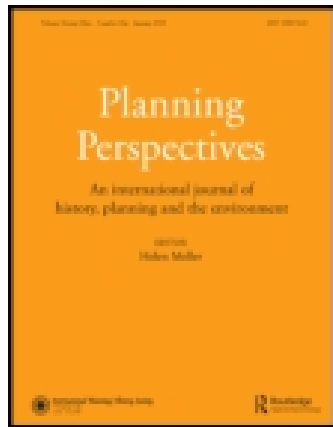


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Social engineering and participation in Anglo-Swedish housing 1945–1976: Ralph Erskine's vernacular plan

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This article appraises the career of architect Ralph Erskine focusing on the context for his contribution to Swedish and British social housing and planning. Erskine's formative experience during the 1930s and his subsequent transnational career are utilized to explore the mutual influences of planning ideals across national boundaries. The Garden City ideal, Functionalism and the urban village concept are considered for their long-term contribution to his work. In addition, vernacular architecture and participatory planning are explored as influences on the evolution of his community architecture vision by the 1970s. Drawing on evidence from urban developments in Britain and Sweden, the discussion demonstrates that Erskine's cultural transfer of international planning ideals essentialized aspects of British and Swedish historical culture. The article concludes with a discussion of the 1970s and Erskine's role in the redevelopment of Byker in Newcastle upon Tyne. This process was hailed as a pioneer moment in the English community architecture movement. However, this study demonstrates that Erskine should be distinguished from the grassroots activism of the community architecture movement. Rather the discussion emphasizes that his participatory planning was underpinned by a structural tension between social engineering and democratic participation that was generated and reinforced by his transnational career.

Keywords: Ralph Erskine; participation; vernacular; community; Anglo-Swedish; planning; comparative

Introduction

Ralph Erskine was commissioned to undertake the development of the Byker Wall estate in Newcastle in 1968. His approach to participatory planning was soon hailed as a pioneer moment of British community architecture. Erskine's commitment to the democratic process in housing, and his fondness for the vernacular, made him well suited to the role of standard bearer for a movement that endorsed participatory democracy and mobilized tenant groups in protest against the experience of urban renewal during the 1960s.¹ Charles Jencks notably described the consultation process adopted by the architect as producing the 'most humane public housing in the world'.² The mythic qualities of the Byker Wall development inevitably roused criticism of both the form and process that produced the encircling serpentine 'Wall' and its 'happy shacky' internal dwellings. Contemporaries who were otherwise won over by the idea of Byker as a 'high density village' quickly noted the appearance of difficulties with Erskine's unconventional designs and use of timber, the 'crudely made, thin little plastic porches and a general elaboration of folksy details'.³ Furthermore, the success of Erskine's participatory approach was later criticized as piecemeal, with Byker residents characterized as ineffective political agents.⁴ By the early 1990s, the estate had languished as another hard to let north

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British housing estate. This was anathema to Erskine's vision of community architecture and democratic participation as a process that would enfranchise residents and contribute to social cohesion and sustainability in the urban environment.⁵ The premature demise of the Byker Wall also resonated with the diminished importance of social planning in the urban environment within the wider dismantling of council housing.

Recently planning and social housing have returned to the political agenda in the light of a resurgence of British housing shortages on a scale that mobilized the building of the New Towns after the Second World War. In the summer of 2011, renewed political interest in social housing helped to realize a long campaign to ensure that the iconic Byker Wall estate in Newcastle be granted status as a community trust. At last, it was to be given a form of governance in sympathy with the ambitions of its creator. The devolution of planning and financial responsibility to residents was described by the trust's chair as resonating with Byker's unique heritage and providing unprecedented opportunities for community-based partnership. It was notably celebrated by the then Conservative Housing Minister as 'the embodiment of the Big Society in action'.⁶

The appetite for community partnership under the auspices of the Big Society is unsurprising and has been anticipated in critical debates that connect the ambition for tenant participation and responsibility to a wider concern with the politics of behaviour.⁷ Clearly government interest in resident and tenant responsibility warrants further consideration in continued discussions of urban governance. However, the longer historical tension between social planning and participation that Erskine's career embodied might also be pertinent to understanding the possibilities for democratic engagement in Byker's twenty-first century community partnership.

To this end, the following discussion offers an historical appraisal of Erskine's participatory planning focusing on three key themes. First, his appreciation of Swedish social housing from the 1930s to the 1960s is considered for its influence on the development of his urban village concept. This demonstrates the importance of Swedish Modern to much of Erskine's later work, especially his understanding of Functionalism and its influence on his approach to participatory planning. As will be shown, his understanding of democratic architecture as derived from Swedish Modern would combine participatory planning with a design process intended to inculcate social mixing between classes and across generations.

Second, the discussion will shift its focus to Erskine's contribution to neovernacular housing design in selected British New Towns during the 1960s and 1970s. Erskine's work during this time is revealed as carrying forward his formative appreciation of Swedish Modern. However, this continuity was also made possible because there was a wider British appetite for Scandinavian housing from the 1960s that was locally tenacious. Finally, the article considers Erskine's community architecture experiment at the Byker Wall estate. Although celebrated by contemporaries as an exemplar of the international community architecture movement, the discussion emphasizes that Erskine should be distinguished from the grassroots activism of the 1970s. Rather, his selective appreciation of Swedish Modern was underpinned by an essentially modernist approach to participatory planning that did not correspond to the, quasi anarchist, methods advocated by the 'barefoot architects' of the community architecture movement. The planning of the Byker Wall estate, and application of his Swedish inspired architecture of democracy, exposed the democratic dilemma of participatory planning and its ambiguous relationship to community architecture. Paradoxically, over 40 years after it was initially planned, it seems that the development of the Conservative inspired Big Society, with its anti-bureaucratic and attendant localist rhetoric, has allowed Erskine's democratic dilemma to be addressed.

Swedish modern and the evolution of the urban village concept

Ralph Erskine was born in Northumberland in 1914 to Fabian Socialist parents. During the 1930s, following a Quaker education in Saffron Walden, Erskine studied architecture and planning at Regent Street Polytechnic. In 1938, he moved to Sweden. His early years there furnished him with the romantic Functionalist epithet, characterized as naturally aligned to the prototype Scandinavian welfare state.⁸ He practiced as an architect during the evolution of the Swedish social democratic welfare model, embracing it with a fervour that complemented the fast emerging Nordic utopian ideal.⁹ However, before 1938, Erskine had also worked in Britain with Louis de Soisson at Welwyn Garden City. Whilst emphasizing the importance of Swedish Modern to Erskine's formative architectural vision, these early British influences were also apparent in later work. For instance, in 1946, he was commissioned to design new housing for the expanding workforce in the Swedish Hammarby district (originally an eighteenth-century steel town with a paper processing plant established during the twentieth century). Here, Erskine's choice of materials, his grouping of the houses around a 'village green' and his efforts to evoke the industrial communities of the late eighteenth century have been read as inferences of the English Garden City.¹⁰

