote from ordinary people is commonly expressed by these local environmental groups, particularly where the effects of local government reorganisation have been dramatic (see Chapter 4, page 167).

GRANT felt that reorganisation would lessen the number of local parties, as it would be more difficult to achieve election to larger authorities. This does not appear to have happened in West Surrey, perhaps because a local group organisation is now needed for election, whilst independent candidates could gain election unaided in smaller authorities.

The support achieved by environmental group candidates indicates that many local residents share their views on the nature of local government. Indeed, several environmental groups which did not support candidates described how they were treated by local people as a form of authority. Thus people would bring their problems and complaints to activists in the local environmental group, rather than to the local authority or other official bodies. This was generally discouraged by the environmental groups, but persisted, with complaints about everything from illegal parking to non-collection of dustbins.

In this context, some hostility between local environmental groups and statutory bodies, such as Parish or neighbourhood councils, might have been expected. In West Surrey there were no statutory neighbourhood councils, and those groups whose areas overlapped with Parish councils reported good relations between them. Observation revealed some rivalry, however, with groups sometimes feeling that they were more representative and active than their statutory rival. In areas where there was no Parish council, as Chapter 4 describes, existing environmental groups were often highly critical of attempts by the Surrey Voluntary Service
Council to introduce the idea of emparishment; the groups felt that their presence rendered Parish councils an unnecessary expense. Only in areas which had lost their local councils in reorganisation, and where the new districts were felt to be remote, were Parish councils welcomed by environmental groups as having a complementary function to that of the groups.

None of the traditional environmental groups outside West Surrey had ever supported a candidate for election to a local authority. In Lambeth, where the local authority had set up Neighbourhood Councils with some powers of access to, and finance from the authority in the early 1970's, few environmental groups appeared to have been involved with them. Few neighbourhood councils had in any case overlapped with the area of environmental groups. They were deliberately located in areas where existing voluntary groups were weakest, and by the time of the study had become virtually inactive. The traditional environmental groups within the area preferred to make representations to the local authority directly, through the machinery of the planning system.

One Environmental Movement or Several?

The evidence available, from both the study data and the literature, indicates that the concept of one, unified local environmental movement is false. Not only are groups slow to undertake co-ordinated action, and concerned with very different issues, but their long-term aims may actually be in direct conflict with each other. It is in their attitude to local politics that these differences are emphasised.

What have been described in this chapter as the traditional environmental groups appear to be the most numerous, especially in suburban areas like West Surrey. These groups see protection of the local environment as an uncontroversial, low cost demand, and their approach to local authorities is thus apolitical, using the tactics described
by DEARLOVE as 'insider'. Even when supporting candidates for local elections, these groups call for an end to party politics in local government, and a return to consensus. Despite the wide agreement found amongst such groups on both aims and tactics, co-operation between them, as opposed to informal contact, is rare. Formal federations have collapsed or become moribund in many cases, because of the reluctance of groups to concede to majority decisions; this is hardly surprising when many stress the importance of local people making decisions upon the future of their area. Indeed this local focus, which in many ways provides the strength of traditional groups in attracting members and influencing local authorities, is also their weakness. A substantial number of these groups are content when they are able to preserve their own area. They are unaware of, or do not feel it is their business to be concerned about, where developments diverted from their area are located. Thus co-ordination of their strategy on a national, or even regional level becomes difficult. In fact groups in different areas are in competition with each other not to be the site for changes to the environment, and perhaps are able to achieve the success they do because their numbers are not evenly distributed. Some of the groups in the study areas were becoming aware of this dilemma, and were beginning to modify their demands and activities accordingly. Contact with national environmental organisations might have hastened this process, but a relatively low proportion of traditional environmental groups were in regular contact with their national counterparts, and even fewer shared regular co-operation with them.

The other traditional groups described by the study were those who specialised in particular issues. These groups tended to stress their expertise, rather than their representation of local opinion, both to members and local authorities. Different types of specialist groups appeared to show little interest in each others concerns, and their relations with more general environmental groups was not always close. Indeed, the demands of general environmental groups sometimes
conflicted with those of the specialists. Some specialist groups, particularly those concerned with nature conservation, had close contact with their relevant national environmental organisations. However, these national organisations do not seem to have a great deal of contact with those of different specialist interests either.

