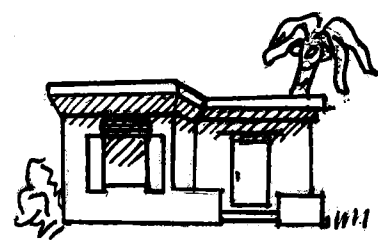


Z
728.1
(016)
H68h
no.27

No. 27 - March 1952

H I G H L I G H T S
O F
F O R E I G N H O U S I N G

(Abstracts of Recent Publications on Foreign Housing and Planning)



Compiled by the
International Housing Activities
~~Office of the Administrator~~
U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency

C O N T E N T S

	Page
Architecture	1
Building Research	1
Construction Materials and Techniques	2
Housing Finance	3
Housing for the Aged	3
Housing Legislation	4
Housing Situation	5
Technical Assistance	7
Town and Country Planning	8
Urban Redevelopment	9

Please call your own library to borrow these publications.

Housing Admin
Library

728.1

(016)

H68P

no. 27

ARCHITECTURE

1. "Significance of the ECA Housing Program for Germany" by Walter F. Bogner. Washington, D. C.: Journal of the American Institute of Architects, February 1952. pp. 51-54.

This article, by the U. S. Chairman of the Committee for Housing Selection for Germany, describes the ECA Housing Development Program for Germany as a program which gave an enviable freedom and opportunity to German architects and contractors to offer ideas leading to progress in housing.

Bogner states this program was initiated by the Marshall Plan Mission to Germany, to achieve cheaper and better housing. He shows how this group in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing of the Federal Republic held competitions in fifteen cities, thus giving architects, contractors and housing organizations an opportunity to contribute new ideas in design and construction. An international jury composed of five Americans and nine Germans, all specialists in either town planning, architecture, building construction, mechanical engineering, financing or housing administration, spent six weeks in continuous session to evaluate the merits of the nearly 1,000 proposals submitted.

Bogner states in conclusion that the wider implications of the Housing Development Projects program are the broad opportunities for a unique research on a national scale, stimulated by international cooperation and aimed at progress in housing, which may result in benefit to more than just one country.

BUILDING RESEARCH

2. Trommelyd (Drum Noise from Floors) by F. Larris. Copenhagen: Teknisk Forlag, 1952. (In Danish with English Summary)

This paper deals with the kind of sound, generated by foot steps on a floor and perceived in the room above the floor. This sound has been termed drum noise, in order not to be confused with the well-known foot step noise, also more generally called impact noise, which is measured in the room below or in adjacent rooms.

Objective measurements of frequency spectra were carried out over a number of floors, when excited by a standardized tapping machine. Various types of floors were tested as well as many kinds of insulation. Some conclusions found were that parquet floors, laid in asphalt or similar materials, are much quieter than those laid on battens; that the strong drum noise of low frequency from wood floors on battens or from loose floor layers of magnesium oxychloride is not reduced by a covering with cork, rubber, or a carpet. 28 pp.

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUES

3. "Conquete et Promesses" (Conquest and Promises) by Andre Balency-Bearn. Paris: Cent Ans de Beton Arme, Editions Science & Industrie. pp. 112-129. (In French)

The author refers briefly to the great strides being made in the use of reinforced concrete in the field of construction and to the reasons for its outstanding success as a building material. Success in its use was so simple that it prevented for some time any research on it and thus an architectural expression of reinforced concrete was not developed.

The author examines the development of this expression, which M. Auguste Perret was the first to crystallize from the forms of the past. He then proceeds to examine future developments which may be expected in building with reinforced concrete and what powers are needed to solve problems of productivity and economy of materials and methods which distinguish modern building construction.

He deals with the problem of shuttering and the economies which are effected by reusing it in different ways; he also examines the problem of handling materials and of rhythm, and concludes by indicating the lines of development of architecture which are determined by those new techniques. He quotes examples of new works which already show this development and points out how French research work is being guided by it.

4. Testing of Eleven Danish Concrete Mixers by Johs. Andersen, Per Bredsdorff, Niels H. Krarup, K. Malmstedt-Andersen, Poul Nerenst and Niels M. Plum. Copenhagen: The Danish National Institute of Building Research, 1951.

This Building Research Report No. 4 is an investigation of the most common types of concrete mixers used in Denmark, including both the free fall types as well as positive types; the primary purpose of the study being to classify the mixers as to their homogenizing capacity. Testing also comprises the water tanks of the mixers as well as their power consumption. Part I gives in some detail a review of earlier research regarding concrete mixing and closes with some considerations as to the technological and economical importance of the homogenization. In Part II there is presented the results of a survey of the mixers tested and the testing procedure employed. Part III contains all original test data as reported by the Danish State Testing Laboratory together with some comments on the power consumption of the mixers. In Part IV the mixers are divided finally by a thorough statistical analysis of the results of the tests divided into a series of groups according to their capacity to homogenize different concretes. 383 pp.