The presence of the village green as a design feature of urban housing projects was subsequently a tenacious characteristic of his British and Swedish projects. For example, at Ekerö Mälärstad on the outskirts of Stockholm Erskine designed a housing area that embraced the two islands on Lake Mälaren. Completed in 1991, the project offers glimpses of Erskine's long running commitment to Welwyn's geometric layouts and to fostering an intimacy between nature and human habitation. In the Swedish setting, the 'village green' was substituted for water, where it provided the backdrop for 'a mini township with a modern form' to evoke the character of Mälaren's historic waterside towns.¹¹ Although as a twentieth-century development, it represents a mature phase of Erskine's work, Ekerö is nonetheless significant to understanding his formative experiences. Notably Erskine has claimed that it demonstrated the potential of design and architecture to foster 'social mixing' in urban areas. Thus, he identified Ekerö as one of few projects to realize his longstanding hope for the urban village as an integrated society. Looking back to his initial experience in Sweden, we could perhaps speculate that from the 1930s he was able to sustain these ideals away from growing evidence of their dilution in English Garden Cities, where the vision of 'next door neighbouring' between the classes had remained stubbornly elusive.¹²

The fondness for vernacular materials such as brightly painted timber has been seen, especially in British appraisal, as a Swedish hallmark (Figure 1). Nonetheless, this could also be cast as a blending of British and Swedish influences. Whilst working to design Welwyn houses deploying nostalgic architecture forms, Erskine's unease with his own growing sympathy for this style allegedly prompted him to withdraw from the project, 'lest he be lured away from modern architecture'.¹³ Evidently his anxiety about the anti-modern inclination of the English Garden City style could be assuaged in Sweden, where a more pragmatic use of vernacular forms was central to early twentieth-century modernism. Erskine would later reflect that Sweden provided an effective host for his mediation of the socially balanced urban village because Swedish Modern was equipped to harness tradition 'without a hint of nostalgia'.¹⁴

The distinguishing features of Swedish Modern were crystallized by the 1930 Stockholm Exhibition which showcased Functionalist architecture that was recognized as a humane and



Figure 1. Erskine at Ekerö, Sweden courtesy of Ekerö Kommun, Sweden, photograph by Kenneth Bengtsson.

pragmatic departure from Le Corbusier's brutalism.¹⁵ With its characteristic pitched roofs, Swedish Modern was designated the 'New Empiricism' by contemporaries, including Erskine, who came to see it as reconciling folk populism to avant-garde modernism.¹⁶ The Stockholm Exhibition had been extensively presented in British architectural periodicals during Erskine's time as a student in England, and, as he often emphasized, this 'architecture of democracy' equipped him with principles that were to inform much of his later work.¹⁷

The exhibition provided a visual platform for the launch of the highly successful social democratic slogan of the 'People's Home'. Moreover, it consolidated the role of the popular housing movement in both building and planning Swedish social housing. The political context for the exhibition clearly also found accord with Erskine. For example, Hyresgästernas sparkasse och byggnadsförening (HSB), the national tenants association, had provided model flats for the exhibition and the association was also a central component of the social democratic vision of social housing.¹⁸ Shortly after Erskine's arrival in Sweden, he had attempted to secure commissions with HSB, which he saw as complementary to both his social and architectural vision.¹⁹ This overture to the Swedish housing association giant may also have been strategic: by the outbreak of the Second World War and in the context of urgent housing, HSB looked set to establish a monopoly on social housing in Sweden. However, his socialist upbringing also explains his enthusiasm for Swedish co-operative housing. Furthermore, his affinity with this

housing trajectory may even have been strengthened by an awareness of the less pronounced influence of co-ownership and participatory housing ideals on English Garden cities.²⁰

In other respects, his attraction to Swedish Modern was mobilized by disappointment with British culture, especially architecture, which he described as preoccupied by its narrow focus on cubist styles and new materials. By contrast, the more pragmatic and less abstract work of modernist architects in Sweden appeared to offer wider possibilities.²¹ Reflecting on his experience as an immigrant to Sweden Erskine recalled how he:

found a wider belief more in accord with the early Functionalism of Central Europe, a faith which included the search for new, juster and more humane society as well as for satisfaction of the intimate daily needs of families and old people and small children ... the new, fresh and inspiring architecture and industrial design of the golden age of 'Swedish Modern' was ... rich with experience of a long history of form: a history of the practical and beautiful use of the simple materials of a poor country.²²

The allusion to the primitive qualities of Swedish Modern is suggestive of a romantic and retrospective construction of Nordic modernity. In a similar fashion, the Finnish architect, Alvar Aalto, a prominent pioneer of Nordic 'modern', whom Erskine acknowledged as a key influence, was often presented to British audiences as the realization of progressive and humane modernism.²³ Aalto's importance to the romantic construction of Finland as a pastorally bucolic, yet progressively urbane, country finds echoes in Erskine's connection of Swedish Modern to a history of simplicity and rural isolation. More broadly his recollection of formative experiences suggests that his early encounters with Swedish culture echoed the external, and especially Anglo-Saxon, utopian construction of Nordic modernity from the 1930s.²⁴

Beyond the caricature, there were tangible explanations for Erskine's affinity with Swedish Modern. In 1938, the newness of Swedish urban modernity must have been striking from a British perspective. Functionalism was by then a visible part of the cityscape in many Swedish and Scandinavian urban areas.²⁵ The appointment of CIAM members Uno Åhrén and Sven Markelius as chief planners in Gothenburg and Stockholm underpinned a shift towards planning for social interaction. This was reflected in new housing projects designed with integral communal and recreational space.²⁶ This clearly influenced Erskine. His later recollections of Functionalism's search for a humane society correspond to Åhrén's advocacy of social planning as a tool in fashioning democratic societal values.²⁷ Erskine carried forward the Functionalist ambition for social interaction with housing plans that designated space for recreation and meeting.²⁸ The conviction that the spatial arrangement of residential areas, with an emphasis on communal space, could be a force in the production of good citizenship was a recurrent theme of his urban village format.

The appeal of Swedish Modern was also explained by its openness to external influences; his commitment to planning for social interaction reflected the prevalence of Anglo-American neighbourhood ideas in Sweden during the 1940s and 1950s. For example, Abercrombie and Forshaw's *County of London Plan* was an important reference point for the redevelopment of many Swedish cities after the Second World War. Lewis Mumford's *Culture of Cities* had similarly been available in Swedish from 1942, a time when many new housing projects were emerging utilizing 'Radburn principles'.²⁹ Erskine's housing projects therefore evolved in a milieu that found an affinity between the architecture of Swedish Modern and Anglo-American neighbourhood planning concepts.

During the 1940s and 1950s, Sweden provided an amenable context for Erskine's hybrid social and architectural vision. But this moment was relatively fleeting. By the 1960s, Erskine's profile was challenged by the ascendancy of the Fordist mode of planning and construction associated with the 'Million Dwellings Programme'. Launched by the Swedish social democratic government in 1965, the Million Dwellings Programme promised to house a million citizens in the ensuing decade and precipitated the emergence of many new suburbs. During these years, Erskine's commitment to small-scale neighbourliness was increased by his alienation from the characterless suburban sprawl that he perceived to be afflicting many parts of Sweden.