Other types of environmental group identified in the study were smaller in numbers, and their history more recent. Both had a different concept of the nature of environmental problems, and of their political significance. Inner-city groups which saw environmental problems as an unacceptable cost which working-class people bear had forged links with the labour movement, and saw the quality of the environment as an overtly political issue. Such groups are related to the inner-city community groups described by BUTCHER, and TAYLOR, and may be supported by community workers and finance from local authorities, although many community groups are not directly concerned with environmental issues. There is some evidence, for example the existence of the Socialist Environment and Resources Association, to indicate that such groups are in contact with each other, but their numbers within the study areas were too small for real co-operation.

Numbers of the other type of local environmental group, the 'new-wave', were also small. Their perspective on environmental issues was both broader and more long-term than that of other local environmental groups. Their global view of the environment meant that the issues which concerned them could rarely be solved at local level, although small achievements could be made, and education was a priority for most. At the national level 'new-wave' groups have co-operated with more traditional ones over particular issues, for example motorway proposals, although the two have argued on a different basis. There was no evidence of this happening at the local level in the study areas, and indeed the two types of groups were sometimes openly hostile towards each other. Neither did different 'new-wave' groups necessarily co-operate with each other; and this is echoed at the national
level where, despite some recent efforts by the 'political' environmental groups, there is no sign of the 'Green movements' of France and Germany being formed in Britain.

Although this poor co-operation, and even direct opposition amongst local environmental groups might be expected to restrict their effectiveness, all local environmental groups felt that they had achievements to their credit. There is little doubt that the environment in Britain would be very different today were it not for their efforts and influence over the years. Despite their differences, all the groups were committed to improving the environment in the way they saw as best, not just for themselves, but for others too. Their achievements had not, of course, been cost-free, and the question of the costs of environmental improvement and where they should fall was one which divided them. The local focus of environmental groups allowed them to be aware of small but important threats to the environment, and to achieve the influence with local authorities to avert them. Their lack of co-ordination meant that they were less able to deal with broader issues, and in the study areas the effects of national decisions upon the local environment have already been described. Nor does the variation in objectives and political attitudes of the groups augur well for future cooperation, except upon limited specific issues.

The role of local environmental groups, for the present at least, is therefore important but limited. If the 'new-wave' groups are to be believed, much more drastic action than they are capable of is likely to be necessary to prevent deterioration of the environment, and it is likely to remain the role of national groups to seek changes at the national level. For the future, prediction is always difficult. In the 1960's it appeared that 'new-wave' groups would become far more important than existing environmental groups, but the traditional groups, with their very different perspective have remained and increased their numbers and support. If the 'new-wave' groups are correct, environmental problems will become too overwhelming for traditional solutions, and the
traditional groups may disappear. The rise of politically-aware environmental groups in the inner cities may give more meaning to the concept of a pluralist system of environmental groups, and may strengthen the traditional groups through challenging them. Whatever the future outcome of the contradictions between local environmental groups, to talk of an 'environmental revolution' in Britain is at the least premature. Indeed, the publicity given to 'new-wave' groups disguises the existence at the local level of much greater numbers of traditional groups, which far from being superseded by 'new-wave' groups, are growing in numbers.

Indeed, none of the models of the local environmental movement contained in the literature describe fully the data collected from the study areas. Pluralist theory, that competing groups will achieve an optimum solution to problems, is negated by the uneven distribution of environmental groups in different areas of the country. The various descriptions of environmental groups in major issues ignore the fact that such issues arise only infrequently in groups' lifetimes. Models that rely solely on the relations between local groups and their local authorities, beg the question of national Government influence on the local environment, and the questions of issues and the people who make up the groups. Whilst it is obvious that environmental groups cannot be understood in isolation from their surroundings, it is worth repeating that only by looking at every aspect of their 'environment' can a full understanding of their activities be obtained. Simple explanations of group behaviour, concentrating upon only one aspect of their 'environment', are likely to conceal as much as they reveal.