5. New Methods of House Construction in the Netherlands After 1945. The Hague: Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing, August 1951.

An account of why and how new building methods were stimulated after the Second World War and an evaluation of developments in this field. In particular, a good comparison is made between the traditional and the non-traditional methods of house construction. 10 pp.

HOUSING FINANCE

6. "Home Ownership" London: Planning published by PEP (Political and Economic Planning), February 11, 1952.

This issue of Planning discusses home ownership in England. It shows the extent of home-ownership and how the purchase of a house is financed. It then attempts to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of home-ownership on a financial and psychological basis. It concludes with a discussion of alternative ways of financing houses in terms of interest rates, time-periods of mortgages and the quality of houses.

The booklet suggests higher advances for houses conforming to certain standards of quality, and it holds that, when making loans, building societies and local authorities should make sure that the borrower has a clear idea of the condition of his house and the probable size of his annual repair bill. 15 pp.

HOUSING FOR THE AGED

7. Planning for the Care of the Aged and the Chronic Sick by Donald A. Goldfinch. London: The Royal Sanitary Institute, June 13, 1951.

A paper describing the housing facilities provided for aged people in Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Great Britain. Detailed floor plans and site plans are presented of several projects in each of these countries.

A major point made in this paper is the need in planning physical facilities for the aged to distinguish between the chronic sick and the ambulant. The architect, it states, must not be lacking in imagination when the psychological effect of an incurable illness on the patient is to be considered or when old age brings its decrease in adaptability and the faculties. Goldfinch also describes some of the research now going on in the field of geriatrics. 20 pp.

HOUSING LEGISLATION

8. "Local Government and the Health of Cities" by D. L. Thomas. London: Planning Outlook, 1951. pp. 70-76.

As this paper states at the outset, "this article discusses the influence of the legal means upon the results so far achieved in the search for a good urban environment." It goes on to say that whatever the achievements of other forms of government may have been, social ill-health in democratic communities has rarely been attacked until its economic ill-effects have been obvious and extensive.

Thomas discusses in this article the various laws of local government affecting the health of cities in Great Britain. He shows that public health laws, and the laws of housing and town planning originated in Britain as a system of regulating individual enterprise, and not as a means of creating sound public health standards. Nevertheless, the creative functions of these laws have had marked effects on the built-up areas of the country.

The approach to the problem under health legislation, says Thomas, is essentially one of a society with a "guilt history" of economic compensation for social degradation, and of pre-occupation with units. The instruments of health legislation, he says, acting in combination with those of planning legislation, have affected the British environment in ways which were not foreseen. Yet these were inherent in the attitude which unconsciously assumed that a reasonably complete and satisfactory whole would necessarily result from the regulation of parts.

9. Revision of the Legal Measures Concerning: Physical Planning, Housing, Expropriation. The Hague: Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing, September 1950.

A summary of a State commission's proposal for legislation to replace the Housing Act of 1901. The Draft Bill on Physical Planning contains regulations for physical planning at three levels - national, regional, and local or municipal.

The most important part of the Draft Bill on Housing is that the central government is to receive powers enabling them to prevent too great a variation in technical criteria as between different sets of local byelaws, in connection with the increasing tendency towards the serial production of housing elements.

The basic principle of the Draft Bill for the Revision of Expropriation Measures is the desire to enable governmental authorities to be able to purchase land required in the common interest for the erection of housing or for the execution of physical planning measures, at a reasonable price. 7 pp.

HOUSING SITUATION

10. "Solving the Housing Problem: True or False Solutions?" by Graeme Shankland. Liverpool: The Town Planning Review, January 1952. pp. 320-344.

This article describes the housing situation in Great Britain as it exists today. The author discusses the major problem areas of housing need, house rents, housing finance, cost of housing to the local authorities and to the taxpayer, housing standards, building materials, and the planning implications involved. The conclusion reached is that adequate legislation exists to remedy all phases of the housing shortage; the problem being one of using it to the fullest extent.

11. Annual Report to the Minister of Resources and Development--1951. Ottawa: Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 1952.

The picture painted in the report of housing in Canada in 1951 and the outlook for 1952 is not a bright one. The report states that 1951 had the unhappy distinction of being the first year since the end of World War II in which the volume of house building has declined, while the prospects of 1952 showing any substantial improvement are slim.

In order to keep the number of housing starts roughly equal to the possible completion rate the Government, in February 1951, suspended the 1/6 additional loan provision of the National Housing Act.