The Million Programme's austere aesthetic has nevertheless also been characterized as the natural inheritance of Functionalism's commitment to rationality.³⁰ In Malmö, the now infamous Rosengård estate was constructed as part of the programme and, predominantly social housing, it was owned and administered by the local authority in addition to HSB. By the late twentieth-century, Rosengård had come to symbolize the city's fall from grace as the urban cradle of 'People's Home' democracy.³¹ The responsibility of inter-war Functionalism for these developments remains debatable. For Erskine, the Million Dwellings Programme was a regrettable departure from the more humane ambitions of Swedish Modern. As he recalled the 'early Functionalisms simplistic planning and interest for the techniques and materials of the industrial age were seized upon' but 'the essential subtleties of the philosophy found no favour'.³² Corresponding to this sense of battling against a new 'production-oriented architecture' was a decline in Erskine's Swedish commissions by the 1960s.³³ The few projects he undertook have since become reminders of an earlier and distinct era of planning and architecture. For example, in 1963, he had won a competition to design a housing project in the Swedish town of Landskrona, a shipbuilding community with certain similarities to the industrial conurbations of North East England. The project was completed in 1968 in the midst of the Million Home programme and came to be seen nostalgically as evoking an earlier vision for urban architecture on a human scale.³⁴ Erskine's Landskrona scheme, known as Esperanza, contained 117 local authority system built houses which complemented the Million Dwellings remit. But attention to the communal space between the buildings, the landscaping and use of different types of natural stone, markers of Erskine's urban village, evoke an earlier and more intimate Swedish Modern. Whilst he may have struggled to secure Swedish commissions during the 1960s, Erskine's work has been praised retrospectively as a welcome exception to the uniformity of mass housing estates like Hammarkullen in Gothenburg and Rosengård in Malmö.³⁵ The celebration of Erskine's urban village concept underlines its anchoring in the early years of Swedish Modern that was consolidated by the social democratic housing vision of the 1940s and 1950s. Erskine's tenacious commitment to its qualities can be discerned in his own romanticized recollections of Swedish Modern. This belief evolved and was later reinforced by a sense of being out of step as Swedish social housing moved to the industrial-scale planning of housing projects after 1965.

Participation and the vernacular: Scandinavian housing influences and British New Towns during the 1960s

The evolution of mass housing in Sweden provides an explanation for Erskine's attraction to British projects during the 1960s, where housing developments, if selectively appreciated, presented an unforeseen contrast to Sweden. In particular, the building of the second wave of New

Towns, with their noticeable Garden City resonances, provided an amenable palette for Erskine.³⁶ He was also fortunate that his work was foreshadowed by a growing British appetite for 'Scandinavia' in design, planning and architecture. Between 1950 and 1965, The British Council of Design and Industry arranged several exhibitions of Scandinavian design for 'good living', which were eagerly appreciated in cities where plans for urban renewal struck a chord with the newness that Scandinavian housing suggested.³⁷ But the appetite for Scandinavian housing appears to have vacillated depending on context. The influence of national design organizations promoting the benefits of Scandinavian housing and designs apparently had a limited impact on national policy. Interest amongst British housing policy-makers remained confined to Swedish prefabrication and, briefly, co-operative housing tenure.³⁸ Local fascination with Scandinavian style persisted nevertheless, especially in the New Towns, which presented growing opportunities to experiment with alternative forms of architecture and planning. There was also a strong affinity with Scandinavian housing architecture amongst modernizing political figures, the most notable being T. Dan Smith in the North East.

Erskine's reputation as an exponent of Scandinavian architectural modernism undoubtedly benefited from a context of local stylistic admiration in the North East. By the mid-1960s, Scandinavian architecture became a symbol of the region's Labour Party modernizers: the 'White Heat' of the North East was often the white stucco Swedish style housing. In County Durham at Peterlee, the shift in politics during the early 1960s brought about a noticeable change in architectural style and planning with admiration expressed for Swedish urban developments. After 1965, T. Dan Smith's Chairmanship of the New Town Corporation presided over a shift from what had been a typical northern British council estate style, to a project characterized by white rendered houses and a traffic free centre, judged by contemporaries as 'in the best new town tradition'.³⁹ This reflected the concern to distinguish local Labour housing developments from Conservative predecessors, who presided during the 1950s over the building of notably poor-quality housing developments, particularly in Newcastle.⁴⁰

This local admiration helped Erskine secure work at the Killingworth New Town. In 1963, construction began on the site of the former Killingworth mining village. Located on the northern outskirts of Newcastle, it was a planned response to acute housing need and signalled a break with the old way of 'overcrowding and congestion'. In accordance with the 1962 Town Planning Act, it hoped to 'set new standards for living and working' for its 20,000 residents.⁴¹ By 1972, the project was nearing completion and its ambition for a dramatic transformation appeared to have been fulfilled. Press coverage concurred that the area was 'rising out of the obliterated squalor left behind by the industrial revolution' as a 'powerhouse of modern technology' and 'test bed of architectural and social theory'. Thanks largely to the grandiose vision of Roy Gazzard, Killingworth's architect and one time Chief Government Planner of Uganda, the New Town boasted influences from both the 'mediaeval castles of England and the bush villages of East Africa'.⁴²

The bureaucratic reality of the New Town was rather more mundane. Northumberland County Council had initially failed to secure government support for Killingworth, forcing them instead to rely on local resources.⁴³ In 1964, Longbenton Urban District Council, in whose area the development was located, formed the Special Housing Committee of Killingworth Township to oversee the planning and construction of the programme.⁴⁴ In other respects, the committee's discussions reflected local (and national) housing conservatism. For example, the tentative suggestion that the North Eastern Housing Association be invited to participate in

the implementation of social housing was strongly rejected, reflecting the pronounced local municipal hostility towards housing associations and the wider failure to introduce them nationally from the 1950s.⁴⁵

The parochial attitude towards new forms of tenure stood in contrast to a more open approach to the planning and design of the New Town. To this end, the housing committee expressed an interest in deploying Radburn principles at Killingworth and visited Cumbernauld New Town to study its layout, house types and vehicular/pedestrian separation. Visits to Vällingby New Town in Sweden were eagerly proposed, as well as to Tapiola on the outskirts of Helsinki. The Finnish New Town fused Anglo-American neighbourhood unit systems with design reliant on European-based CIAM urbanism and had been forcefully promoted as a model Garden City New Town by Finnish marketing of their post-war planning innovations.⁴⁶ Although resources were scarce, the idea of drawing on ideal typical European New Towns was keenly promoted in discussions over Killingworth, which reflected a collective appreciation of Tapiola.⁴⁷

Ralph Erskine's urban village concept appeared to mesh neatly with the milieu of appreciation for Scandinavian planning innovations. However, Erskine's work on the project was complicated by a number of factors. Erskine had been invited by local developer Stanley Miller, who later built part of the Byker housing scheme, to enter a competition for housing adjacent to the old colliery pond that was to become the Killingworth boating lake. The 'lakeshore' housing village was therefore distinguished because it was only a small part of the bigger scheme, it was assigned a bespoke architectural competition and it was the only housing to abut the lake. Moreover, Killingworth New Town was intended to provide a mix of housing, and the lakeshore development was the first attempt to provide homes for owner occupation.⁴⁸