Nevertheless, beyond this complexity, one basic theme emerges: that in Britain a growing number of people care enough about their environment to form and join groups to protect and improve it. Whilst the 'environmental revolution' has certainly not taken place in the form envisaged ten years ago, care and concern for the environment in Britain is thriving.
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APPENDIX
During preliminary research in West Surrey it became apparent that the number of local environmental groups within the area was much higher than had been expected, and that it would not be feasible to carry out the original aim of interviewing key personnel from all groups within the available time. (Indeed, it was originally intended that research should cover environmental groups throughout the whole of Surrey, on the expectation that the total number would only be around 50). It was therefore decided that a postal questionnaire, supplemented by some interviews, and by information from literature produced by the environmental groups themselves, would give the maximum amount of information within the resources available.

Interviews had already been conducted with key personnel from a number of environmental groups as the initial stage of research, and together with the literature, these indicated a number of areas of interest upon which information was required. The aim of the questionnaire was to confirm or reject the various hypotheses in the literature (see Chapter 1), and to ascertain whether the detailed information being obtained from interviews with particular groups and local authorities applied equally to the whole of the study area. The questionnaire should also indicate the scope and nature of local environmental group activity in West Surrey in a general way. The questionnaire thus needed to ask about group formation and organisation, aims and activities, relations between local environmental groups and other organisations, and groups' problems and achievements.

As a major aim of the study as a whole was to produce detailed information about a range of environmental groups, to fill the gap between case studies and generalisations in the literature, a lengthy questionnaire would be most useful. However, the experience of many postal questionnaires, (and
the suggestion of several environmental group personnel interviewed) is that the longer the questionnaire, and the more complex, the lower the response rate. A high response rate was particularly important, to indicate the scope of local environmental group activity, and to allow for the variety which appeared to exist. Thus the questionnaire also needed to be as brief and simple as possible.

Using examples of questionnaires prepared by several researchers, the suggestions of environmental groups already interviewed, and with advice from people with experience in the application of postal questionnaires, an initial questionnaire was drawn up. This was passed to colleagues within the University for comment, and then piloted by sending copies to those environmental groups who had already been interviewed, and who had agreed to assist in this way. These groups completed the questionnaire, and also commented on any problems they had encountered, and suggested some improvements. In one local groups, on the suggestion of activists, all members of the committee were given a copy of the initial questionnaire, and time was set aside at a committee meeting to discuss problems and improvements. One interesting fact arising from this and other meetings was that whilst some committee members felt that the questionnaire was too long, and that they would not answer it, generally group Secretaries indicated that they would feel that replying was the responsible thing to do, and also that they had the knowledge to reply readily available. For this reason, when questionnaires were mailed, they were addressed to the Secretary wherever possible, rather than other officers or the committee in general. However, the questionnaire did not specify whether the views to be given should be those of the Secretary or the group as a whole; interviews had indicated that there was unlikely to be much difference between the two, but this allowed for a personal reply by the Secretary if the group as a whole was unwilling to complete the questionnaire. In the event, a range of replies was received, some clearly the work of a number of people, others stating firmly that the views were of a personal nature only. No discrimination
was made between these in the analysis, as interview experience had indicated that there was likely to be little divergence between them.

It was felt that attaching a covering letter to the questionnaire, stating the aims of research, stressing confidentiality and giving addresses and telephone numbers where the researcher could be contacted was important. Again, the letter was given to previously-interviewed groups for comment. The results of the pilot survey were compared with the information already collected from the groups, to identify omissions and misleading question wording. In the light of this comparison, and the comments received, the questionnaire was modified. The wording in general was simplified, and more questions on the positive achievements of environmental groups, which the pilot groups had suggested, were added. The final version of the questionnaire (see over) stressed confidentiality, and encouraged groups to send their own literature to supplement, or replace part of, their questionnaire replies. It was hoped that this would both encourage a higher response rate by reducing the work of completing the questionnaire, and provide a further source of information. A pre-paid, addressed reply envelope was included, and the questionnaire was printed to give a pleasant appearance.

