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PROJEKT ■ PROJECT
Groß ■ ■ ■ ■ Large
sied ■ ■ housing
lung ■ ■ ■ ■ area

Exhibition
of the
Center of Competence for Large Housing Estates
“Project Large Housing Estates”

Die Ausstellung entstand mit
freundlicher Unterstützung von:



Poster 1

Large Housing Estates are Part of the Future of European Cities

Millions of people all over Europe live in large housing estates. Most of the large suburban developments were constructed in the 1960s through 1980s using mass-production building methods, and they represent an indispensable share of housing supply. They were a precondition of overcoming the shortage of housing. As a consequence of the accession of countries in Eastern Europe to the European Union, a European strategy for the sustainable development of these residential areas has become particularly important, since mass production of housing was the predominant building method in Eastern Europe for decades.

The sheer importance they have for the provision of housing to large portions of the population will keep Europe's large suburban housing developments on the housing market in the future as a segment with specific qualities.

Images

1 Geographic distribution in Berlin. The map shows the distribution of the large housing estates constructed on the city's territory after 1960.

Note the vast areas of Marzahn, Hellersdorf, and Hohenschönhausen in the north-eastern part, Gropiusstadt in the south-eastern part, and Märkisches Viertel in the north-western part of the city.

Some 700,000 inhabitants live in approx. 350,000 apartments in Berlin's large suburban housing developments, which represent some 20% of the total housing supply of the city.

Berlin aims to stabilise the large housing developments socially as green residential towns and to enhance them in terms of urban design and living quality. In this respect requirements are:-

- socio-politically speaking, to reduce the process of social segregation and destabilisation by social management, community building, and housing allocation;
- urbanistically speaking, to complement, enhance, upgrade, or reduce housing supply, service offerings, and facilities of the public.

2 Large housing estate of Marzahn-Hellersdorf

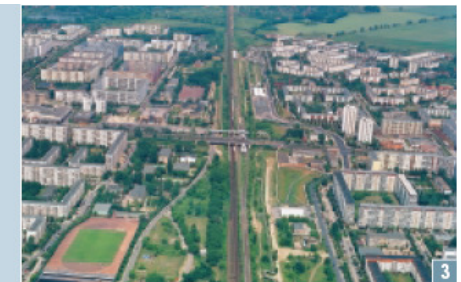
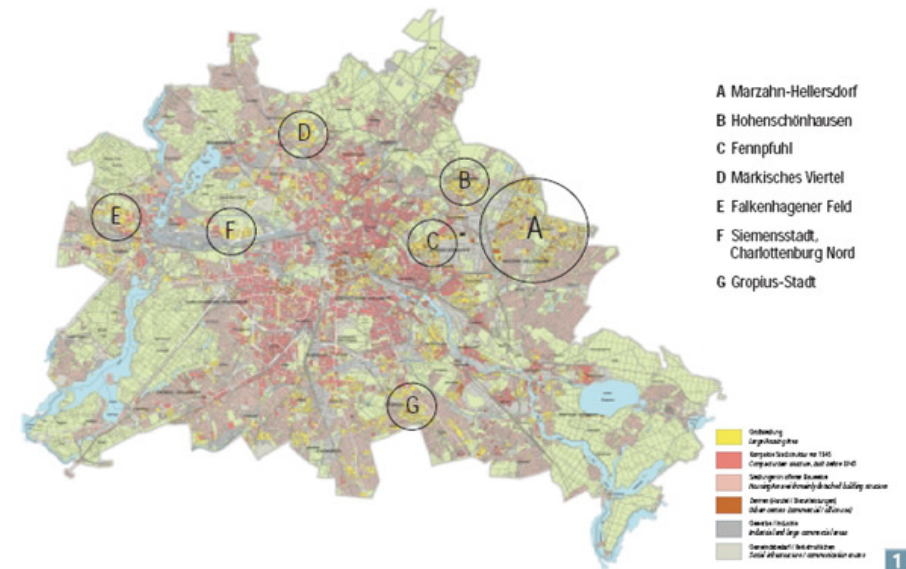
3 Large housing estate of Hohenschönhausen