In other respects, the lakeshore housing scheme corresponded to the wider ambitions to underline a break with older housing forms. In 1968, the project featured as the case study in *Northern Architect*, whose didactic tone reflected a strong commitment to disseminating good practices in international planning and architecture to local audiences. Erskine's contribution to the discussion reveals his efforts to mediate the urban village concept in a mature industrial setting:

A lakeside has a particularly attractive situation—a line of happening where water meets land. We consider it important not to create an enclosure of privilege..we would wish that the lakeshore village should moreover further the ideals of common interest, of communicate and a compassionate community.. Architecturally it will be more allied to the groups of simple crofters' cottages on Skye than to the rich villages of Southern England. We hope that this can create its own beauty, an environment in harmony not only with the landscape but with the economy of those who live in Killingworth ⁴⁹

The Killingworth development speaks to key themes in this discussion. The use of 'vernacular' materials, and particularly painted wood, has been characterized by architectural historians as part of a wider response to the 'tristesse of brutal high rise'. Erskine's work in Britain from the 1960s has been cited as exemplifying this shift. Sutherland Lyall, in particular, suggests that by the late 1960s, the British architectural turn to 'neovernacular' was also mobilized by the popularity of the Radburn planning ideal and its diminutive scale that provided an alternative to the '*Ville Radieuse* high-rise' approach of estate planning.⁵⁰ As has been seen, Erskine's interest in diminutive scale significantly foreshadowed the British turn to neovernacular; nevertheless,

his work at Killingworth complemented a climate of architectural enthusiasm for neovernacular, which included advocacy of tenant led self-build contributions. At Killingworth, the *Northern Architect* noticeably praised the project's design as responsive to the potential of interaction and community participation through self-build initiatives (Figures 2–4):

The relationship of indoor-patio-garden spaces in the dwellings suggest the extension of . . . participation outwards from the core of the home. There is no reason why, within this organised framework, such participation could not be continued into elevation treatments and public spaces: and do-it yourself and self help activities fused with recreational and social inter-course.⁵¹

The allusion to 'do it yourself' activities was unwittingly prophetic: note, in particular, the problems with the original external porches and the local resident's 'DIY' response. Perhaps the addition of upvc porches and conservatories could be read as evidence of a bricolage reaction, corresponding to the idea of Erskine's Killingworth plan as impetus towards wider participation 'outwards from the core of the home'.⁵²

The *Northern Architect's* professional encouragement contrasted to a much cooler response from the housing committee. An official visit to Erskine's lakeshore development produced anxieties over the architect's audacious plan for houses constructed on stilts in the boating lake, in addition to proposals for harbours and a boat builders' yard. Objections were raised against plans for amphibious dwellings with the result that the scheme was only partly constructed. An angry exchange between building contractor and housing committee ensued. Stanley Miller's representatives accused the authorities of prejudice against the architectural



Figure 2. Ralph Erskine's Lakeshore Housing at Killingworth, Tyne and Wear, photograph by author.



Figure 3. Ralph Erskine's Lakeshore Housing at Killingworth, Tyne and Wear, photograph by author.

vision, and claimed that the project was a 'scape goat' of politics.⁵³ The committee's trepidation was perhaps understandable in the light of suspicion amongst council tenants that the project would create an 'owner occupied enclave cutting them off from the lake'.⁵⁴ Evidently



Figure 4. Ralph Erskine's Lakeshore Housing at Killingworth, Tyne and Wear, 'neovernacular' porches and bespoke additions, photograph by author.

prospective residents did not share Erskine's conviction that the 'harmonious' architecture of the lakeshore village would militate against the creation of 'an enclosure of privilege'.⁵⁵

The uneasy response to the cost of these waterfront elevations is perhaps also explicable in the context of the national financial crisis that engulfed the Labour government by the end of 1968. Thereafter, Erskine's small but important legacy at Killingworth was frequently overlooked. Roy Gazzard emphasized that the Killingworth central development, a series of brutalist tower blocks with a complex concentric arrangement, were inspired from Northumberland's medieval castles. These would enhance a community that was both 'unchanging and modern'.⁵⁶ Such optimism was short-lived. The concrete central 'Towers' soon crumbled, bringing with them the area's reputation as it became notorious for dereliction and arson attacks. Killingworth social housing was quickly maligned. As compared to Erskine's experiment with speculatively built houses, later building for owner occupiers became a symbol of local upward mobility. The Barratt's Homes semis on the Highfield Estate, constructed during the early 1970s, were to find humorous expression in *Whatever happened to the Likely Lads*, where Bob and Thelma's aspirations were signalled by their purchase of a house in the area.⁵⁷ Demolition of the towers started as early as 1986.⁵⁸

Erskine's recollection of his unfinished Killingworth project was noticeably muted. He reflected that the bureaucratic structure of the English New Town had complicated what was otherwise a relatively smooth transfer of his architectural vision from Sweden to England. Killingworth, as we have seen, was reliant on local resources which prompted anxieties over the cost of his ambitious scheme. But his frustration with the New Town bureaucracy may also have reflected his own limited control, as architect and planner, over a much bigger scheme at Killingworth, where his lakeshore village was a relatively small part.

Erskine was to revisit the English New Town bureaucracy during the 1970s when he was engaged to develop houses for owner occupation at Milton Keynes. Milton Keynes had been designated as a New Town in 1967 and quickly roused attention in international planning circles. In particular, the concerted efforts to evoke the characteristics of the English Garden City attracted a number of acclaimed architects.⁵⁹ In 1972, Erskine began work at the New Town for Bovis. He was engaged to plan and design the new suburb Eaglestone and the developer lauded the appointment of an architect with a growing international reputation in a large advert in *The Times*.⁶⁰ Like Killingworth, his residential scheme at Eaglestone comprised predominantly low-rise houses for owner occupation, which were an element within the grander scheme for the New Town.

The plan for Eaglestone reflected the prevailing appetite for Radburn style layout within the second New Town development. These houses were designed with marked contrasts between the shape of windows, roof pitches, and a characteristic use of painted timber and other 'folksy' additions. As at Killingworth, they were positioned on a network which separated traffic from pedestrians.⁶¹ As at Killingworth, a deliberate open-endedness was suggestive of the potential for community engagement through self-build initiatives. These design features elicited a mixed response. Lyall detected the architecture of social engineering and the continuity of an essentially patrician approach to planning, only superficially cloaked in the 'sham intentionalism' of 'non-architect designed downmarket ordinariness'.⁶² Swedish architectural observers of this type of participation were also unmoved, but acquitted the architect whilst criticizing the residents and the 'pronounced need of the Englishman to personalise his property', adding that an uncoordinated repainting of the wooden cladding had spoiled the original plan.⁶³ But the

project's Garden City resonances and embrace of Radburn planning principles also earned sympathetic responses. For instance, the residential area's placing around a communal green and the planned emphasis on the possibilities for social interaction have been understood as an architectural appeal for community, social cohesion and self-reliance.⁶⁴ This interpretation resonates with Erskine's ambition that his work would foster social integration, in its turn an outgrowth of the progressive societal world view nourished in Sweden during the 1940s and 1950s. However, by the 1970s, the combination of this ideal with a radical approach to user participation exposed the democratic dilemma within Erskine's vernacular architecture.