As one of the goals of research was to obtain a comprehensive picture of local environmental group activity within the area, copies were sent, as Chapter 4 describes, to all organisations which might possibly be environmental groups within the area. The initial mailing of the questionnaire took place at the end of March 1980, with other copies being mailed whenever a new address for a potential environmental group was discovered. Approximately one third of the eventual total of completed questionnaires were received within one month of the initial mailing. People working with the Surrey Voluntary Services Council had commented that voluntary groups in the area were very conscientious at returning questionnaires, but that they sometimes took a considerable
Dear

I am a member of a small group based at the University of Surrey studying local societies concerned about amenity and the environment. At the moment I am working in the West Surrey area, and hope to see as many different societies as possible.

I am interested in the problems that local societies are trying to solve, how they set about tackling these problems, and how the societies are organised. I realise that you must be very busy, but I would be very grateful for your help.

I attach some basic questions that I am asking all local amenity and environmental societies in the area. The answers will be treated in strict confidence, and no society will be mentioned individually when I write my report for the University, unless they specifically give their permission.

I hope I have made the questions as straightforward as possible, but if you would like further information, or have any questions, please telephone me at the above number or in the evenings on 01-946 3094. If you are able to send any leaflets, or a newsletter, produced by your society, these would be a great help to me.

I do hope you will find time to answer these questions, as I feel the results will be of great interest to all concerned about Surrey. My completed report will be available to all interested societies. I look forward to hearing and enclose a reply-paid envelope for your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Janet Vernon BSc.
Part 1

This section asks about the organisation of your society. If you are able to send a leaflet to supplement your answers, please do so.

Please would you write the full name of your society below? This is as a check only and will not be used in the analysis of replies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 1a) How many members does your society have at present?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1b) How many other people do you estimate would respond to a call for support by your society on a major issue?

| 7                                                            |

2) What area of Surrey does your society cover?

| 8                                                            |

3) What year was your society formed? (If you are not sure, please estimate.)

| 9                                                            |

4) Why was your society formed? If it was because of a specific problem, please describe this briefly.

| 10                                                           |

5a) Does your society have a committee? If so, how many members has it?

| 11                                                           |

b) Some societies are fortunate enough to have people on their committee with valuable expertise - such as solicitors, architects, engineers. What expertise, if any, does your committee have?

| 12                                                           |

c) How many meetings, if any, have you held this year which were open to your society's members? Please give the numbers and subjects.

| 13                                                           |

| 14                                                           |

(continued)
6a) Is your society affiliated to any of the following organisations? Please put a tick by those to which your society is affiliated.

- Council for the Protection of Rural England
- Surrey Trust for Nature Conservation
- Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Preservation Society
- Civic Trust (tick if you are registered with this group)
- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
- Surrey Amenity Council
- National Trust
- Any other organisation (please name them below)

b) Is your society in regular contact with any other local organisations? If so, please list them below.

Part 2

This section asks about your society's aims, the problems you are faced with, and how you try to solve them. This short inquiry can't do justice to the complex activities of your society, but asks you to think of 'typical' problems. If you would like to add further information, please use the back of the form.

7) What are the main aims of your society? (For example, those in your constitution)

8) What, briefly, are some of the main issues on which your society has been active in the last few years?

(continued)
9a) Different societies use different means to solve their problems. Below is a list of some methods used by local societies. For a major issue, such as one of those you have listed above, please tick any methods your society has used.

Monitoring planning applications
Starting a petition
Holding a public meeting
Contacting other local societies
Arranging a demonstration
Producing a leaflet about the issue
Putting your views to the local council
Asking a national organisation for support
Sponsoring a local election candidate
Appearing at a public inquiry
Contacting a local MP

(Please list any other methods used below)

b) How did this major issue first come to the attention of the society?

c) Who decided that the issue was important enough for the society to take action on?

d) Do you feel that the actions taken by your society affected the outcome of the issue? What makes you think this?