4 Large housing estate of Mitte, Platz der Vereinten Nationen

5 Large housing estate of Märkisches Viertel

Poster 1:

Large Housing Estates are Part of the Future of European Cities



Poster 2

Tradition of Housing Development of the 1920s

The social design and the urbanistic structure of the large housing estate owes much to the tradition of European urbanism in the 20th century. They have become parts in their own right of the history of European urbanism. They are rooted in the reform movements at the beginning of the 20th century that claimed Light, Air, and Sun for All based on the criticism addressed to the backyards of Gründerzeit housing in the 19th century. The first garden cities and workers' villages of the turn of the century:-

- replaced city blocks with less densely designed living units in the country;
- separated living and working, bearing healthy living conditions in mind; and
- focused on living in conveniently sized neighbourhoods with the associated public facilities.

This proved at the same time to be a template for new housing policies which:

- aimed to build as many flats as possible for large portions of the population at an affordable cost with rationalised building methods;
- to this end, established powerful housing societies liable to the common welfare; in Berlin, estates were developed that were held in high esteem all over the world and are listed today as World Cultural Heritage.

Images

- 1 Large housing estate of Britz (horseshoe settlement)
The horseshoe, the urbanistic centre of the development, has been considered for years the hallmark of Berlin's urban planning of the 1920s.
- 2 Large housing estate of Britz
built 1925 - 1930; architects: Bruno Taut, Martin Wagner
- 3 Large housing estate of Siemensstadt
built 1929 - 1934; architects: Hans Scharoun, Walter Gropius, Fred Forbat, Otto Bartning, Paul Rudolph Henning, Hogo Häring
- 4 Garden city of Falkenberg
built 1913 - 1916; architect: Bruno Taut, spatial planning: Ludwig Lesser
- 5 Weiße Stadt ("White City")
built 1929 - 1931; architects: Otto Rudolph Salvisberg, Bruno Ahrends, Wilhelm Büning, municipal housing officer: Martin Wagner, spatial planning: Ludwig Lesser

Poster 2

Tradition of Housing Development of the 1920s



Poster 3

Definition of Properties and Estates

The Agreement on German Unity required the local authorities to see to it that land owned by the municipality be delimited from the estates of “the eligible parties active in the private sector”.

The municipality defined which areas it had to keep in order for it to ensure orderly urban planning and development and which areas had to be assigned to the housing societies that needed them for the appropriate management of the housing estates.

In the large housing estates, municipal housing societies and housing cooperatives initially took over the residential buildings and associated residential building land.

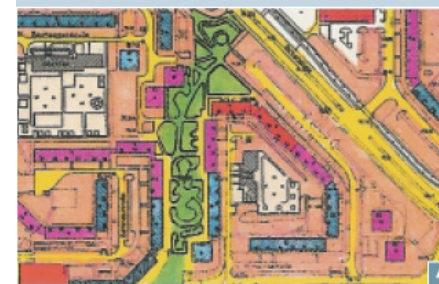
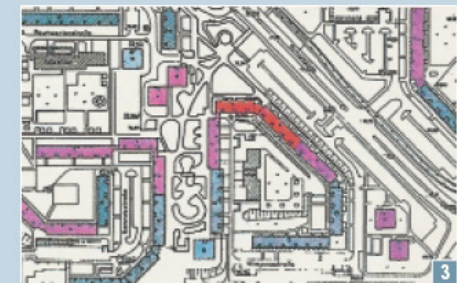
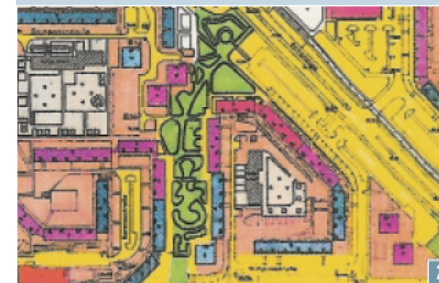
Images