Participation and social engineering: the Byker Wall estate

In spite of his difficulties at Killingworth, during the late 1960s, Erskine had come to the attention of Arthur Grey, the leader of the newly elected Conservative Council in Newcastle. Grey enlisted him to work on the Byker redevelopment from 1968. This project took place in the context of another shift in local politics. By the late 1960s, tenant protests against centralized Labour-controlled slum clearance programmes had contributed to a Tory municipal victory in 1968. Following national guidelines, the Labour-controlled council had proposed to reduce the density of the area thus dispersing the community, and this precipitated widespread anger. One of the Tory slogans used to great effect was *Byker for Byker People*, which was an indication of the popular alienation from the poured concrete reality of T. Dan Smith's Brasilia of the North.⁶⁵ Erskine's appointment therefore signalled a break with housing approaches of the past. He was known for planning new forms of domestic housing and perhaps the local Conservatives wished to emphasize their progressive credentials by appearing even more willing than their predecessors to embrace and execute a modernist Scandinavian housing project.

A densely populated part of east Newcastle from the 1880s, the tenure of the original network of grid pattern streets was privately rented up to the 1960s. The desire of residents to be housed together was often attributed to the strong social and cultural bonds that characterized such sections of the industrial working-class and Erskine's brief was to keep the community intact. In spatial design, the Byker Wall provided a concentrated snapshot of Erskine's transnational architectural vision. As at Killingworth and later at Eaglestone, the buildings made use of strong colours and painted wood. Elements of Radburn principles were evident with traffic segregation and the enthusiasm for collective areas, which British commentators ascribed to his Swedish influences.⁶⁶ The architect often referred to the continuity of local urban sociability as the rationale for retaining the area's pubs and working men's clubs, as well as for planning new meeting points and children's play areas. But in many respects, the contrast with the past was stark, especially in the extensive planting and green areas which distinguished the Byker Wall estate from the unremitting greyneess of the terraces it replaced. However, the execution of the serpentine wall and the dwellings it enveloped was to be protracted and in the end barely half the original residents were re-housed-the promise to keep 'Byker for Byker people' remained unfulfilled.⁶⁷

The intricacies of its redevelopment can be reviewed elsewhere and despite its blighted local hopes the Byker project proceeded to become a landmark in the British community architecture movement. Widely celebrated in the architectural press even Sutherland Lyall, having disparaged the ersatz intentionalism of Erskine's neovernacularism in Milton Keynes, grudgingly acknowledged that the Byker experiment deployed the same techniques with far greater

'bravura and social meaning'.⁶⁸ By the middle of the decade, the project had been widely profiled: in 1976, Swedish architectural students were sent on field visits to study English social housing projects. Naturally, the Byker project provided a central focus and was improbably compared to Haussmann's monumental renewal of Paris.⁶⁹ Enthusiasm extended beyond an admiration for its spatial arrangements and brightly painted woodwork. Erskine's unique engagement of user participation placed the project at the centre of the burgeoning community architecture movement. User participation was initially channelled through the architect's office, which operated an open door policy allowing residents to build a dialogue with the architect. Thereafter, the forward allocation of new houses allowed 'residents to plan, anticipate and watch the building of their new homes day by day'.⁷⁰ Formal organizations, liaison committees and community development projects were quickly established to facilitate discussion, often with municipal support (Figures 5 and 6).

For activists who saw themselves as legitimate advocates of the inner city, Erskine's involvement of residents in designing their houses was central to the community architecture movement's embryonic phase and ranked alongside the creation of the Neighbourhood Action Project in Liverpool and the North Kensington Amenity Trust in west London.⁷¹ This ferment of community action complemented Erskine's public pronouncements (he was now writing admiringly about the virtues of urban settlements with no professional architectural intervention such as African townships). In 1987, Nick Wates and Charles Kneivitt attempted to establish the 'laws' of community architecture in their documentary history of its emergence over the



Figure 5. Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1976, courtesy of Newcastle City Libraries.

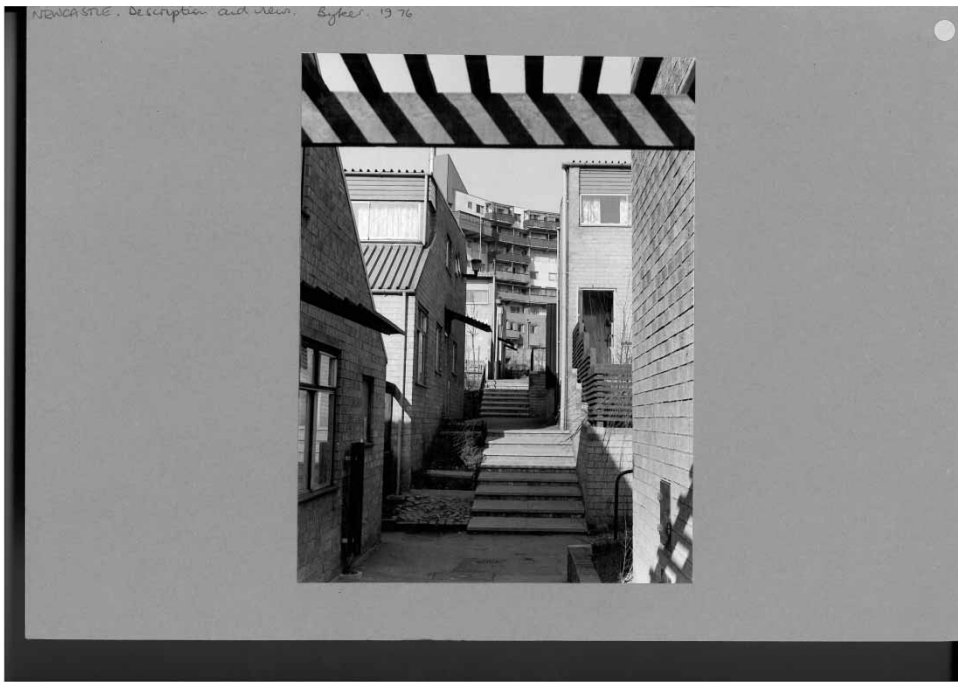


Figure 6. Byker Wall, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1976, courtesy of Newcastle City Libraries.

previous decade. These stated that ‘people should willingly take responsibility for their environment and participate ... in its creation and management’; this should furnish a ‘creative working partnership ... with specialists from one or more disciplines’; and, finally ‘all aspects of people’s environmental needs [be considered on a] continuing evolutionary basis’. In all these principles were judged as rooted in ‘harmonious historic settlements’, which, having been overwhelmed by the industrial and bureaucratic requirements of modern planning and construction, were re-emerging thanks to the community architecture movement.⁷²