(continued)
10a) Some people think that since local government was re-organised, the new, larger authorities are too remote, and less helpful to local societies. Others feel that the expertise of the new Counties and Districts has made them more sympathetic to the aims of societies such as yours. What has your experience of your County, District, (and Parish) councils been?


b) Is your society's opinion on environmental and/or planning matters regularly sought by any of your local authorities? If so, please specify by which authority.


c) Is your society's contact with local authorities mainly with paid officers or with elected council members? If this varies between Different authorities, please specify.


11) What would you say is the biggest problem facing your society? (Please continue your answer over the page if necessary).


12) Finally, which of its achievements is your society proudest of? (Again please use the back of the sheet if you wish).


Thankyou very much for answering the questions, I hope it wasn't too much trouble. If you would like to add any comments, or telephone me with any queries, please do so.

Janet Vernon,
Surrey University,
March 1980.
amount of time, to allow for consultation of their committees. The timing of the questionnaire had thus allowed for up to six months for this process, during which period research concentrated upon the other study areas. In some cases questionnaires were returned as undelivered mail, and in others they had been returned by the current occupants of the address, at which the group in question could no longer be contacted. In these cases, attempts were made to locate new addresses for the groups, and where possible, new mailings were sent out. Returned questionnaires were acknowledged, and in some cases were followed up by interviews with group activists, generally where the groups were in areas where no previous interviews had been held, or where the questionnaire replies contained some interesting feature. As Chapter 4 describes, several organisations contacted turned out not be environmental groups, and these were removed from the list.

After five months had elapsed for groups to complete consultation and send in replies, the process of following-up non-respondents began. Where there were two addresses available for an organisation, a second questionnaire was sent to the address no used previously. Later telephone calls were made to organisations for whom a telephone number was available, asking whether a questionnaire had been received, and attempting to elicit some information about the organisation if it did not feel able to complete the questionnaire. Where no alternative address or telephone number was available, reminders, offering to send a new questionnaire if it had not been received, were sent. Seventy-one groups received postal reminders, resulting in six replies, most giving a new address, or stating that the organisation in question was now defunct. Telephone calls gave a much higher response rate, both in new addresses and completed questionnaires. However, as most calls had to be made during the evening, this was an awkward and time-consuming process. Only one reply was identified as having been lost in the post, although several organisations appeared not to have received the original mailing. In September 1980, six months
after the initial mailing, attempts to contact non-
respondents were abandoned, although replies arriving
after this date could still be incorporated in the analysis.

Analysis of Questionnaire Data

An initial scheme for analysis of the questionnaire
data, based on the pilot and interview data, had been drawn
up whilst the questionnaire was being prepared. This was
modified after preliminary examination of the replies to
take account of the breadth of information they contained.

A great deal of information was obtained from manual
analysis of both the questionnaires and the mass of accom­
panying material which the environmental groups had sent.
To give a more systematic picture of the data, however, it
was felt that further analysis would be useful. The data on
the questionnaires had been coded for ease of computer entry,
and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was
available in an easily manipulable form through the University
of Surrey PRIME computer system.

The first purpose of computer analysis was to sort
the data, giving the frequency of each variable, and the
mean, median, variance and standard deviation. (The latter,
however, proved to be of limited use, as the majority of
data was at the nominal, or at best ordinal level).

The next stage of analysis was to look for relationships
between different variables within the data. No significant
correlations were found between the variables in their
original form, owing primarily to the large number of
categories within each variable, (for example, many variables
had nine possible responses), and the relatively low number
of cases (101).

Revised Manual Analysis

After some experimentation, the simplest way to
organise the combined data from interviews and questionnaires,
and thus increase the number of cases, proved to be the drawing up of a large table. Whilst the table was being prepared, it proved possible to delimit more useful variables, within which the number of possible categories could be restricted. This was assisted by the need to include data from an interview rather than a questionnaire format. The variables used in the Table are shown in Table 1. Whilst there was a possibility that bias might be introduced by the researcher drawing information selectively from the interview, this was minimised by the existence of completed pilot questionnaires for several groups, and the use of information only when group opinion or practice had been clearly noted at the time of the interview. Printed information from the groups in question, for example groups' constitutions, was also used.