- 1 The association of private properties with the residential buildings allowed setting up tenant's gardens. The quality of ground-floor apartments can be enhanced by providing a direct access to the garden.
- 2 Plans 2, 3, and 4 illustrate various methods of defining properties. In Plan 2, the car parking area is located on publicly owned land (yellow). Privately owned areas (orange) are limited to the residential yards.
- 3 Plan 3 shows the ownership structure of the residential buildings. Three owners are present in this area: the municipal housing society (blue) and two housing cooperatives (purple and red).
- 4 In Plan 4, car parking spots are assigned to the privately owned land (orange). Only the streets and the access pathways to the parking spots and public facilities are publicly owned (grey) in this case.
- 5 The way estates were assigned may result in complicated ownership patterns in some cases, which however allows financing and managing the publicly owned areas.

This example is a section through a street in which the walkways and the left-hand side lane, including the parking spots alongside it and the rows of trees, are publicly owned. On the other hand, the front gardens and the right-hand side lane that doubles as the access to the parking area, including the parking spots alongside it and the grass strip are privately owned and maintained by the owners.

Poster 3

Definition of Properties and Estates



Poster 4 Development of the Cost of Living in Large Housing Estates

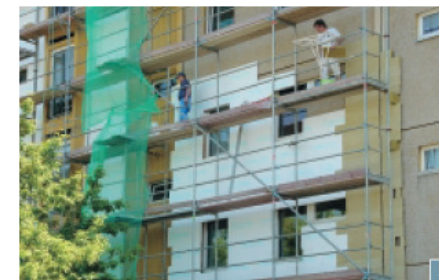
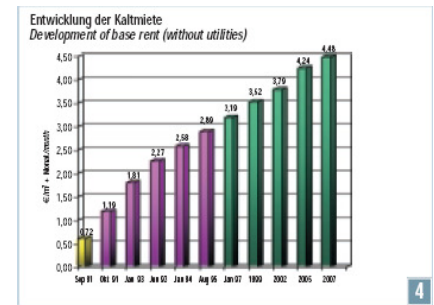
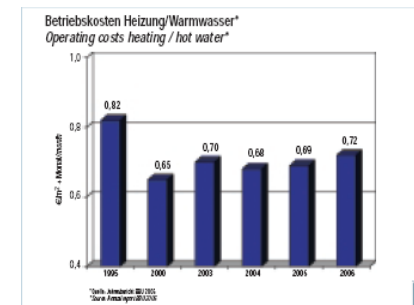
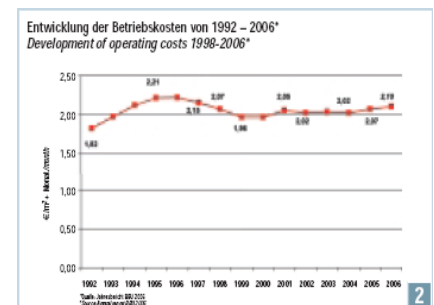
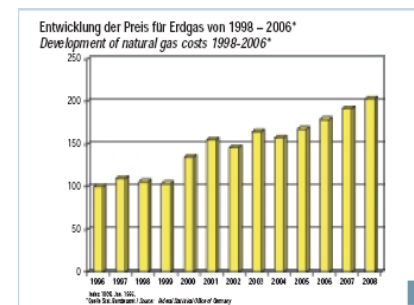
After the introduction of the social market economy in the New Länder from 1990, the legislation slowly and gradually adjusted rents, which had been highly subsidised until then, to “market level”. Utilities and charges were set apart from the base rent and from then on have been billed separately. The market rent enables the owner to address the expense of management and administration and to accumulate the resources for funding appropriate upkeep.