Although Erskine’s approach was seen as complementing the breakthrough of an innate and democratic architecture, in many ways his work in Britain and Sweden in the years leading up to Byker was dependent on state planning regulations and finance that were pilloried by the community architecture movement. Thus it is important to distinguish Erskine’s work from the grassroots movements alluded to by Wates and Knevitt. In other respects, the intellectual underpinning of his praxis needs to be separated from the historical affinity that characterized his appreciation by the community architecture exponents during the 1970s. Erskine would often re-state his admiration for a planning process which produced architecture with negligible hallmarks of professional design. This conviction had been hinted at in his explanation for the design at Killingworth. It was detected and critically appraised in the gesture towards self-build at Eaglestone. At Byker, where Erskine had responsibility for the whole area, this conviction could be given full expression. Thus he described the architectural remit at Byker as incorporating planning, ‘a bit of poetry’ and social engineering.⁷³

Erskine attempted to reconcile user participation with social engineering by connecting it to the Functionalist concept. In so doing, the ethical and moral effect of adhering to Functionalism as a search for pragmatic humanity should realize a less self-consciously designed architecture.⁷⁴ User participation was thus a means of supporting the ethical ambitions of Functionalism. Referring to his work in Arctic Canada, at Resolute Bay, Erskine noted that 'the meetings which did take place-[with residents]-had a considerable effect on the planning despite the fact that we had different backgrounds'.⁷⁵ However, critics assert that similar exercises in northern Sweden bestowed questionable benefits on the indigenous population. Projects that have become celebrated motifs of indigenous architecture resulted in the building of a 'ski hotel' and housing for mine workers. These were erected during a time of state colonialism by Nordic countries of the Arctic territories, and were not demonstrably sympathetic to the indigenous nomadic community.⁷⁶ Despite his claim to be sympathetic to indigenous style, he could be criticized as a gesture architect doing little more than incorporating native motifs into mining camp housing and ski resort hotels.

The ambiguity underpinning Erskine's indigenous architecture is not restricted to his work in the Arctic and can be related to the democratic dilemma of his approach to participation in planning in Britain. His expectation that residents at Killingworth would wish to live in 'crofter's cottages', rather than in more salubrious housing forms, perhaps also recalls an anthropological preoccupation with 'the primitive'. Moreover, his pronouncements on participation and planning in Byker reinforce the sense that his ambition for a less self-consciously designed architecture was underpinned by an 'essentially modern notion of architecture as social engineering, however gently designed'.⁷⁷ Although he held formal meetings to elaborate abstract planning ideas, he recalled that they functioned as 'grumble sessions' compared to Sweden where 'people in general are more receptive to the idea of planning and development'.⁷⁸ Further, there was a tendency for residents to withdraw from active discussion of problems and concepts. This he attributed to deficits within cultural heritage of the British working-class and its cultural fear of abstract ideas. Thus, he implied that the traditional managerial approach to British social housing gave little opportunity for tenant participation.⁷⁹

These two legacies equipped people with little experience of this type of involvement in such important creative processes and illustrate the challenges he faced in sustaining a participatory dialogue. That an often contradictory approach to planning and participation evolved is therefore unsurprising. For instance, Erskine insisted that the rationale for the new low-rise housing inside the Byker Wall was mobilized by persuasive residents, whereas the architect and planner remained open to the possibility of rebuilding the old streets. This contrasted to the approach for the 'perimeter block', which was executed with less user influence and was considered 'too complicated' to explain to a population with limited purchase on abstract ideas.⁸⁰ Interestingly, if we recall that the Killingworth plan gestured towards resident participation 'outwards from the core of the home', he responded ambiguously to the evidence of personalizing individual properties at Byker. The growing tendency of resident private investment in the domestic sphere, such as the installation of new kitchens, seemed to him to reinforce a complacency reiterated in the unwillingness to discuss abstract planning ideals. Whilst he conceded ruefully that tenant activism could not be sustained by deliberately planning a poor housing milieu, his intellectual position accords with earlier criticisms directed towards the New Towns as instruments of social control to stymie the spread of tenant dissent.⁸¹

The central problem of combining a participatory approach with social engineering can be better understood if we accept that his experience in Sweden had furnished him with specific

expectations of resident behaviour in Britain. Tenant participation in the planning and execution of social housing in Sweden is rooted in the history of housing associations, which have functioned as the 'coalition of popular movements' that underpinned the successful social democratic movement.⁸² Swedish social housing embodied the co-operative ideal and after the Second World War new social housing associations were at the core of the emergent Swedish welfare state. Alongside the central provider, HSB, there was a sharp rise in the number of independent housing associations nationally after 1945 and by the early 1960s they were the major housing provider. Independent housing associations were often characterized by high levels of tenant participation, with full decentralization of budgetary decisions and comprehensive maintenance devolved to resident control. This was often welcomed by the social democrats who saw housing associations and co-operatives as a useful complement to the Labour movement in the dissemination of People's Home democratic ideals.⁸³

Whilst the post-war admiration of Scandinavian modernity in Britain extended to housing tenure, on the whole tenant involvement in public housing and in the formation of housing associations was 'tolerated rather than welcomed'. Malpass has characterized local government as generally hostile to housing associations that appeared to be 'run by middle class and titled people who were suspected of having Tory leanings', which corresponds to the municipal approach taken at Killingworth.⁸⁴ Erskine's Anglo-Swedish experience may well have underlined this difference, prompting him to explore historical and comparative explanations for the complacency of tenant participation at Byker. However, he also seemed impervious to the evidence that the successful counterpoint of tenant participation in Sweden was probably exaggerated by the late 1960s. The scale of the Million Dwellings Programme soon elicited criticisms that the new housing estates contributed to a fragmentation of communities and growing social anomie.⁸⁵ The myth of Swedish and Scandinavian urban democracy was thereafter often qualified with a proliferation of studies seeking to reveal beneath its veneer a hegemonic modernization process that could be as exclusive and coercive as it was democratic and open. Changing attitudes to tenant participation were central to this debate. For critics on the left, tenant involvement in the housing associations both relied on and encouraged an ethos of self-help and respectability that had always been inclined towards a market-oriented social housing. Housing associations were characterized by high levels of tenant participation, but they had an ideal typical resident in mind: 'healthy, steady, capable and industrious men, generally with a bit saved on the side ... the unemployed or sick often struggled to pay the deposits required for entry into this world of tenant participation'.⁸⁶ Tenant participation was shaped for those who could afford the opportunity costs of entry into this milieu and there was the added potential of rising equity value for individual families.