Another reason cited for the falling off in housing construction given in the report was a drying up of institutional funds available for mortgages. In its report, the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation states that "in order that a larger portion of the funds for investment of the lending institutions would flow into National Housing Act operations, the Act was amended to permit an upward adjustment of interest rates of 1/2 of 1% applying under its various sections in accordance with movements in the general interest rate structure." This brought the gross rate up to 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ %. Other factors cited in the falling off in housing in 1951 were construction costs, which increased about 15% during the year. Labor rates were up about 9% and material supplies were up about 18%. Contributing to the gloomy outlook for 1952 is the fact that the number of builders has decreased.

Some of the main parts of this report are entitled, lending operations, housing for defense workers, guarantees, public housing and land assembly, mortgage administration, construction, real estate administration, and research and information.

There are 24 tables included in this report. 92 pp.

12. Housing and City, Town and Country Planning - Mauritius. Mombasa: U. S. Embassy Report, November 13, 1951.

Discusses the housing situation on the island of Mauritius located in the Indian Ocean. This report includes the causes of the housing shortage, the number of dwelling units required, the most prevalent types of structures used for dwelling units, building costs, construction methods employed, financing schemes, price levels and rents of dwelling units, city, town and country planning, slums and slum clearance, and the government housing policy. 6 pp.

13. An Essay on Housing, Urban and Rural Planning with Special Reference to Mauritius by R. Lavoipierre. Colony of Mauritius: Development and Welfare Department, 1946.

This essay describes the evils of slum housing in the Colony of Mauritius in terms of shoddy construction, high population densities and lack of planning. In Mauritius, the author claims, a housing policy is urgently needed to improve residential areas and to provide for their extension, but he says that one must bear in mind that no housing scheme can meet with a reasonable measure of success unless the inhabitants are educated in social hygiene; that it would serve no useful purpose to remove people from their slums if they were to maintain their past habits in an up-to-date housing estate.

A conclusion is reached that defective population groups are, as a rule, victims of environmental shortcomings which may be classified in this sequence--(a) food, (b) housing, (c) health services, (d) education; the high position assigned to housing being quite obvious.

This monograph is well illustrated with some 54 figures of pictures of indigenous housing and proposed floor plans for new construction. 28 pp.

14. Report on the Housing of Sugar Estate Workers by L. W. Thorton White. Colony of Mauritius: Government Printer, May 1949.

The purpose of this report is to analyze the problem of the minimum housing accommodation which may reasonably be provided for agricultural workers in Mauritius, and to analyze the site planning problems involved. An attempt is made to define minimum standards for a housing program for the workers. These turn out to be a compromise between (a) setting so high a standard of both accommodation and construction that it will be economically impossible to attain, and (b) continuing with the impossibly low standards of the grass and mud hut.

The plan is set forth in some detail covering the site plan, housing, construction, and costs involved. Some of the elevation drawings and neighborhood plan is included. 15 pp.

15. The State and Housing in the Netherlands. The Hague: Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing, September 1951.

This booklet is a review of housing legislation in The Netherlands. It describes in brief the building byelaws, licenses, building inspection, declaration of uninhabitability, supervision over local authorities, expropriation, and state-assisted housing.

The town, regional and national planning functions are outlined also. In this part of the booklet it states that the most important of the town planning regulations embodied in the Housing Act is that local authorities whose areas contain more than 10,000 inhabitants and those whose population has increased by more than 20% during the last five years, have to put a municipal development plan into force.

The latter part of this publication describes the housing situation in The Netherlands, the housing shortage and the administrative provisions for remedying it. 14 pp.

16. "More Homes for Germans" by Bernard Wagner. Information Bulletin, Office of the U. S. High Commissioner for Germany, December 1951. pp. 21-24.

The author states in this article that the free development of architecture, housing and city planning in Germany has been restricted by many obstacles. The most significant of these being: (1) that there is no city planning legislation to enable the German people to rebuild their cities according to present and future needs; (2) that there are no new building techniques which promise a drastic reduction of building costs and no building codes which would permit the introduction of such techniques; (3) that there is no central organization or group of persons either capable or in a position to promote city planning and housing in Germany; and (4) that there is little building money in Germany.

Wagner points out that to date ECA (now MSA) has spent approximately DM 400,000,000 (\$95,200,000) for housing in Germany. Part of this expenditure resulted in the initiation of a nationwide competition for architect-builder teams to submit in the form of firm bids their best proposals for modern low cost housing. The winning team in each city was granted the building contract for its project, runners-up receiving cash prizes. This article describes in some detail the exact procedure used in conducting these competitions and discusses how effective they are.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

17. "United Nations and Resettlement in the Far East" by Robert Gardner-Medwin. Liverpool: The Town Planning Review, January 1952. pp. 283-298.