Because of these constraints, and the fact that not all the questionnaires had been completed fully, there were gaps in the table summarising data on West Surrey environmental groups. Nevertheless, it proved to be a useful and clear way to present the data, and indeed provided the basis for the description of West Surrey groups given in Chapter 4. The discipline of having to fit the data onto a table forced a clearer analysis of the data, and the most useful variables to draw out. These new variables also provided an improved basis for computer analysis, and as it was still felt useful to give a statistical basis to conclusions drawn from manual analysis, a search was instigated for an improved method of computer analysis.

**Identification of Related Variables by the 'McQuitty List' System**

The aim of the second computer analysis was to ensure that manual analysis had not led to falsely-based conclusions, and that no inter-variable relationships had been missed in earlier analysis. The aim was to identify not only the possible association between pairs of variables, but also sets of related variables which might define different types of local environmental group. Whilst factor analysis is
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1</th>
<th>VARIABLES USED IN DATA TABLE AND MCQUITTY MATRIX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSHIP:</td>
<td>number of members of group. Categories high (over 1000), low (under 100) and medium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AREA:</td>
<td>geographical area covered by group. Categories large (town or larger), small (one road or small estate), medium.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPECIAL:</td>
<td>group a specialist (see Chapter 4).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECADE:</td>
<td>decade in which group was formed (0-7, pre 1900 is 1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRISIS:</td>
<td>group formed in response to particular issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROMOTE:</td>
<td>group received promotional input to aid formation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARTICIP:</td>
<td>members participate in decision-making by group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aims</td>
<td>SELF-HELP: group aims to undertake activity to aid members (e.g., road maintenance).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRESERV: aims to preserve area or features locally.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>REP: aims to represent interests of members or area.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>POLITIC: specifies putting views/demands to official bodies.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EDUCATE: aims to educate members and/or general public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LINKS: aims to make contact with other (non official) organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues</td>
<td>ISSUES: number of issues cited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HELPSELF: group has carried out self-help activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DEVELOP: group has opposed building development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TRAFFIC: group has opposed increased traffic or road plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WILDLIFE: group involved in nature conservation issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ACCESS: group involved in footpath and commons protection.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HISTORIC: group involved in preservation of historic buildings.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PLANNING: group has participated in plan-making.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AIRCRAFT: group opposed to airport development or aircraft noise.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>LITTER: group has opposed litter dropping or refuse dumping.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>INTPROB: major problem faced by group one of organisation.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SUCCESS: group feels it has been successful on a major issue.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EXPERTS: number of types of relevant expertise (planning/architecture, legal, financial) available to group (1-3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>COUNCIL: local authority councillor on group committee.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>COUNTY: good relations with county council.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>DISTRICT: good relations with district council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PARISH: good relations with parish council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ASKED: group opinion regularly sought by local authority.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NATIONAL: number of national environmental organisations group is affiliated to (1-9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FEDS: number of federations group belongs to (1-9).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENVS: number of other local environmental groups group is regularly in contact with (1-9).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VOLS: number of other voluntary groups group is in contact with (1-9).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where no categories are shown, categories are simply presence or absence of attribute. For computer coding purposes, 1 equals presence, 0 equals absence. For others, 0 equals no reply, higher numbers equal higher level of attribute (e.g., size, number of contacts).
perhaps the most widely used method of achieving the latter objective, it was felt that the nature and range of the data made it unsuitable for this method of analysis. A simpler method, which might indicate that clusters existed, but not the strength of the association, was therefore sought. Such a method is provided by the 'McQuitty List' method of analysis. This method is simpler than factor analysis per se, and is particularly useful in selecting related variables from a mass of data.