In the context of rising property prices many critics on the left charged that the Scandinavian housing system had the unintended consequence of bearing similarities to the system of owner occupation in Anglo-Saxon economies. Furthermore, such critics saw the 1970s fatigue with participation in housing associations as an effect of detachment from the political culture of the participatory system. Anger over the entrepreneurial inclination of housing associations was present from the early 1970s and expressed by housing activists in cities like Stockholm and Malmö in Sweden, where residents occupied buildings and arranged protest marches. This reached a peak with the creation of the Christiania Free Town on the outskirts of Copenhagen, where activists built a settlement without planning controls that professed to stand outside the parameters of the Orwellian Danish welfare state.⁸⁷ Widely publicized outside Denmark,

Christiania, like Byker, was identified as a pioneering example of the community architecture movement.⁸⁸ Erskine's response to growing evidence of tenant radicalism was overwhelmingly positive. He endorsed the protests and drew parallels with the organic 'plan-less' communities of developing countries.⁸⁹ At the same time, he continued to insist that an overarching 'Scandinavian' ideal of progress was compatible with the aims of the protesters and remained faithful to his belief that Functionalism could be aligned to democratic participation in planning. He appeared not to recognize this activism as an expression of alienation from 'People's Home' democracy, but rather as an effect of the failure of the Fordist mode of planning and construction, integral to the 'Million Home Programme', that he had remained largely impervious to.

Conclusion

The historical and transnational perspective of Erskine's attempt to realize democratic participation at Byker might also assist a wider review of planning and social housing in Britain, particularly during the 1970s. The weight of historical preoccupation relating to later events, and particularly the introduction of the Right to Buy through the Housing Act of 1980, has arguably cast a long and retrospective shadow over plans that were conceived in a milieu that did not anticipate these shifts. In particular, a focus on the alleged break between earlier social planning and the entrepreneurial urban development unleashed by the 1980s has tended to obscure from view the experiments in democratic participation that were initiated during the early 1970s.⁹⁰

The challenge of eliciting democratic participation in the redevelopment of Byker during the 1970s was undeniably complicated by local political contingencies, but it also proved to be a distinctive moment in social housing in which the essential aspects of Erskine's international career were brought to light. Whilst Erskine's transnational career might seem an instinctive choice to examine the mutual influence of planning ideals across national boundaries, this discussion departs from the notion that cultural transfers moderate the significance of constructed national caricatures.⁹¹ Rather Erskine's selective hybrid of international planning ideals essentialized aspects of British and Swedish historical culture. This process was reinforced over time and across space, allowing Erskine to sustain the outwardly contradictory elements of social engineering and democratic participation that was crystallized in the redevelopment of Byker.

Overall his work in Britain allowed a romantic conception of Swedish modernity to be sustained by a society that was responsive to the external construction of the modern Nordic caricature. Erskine was also an agent in this process: during the 1940s and 1950s, the building of the Swedish welfare state, and especially its social housing, allowed Erskine to work within the English Garden City ideal whilst also nurturing selected aspects Functionalist design that would underpin his approach to democratic participation. His utopian attitude to Nordic modernity was increased by the alienation he felt as an effect of Sweden's turn to mass produced houses and the ensuing suburban sprawl of the 1960s. His return to Britain reinforced this professional trajectory, providing intellectual sanctuary furnished by the English Garden City influences within the New Town movement.

Away from the spectre of Fordist mass housing Erskine could idealize the Swedish Modern of his youth. His work in North East England was seen as evoking the more intimate scale and visual representation of Swedish Modern with the use of brightly painted woodwork and pronounced celebration of vernacular forms. The inevitable problems he encountered at Killingworth tell us

about the distance between his transnational planning ideals and local contingencies. But here too, the international perspective is illuminating: whilst Killingworth initially provided an escape from Fordist mass housing, his vision there was also quickly eclipsed by a housing trajectory that equalled Sweden in its appetite for poured concrete uniformity.

By moving between Britain and Sweden during the 1960s and 1970s, Erskine selectively appreciated housing and planning developments that complemented his architectural outlook. By the end of the 1960s, British neovernacular and the grassroots community architecture movement could be embraced, whilst inconvenient realities, such as the British inclination towards Fordist housing, were largely overlooked. Likewise the tenant activism mobilized by the international community architecture movement was seen as meshing with his own interest in indigenous plan-less communities. That he failed to recognize this movement as stimulated by alienation from either modernist planning, or the social democratic welfare model, provides evidence that the cultural transfer of his ideas and practice between Britain and Sweden averted his gaze from inconvenient realities in both countries.

That is not to detract from the achievements and legacy of the Byker Wall estate. Despite its limitations, the participatory process he instigated still has many devoted admirers.⁹² Erskine's on site office and the promise of a new tenant led urban landscape, a vision of brightly painted Swedish rational modernity, remains an alluring memory. It still provides stark contrast to the dereliction that beset the estate by the early 1990s. Housing Minister Grant Shapp's apparent celebration of the 'community campaign' to save the maligned estate from demolition in 2007 and secure its status as a Community Trust has prompted some to see links to between this new phase of Community Partnership and Erskine's pioneering community architecture project. But this is to forget that Erskine's success built on a foreground of activism that helped to preserve 'old Byker' from dispersal through Labour-led slum clearance programmes. More broadly, during the last 40 years, tenant activism has been mobilized effectively in conjunction with acute local crises: first during the 1960s in response to slum clearance and most recently in the face of proposed demolition. But evidence of a more mundane and everyday tenant engagement in the planning and management of the residential landscape, the hallmark of the 'successful' social democratic housing model in Sweden, has been less apparent. Perhaps as Erskine speculated in 1976, the cultural legacy of British social housing was one of limited tenant engagement in planning and housing. Equally Erskine's fear that improving the built environment undermined the radical potential of grassroots activism is also pertinent in the light of the episodic and crisis orientated character of tenant engagement in Byker. Whether the 'Big Society' has either the theoretical or practical expedients to stimulate sustained tenant participation in the planning of our twenty-first-century cities remains to be seen.

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Notes

1. Wates and Kneivitt, *Community Architecture*, 29. See also, Towers, *Building Democracy*.
2. Jencks, *Modern Movements in Architecture*, 377.
3. Amery, "Newcastle upon Tyne," 362.
4. Goldsmith, "Social Housing," 284.
5. On the theory of participatory architecture and planning, see Albrecht, "Towards a Theory of Participation," 24. Albrecht credits Erskine, amongst others, with adhering to the democratic impulse of community design, in its 'quest for equality', as well as helping to secure public recognition for participation in planning and architecture.
6. <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/housing-management/byker-residents-given-chance-to-run-estate/6514038.article>
7. Flint, "The Responsible Tenant," 893–909.
8. Collymore, *Architecture of Ralph Erskine*, 1.
9. Anderson and Hilson, "Images of Sweden and Nordic Countries," 224; Anderson, "Nordic Nostalgia and Nordic Light," 229–46.
10. Egelius, *Ralph Erskine*, 21. Peter Hall attributes the architecture of 'Georgian good taste' in the Second Garden City to the influence of Louis de Soisson. Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow*, 112.
11. Lisa Lindström, "Utvecklingen av Ekerö Centrum under 100 År," *Ekerö Tidning* 1, 2010, 6–7. <http://www.ekero.se/upload/Nyheter/dokument/ekero%20tidning%20nr%201%202010%20lagupplöst.pdf>; Collymore, *Architecture of Ralph Erskine*, 2.
12. Collymore, "Swedish or British," 32; Cullen, "Byker," 360–3; and Clapson, *Invincible Green Suburbs*, 30.
13. Egelius, *Ralph Erskine*, 21.
14. Erskine, "Architecture the Useful and Universal Art," 10; and Erskine, "Democratic Architecture," 1–18.
15. Findal, *Nordisk Functionalism*.
16. Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse*, 178.
17. Collymore, "Swedish or British," 32; and Erskine, "Architecture the Useful and Universal Art," 10.
18. Liese, *Modern Swedish Design*, 345.
19. Egelius, *Ralph Erskine*, 21.
20. Birchall, "Co-Partnership Housing and the Garden," 329–58.
21. Erskine, "R. Erskine talks to AJ," 417.
22. Erskine, "Architecture the Useful and Universal Art," 10.
23. Charrington, "Co-ordinating Method and Art," 310.
24. Marklund, "The Social Laboratory," 264–85.
25. The success of the Stockholm Exhibition had special resonance in the Nordic region, such as in Iceland where the planning of Reykjavik during the 1930s and 1940s took indisputable inspiration from Swedish Functionalism; after the Second World War, the building of Icelandic high rise suburbs evoked Swedish fore-runners, notably Vällingby: Reynarsson, "The Planning of Reykjavik," 58–9.
26. Mumford, *CIAM Discourse*, 166.
27. SOU, "Slutbetänkande avgivet av Bostadssociala utredningen," 63.
28. Hall, "Planning History," 153–79.
29. O'Hara, "Applied Socialism," 10.
30. Hall, "Planning History," 153–79.
31. Billing and Stigendal, *Hegemonins decennier. Lärdomar från Malmö om den svenska modellen*, 291–305.