The chief architect and planning officer of the Department of Health in Scotland states in this article that more than 100 million Asian families now live in crowded, insanitary quarters, accommodating two or more families per room. He states too that the housing of refugees in India, Pakistan, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia and the Philippines has become a desperate task and that only the most drastic measures can overcome the congestion caused by the terrifying influx of these refugees.

With this introduction, Gardner-Medwin goes on to describe the many United Nations organizations that are working on and attempting to solve this tremendous problem. He makes special note of the work done by the mission of experts (of which he was one) in their study of housing in South and South-East Asia. The major portion of this paper consists of the author's own impressions of some of the main problems in the countries which the Mission visited and the heroic scale of regional and community planning which has to be attempted in these parts of the world. His discussion centers around the problems of refugees and world planning, new capitals and new towns, new village life, tropical standards, city planning and self-help training, and research and pilot projects.

The author summarizes the possible international remedies-- particularly those which the United Nations seems likely to support. In conclusion, he describes the highlights of the United Nations' Technical Assistance Programme. There are also eight pages of excellent pictures of housing in the various countries discussed.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

18. "Dynamic Cities" by T. S. Simey. Liverpool: The Town Planning Review, January 1952. pp. 299-310.

A paper discussing the relationship of the sociologist to the city planner and of the need for the two to complement each other's work. A major theme in this discussion is an analysis of the concept "neighborhood." Professor Simey reviews the thinking on this subject by such people as Stein, Isaacs, Dewey, Perry, et al. Simey points out that in much of the literature there is a tendency to treat the neighborhood unit as a fixed social objective rather than a measuring rod for planning purposes, and as solving a problem rather than setting it.

Professor Simey presents a case for the continued use of the concept stating that the neighborhood should be considered as part and parcel of the textures of our social administrative, and political lives, and that it is, in itself, a factor in our social structure which the sociologist must take into careful account, rather than be made the subject of a somewhat naive condemnation. He points out that the County of London Plan contains the statement that the maintenance and development of the community structure of London was one of the first considerations, and was based on the assumption that the "best results in reconstruction will be achieved if the neighborhood unit is taken as the

minimum unit for redevelopment as a whole." Professor William Holford is quoted too as saying that nothing can be gained by abandoning the neighborhood principle, while much would be lost in the fields of planning, building, and local services.

So far as planning in general is concerned, this paper states that the first and most obvious problem to be solved is the setting in motion and control of processes of social change so as to make available to the planner sufficient resources to carry out his plan, and a suitable administrative and political structure to use them effectively. Borrowing a point from Clarence Stein, it points out that the unusual design of the New Town requires an unusual form of community organization or of legal framework to maintain and organize it.

19. Town and Country Planning in Southern Rhodesia. Bulawayo: Government Town Planning Office, June 1951.

This booklet describes the town and country planning being carried out in Southern Rhodesia. It states the aims and objectives of such planning pointing up the needs for and the goals of planning. The second part of the booklet describes in some detail the planning schemes for the Bulawayo peri-urban area. These schemes are also shown in the form of six maps appended to the publication. 18 pp.

20. Reports of the Aycliffe, Basildon, Bracknell, Corby, Crawley, Cwmbran, Harlow, Hemel Hempstead, Peterlee, Stevenage, Welwyn Garden City and Hatfield Development Corporations for the Period Ending 31st March, 1951. London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1951.

A compilation of reports of the twelve Development Corporations for the building of new towns in Great Britain. They describe the general situation in each of these new towns, the present state of planning, the public services being developed, public relations, state of finances, and the administrative organization. 321 pp.

See also Housing Legislation, p. 4, and Housing Situation, pp. 5, 6 and 7 for additional studies of town and country planning

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

21. "Ways and Means of Redevelopment" by Eric H. Croston. Covent Gardens: Town and Country Planning, March 1952. pp. 140-145.

The author states that there are now many instances in England in which a redevelopment program may be achieved under various statutes. When such a choice exists, he says, the powers to be used will depend upon their relative procedural and financial advantages. In fact, he

states it may be a positive advantage for the developing authority to acquire land directly when this is possible, rather than by the round-about method of the Planning Act. Actually, the development powers of the Planning Act may be used only when no other statutory powers are available. For instance, planning powers may be used for the provision of industrial premises when this is not possible under other enactments. This article by Mr. Croston, a local government economist, is a useful study of the alternatives.

DATE	ISSUED TO

U.S. Housing and Home
Finance Agency...
Highlights of foreign
housing.

DATE

ISSUED TO