The first stage of analysis is to produce a matrix of correlations between each variable by which the data has been analysed, and all other variables. As this process, for the data from the table, involved a 36 x 36 table of correlation coefficients, the SPSS was again utilised. Within the SPSS package of programmes, there were two methods of generating such coefficients from the type of data available. These were the 'Crosstabs' programme used earlier, and the 'Pearson Correlation Coefficient' programme. The latter had the advantages of producing a printed table of coefficients between all the variables, and indicating whether a correlation was positive or negative. However, to provide a check on the data from this programme, part of the analysis was repeated using data from the 'Crosstabs' programme. As the two gave similar results, full analysis was carried out using the 'Pearson Correlation Coefficient' system for convenience.

Once the table is generated, McQuitty's method of analysis involves first finding the highest entry in each column of the matrix, and then selecting the highest entry of the matrix as a whole (ignoring any positive or negative sign). For the study data (see Table 2) this proved to be the correlation between having roads and traffic as an issue, and citing many issues in which the group was involved. The next step of analysis is to read across the rows of these two variables, and find other variables for which they provide the highest level of correlation in the column. For the variables 'traffic' and 'issues', 'traffic' did not provide the highest correlation for any other variable, whilst 'issues' was also
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<th>REP</th>
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<th>EDUCATE</th>
<th>LINK</th>
<th>AIMS</th>
<th>ISSUES</th>
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the highest correlation for 'develop', 'wildlife', 'aircraft' and 'success'. Each of the variables drawn out by the process was in turn examined to see whether it provided the highest correlation for any other variables, by looking along the appropriate row of the matrix to see whether it contains any column-highest correlations. In the case of the 'traffic'/ 'issues' correlation, they did not, so that the cluster was completed at the second stage. The result of the process is then pictured, using an 'equals' sign to indicate that a pair of variables each generate their highest correlation with each other, and an arrow sign indicating a one-way highest correlation, with the arrow head pointing to the generating variable. For the first cluster obtained, as described above, the diagram was as follows (Table 3 gives the clusters generated from the data in full):

A cluster is exhausted once further analysis does not draw in any new variables. The variables absorbed into a cluster are then considered as being removed from the matrix, and the remaining part of the matrix is analysed similarly, beginning with the highest remaining correlation. The analysis is completed when all variables in the matrix have been assigned to a cluster.

Whilst McQuitty proceeded from the clusters to obtain factor loadings (for data relating to individual psychological properties, for example), this was not attempted for the data on West Surrey environmental groups. Further analysis ran the danger of distilling the data beyond a point which was useful for the research's main concerns, and which the accuracy of the data could uphold. Whilst the signs of the correlations
TABLE 3

VARIABLE CLUSTERS DERIVED FROM McQUITTY LIST METHOD

(In order of derivation, first at top)

traffic = issues
  develop
  wildlife
  aircraft
  success

county = district

rep = {-ve} preserv

helpself = self-help
  ve
  area
  ve
  crisis
  ve
  decade
  special
  national
  ve
  envs
  ve
  promote
  ve
  experts
  intprob

aims = educate
  ve
  vols

feds \rightarrow mship = asked
  ve
  historic
  litter

access \rightarrow links = politics

councilo \rightarrow parish = planning
had been ignored in finding the clusters, they proved very useful in explaining the results achieved, in the context of the broader data.

It was apparent that some of the clusters owed much to statistical anomalies, such as the correlation between less common issues and the number of issues a group cited. Others were related to geographical features: for example the correlation between anti-litter campaigns and belonging to a federation. The only active district federation is located in an area where the geography means that refuse dumping is a common problem. Such correlations as these are not incorrect, but need careful interpretation in the light of other data. This method of analysis did provide useful insights, such as the number of variables correlating with group size (in area), and the few which correlated with membership size.

The main problem with analysing data generated by the interviews and questionnaire in West Surrey was making sense of the mass of detailed information which was gathered. Whilst one aim of the research was to collect such detail, the large number of groups encountered meant that some overall statistical analysis was necessary, with, inevitably, some loss of detail. In Newham, where only seven local environmental groups were traced, the smaller amount of data meant that the amount of detail could be handled without the use of computer analysis. In both areas, however, the groups differed from one another in so many ways that much of the information about them must remain of a descriptive nature.

Reference

McQUITTY, L. Elementary factor analysis. in Psychological Reports, vol 9, p71-8, 1961.