32. Erskine "Architecture the Useful and Universal Art," 10.
33. Waern et al., *A Guide to Swedish Architecture*, 144.
34. Hall, "Urban planning in Sweden," 222, 230.
35. Ibid.
36. Clapson, "Invincible Green," 4, 29–30; and Johnson "Origin of the Neighbourhood Unit," 227–47.
37. Davies, "Norwegian Wood? Scandinavian Design," 80–93.
38. O'Hara, "Applied Socialism," 10.
39. Schaffer, *New Town Story*, 269. Civic architecture was noticeably influenced by Scandinavian design such as Newcastle Civic Centre. Constructed after 1958 it owes a debt to both Stockholm and Oslo Town Halls. Faulkner, "Architecture in Newcastle," 243.
40. Benwell Community Development Project, *Slums on the Drawing Board*, 4.
41. Erskine, "Editorial. Lakeshore Housing," 1016.
42. John Ardill, "A Special Report by John Ardill," *The Guardian*, March 4, 1970, 4.
43. Schaffer, *New Town Story*, 230.
44. Tyne and Wear Archive Service (TWAS), UD.LO/A/2/25, Killingworth Township, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Housing Committee, April 28, 1964, 28.
45. Ibid, 29.
46. Lahti, "The Helsinki suburbs of Tapiola," 158.
47. TWAS, UD.LO/A/2/27, Killingworth Township, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Housing Committee, May 9, 1966, 7.
48. Ardill, "A Special Report," 4.
49. Erskine, "Editorial. Lakeshore Housing," 1018.
50. Lyall, *British Architecture*, 72.
51. "Editorial. Lakeshore Housing," 1016.
52. "Editorial. Lakeshore Housing," 1016.
53. TWAS, UD.LO/A/1/40, Killingworth Township, Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Housing Committee, June 2, 1969.
54. Ardill, "A Special Report," 4.
55. Erskine, "Editorial. Lakeshore Housing," 1018.
56. Gazzard, "Killingworth-Half Way to Completion," 19.
57. "The Likely Lads fact file," http://www.bbc.co.uk/tyne/content/articles/2006/04/12/hollywood_on_tyne_likely_lads_feature.shtml
58. Usherwood, Beach and Morris, *Public Sculpture*, 221.
59. Clapson, *Social History of Milton Keynes*.
60. *The Times*, May 17, 1973, 2.
61. Iqbal Alam <http://iqbalaalam.wordpress.com/category/milton-keynes/>
62. Lyall, *British Architecture*, 76. As a student of English town planning during the 1930s, it remains important to recall that Erskine had probably also embraced the route idea of adjusting the urban environment to produce beneficial social changes. Meller, *Patrick Geddes*, 156–200.
63. Hulltin, "Tre Gånger Erskine," 37.
64. Alam <http://iqbalaalam.wordpress.com/category/milton-keynes/>
65. Malpass, "Professionalism in Architecture," 188; and "Editorial. Byker," 3–11.
66. Collymore, "Swedish or British," 32.
67. Malpass, Professionalism in Architecture," 188.
68. Lyall, *British Architecture*, 76.
69. Sjöström, "Byker förebild eller undantags miljö?" 4.
70. McGuirk, "Back to Byker," 45.
71. Wates and Knevt, *Community Architecture*, 2. The community architecture movement was established in the context of state legislation promoting participation in planning following the findings of the 1969 Skeffington Committee (Skeffington Committee, People and Planning, HMSO, 1969). However, Peter Shapely's discussion reveals that local government used such measures primarily to ease the path of planning, an approach that left less scope for meaningful participation. This had the effect of further alienating tenants and ironically legislation mobilized in response to

- Skeffington highlighted further the democratic deficit in local housing policy. Shapely, "Planning, Housing and Participation," 75–90.
72. Wates and Knevitt, *Community Architecture*, 112–11.
 73. Erskine, "Byker," 346.
 74. Bryan, "Ralph Erskine at Stockholm University," 80.
 75. Bryan, "Ralph Erskine," 80.
 76. McGovern, "Ralph Erskine (Skiing) architect," 249. Erskine's unselfconscious reference to social engineering is perhaps explained also by his background, first as a student of the English town planning movement, and then as a practicing architect in Sweden at a time when sociologists including Gunnar Myrdal, exerted a major influence over town planning. Mumford, *CIAM Discourse*, 166.
 77. Lyall, *British Architecture*, 77.
 78. Collymore, "Swedish or British," 32.
 79. Erskine, "Byker," 4.
 80. Ibid.
 81. Dennis, "Popularity of the Neighbourhood Community Idea," 74–92.
 82. Strömberg, "Politicization of the Housing Market," 237–71.
 83. Goldsmith, "Social Housing," 201.
 84. By the 1970s, this trajectory was temporarily reversed as housing co-operatives came to be seen as central in tackling inner-city decay. Malpass, *Housing Associations and Policy*, 133.
 85. Flemström and Ronnby, *Fallet Rosengård. En studie*, 8.
 86. Billing, Olsson, and Stigendal, "Local Politics," 297; and Goldsmith, 'Social Housing', 201.
 87. Christiansen, "Denmark," 19.
 88. Wates and Knevitt, *Community Architecture*, 31.
 89. Erskine, "Tankar efter Mullvaden," 27.
 90. Harvey, "From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism," 3–17; and Brenner, "Restructuring, Rescaling and Urban," 67–68.
 91. Espagne and Werner, "Transfers"; and Miller, "Comparative and cross-national history," 115.
 92. McGuirk, "Back to Byker," 45.

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