Separate billing of charges shows the tenant the interest of renovation and upgrading by making savings obvious. Upgrading measures, i.e. a clear improvement of the value in use of the apartments, for instance by thermal insulation, new windows or heating systems, are funded from an extra contribution by the tenants. This requires the consent of the majority of tenants. The balancing of tenants’ and owners’ interests has been standardised in the law at federal level since 2001.

Images

- 1 Development of base rents, less charges
From October 1991, base rent levels were raised consistently and in a socially responsible way. This put the management and the upkeep of the flats and the funding of renovation measures on a sound economic footing.
- 2 Development of charges (source: Annual Report for 2006 of Berlin-Brandenburg’s Housing Enterprises Association)
The utilities and charges, which are billed on top of the rent, have remained consistently at the same level since 1995, despite rising costs of power, water supply, wastewater discharge, refuse collection, fees, maintenance of outdoor installations, etc.
- 3 Development of natural gas rates (source: Federal Statistical Office)
The massive and uninterrupted increase of rates for energy sources (gas, fuel, district heating) would result in considerably higher expenses for heating without the appropriate measures applied to the residential buildings.
- 4 Development of the cost of consumption of heating and hot water (source: Annual Report for 2006 of Berlin-Brandenburg’s Housing Enterprises Association)
Energy-efficient renovation of the residential buildings is the reason why the price increase for heating and hot water could be compensated: thermal insulation in a prefab concrete building.
- 5 Full thermal insulation of the buildings, involving outside walls, top-level intermediate floors and roofs, as well as basement ceilings, result in considerable thermal heat consumption savings.
- 6 Repairing roofs
The owner funds needed measures of upkeep of the buildings, such as repairing the roofing, from the base rent.
- 7 New windows
One of the first steps to reduce thermal heat consumption was the installation of new, thermally insulated windows. This step was carried out for the most part before thermal insulation was fitted into the buildings.
- 8 Garbage bin area
Household waste, too, is a generator of expenses for the tenants of the apartments. Strict separation of the household waste, to sort recyclable material and refuse, and clear assignment of garbage bin spots to certain entrances heightens the tenants’ environmental awareness and behaviour, thereby reducing waste disposal cost.

Poster 4 Development of the Cost of Living in Large Housing Estates



Poster 5 Funding and Management

As a result of the definition of properties and the assignment of assets, the enterprises achieved a credit standing with banks: their own resources, public subsidies (subventions and low-interest credits), and bank loans allowed funding the structural renovation and upgrading of the apartment buildings. The municipality supported the renovation effort by urbanistic enhancements in the public space.

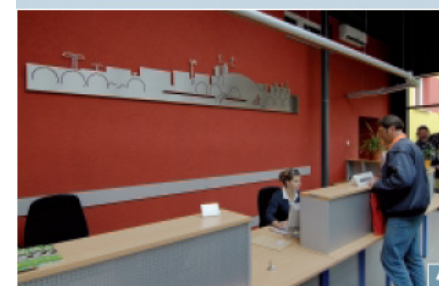
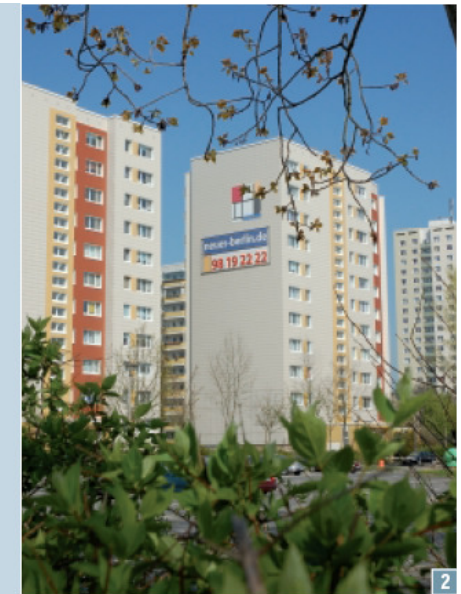
Definition of properties and assignment of assets were also the preconditions of the privatisation of apartments to individual owners occupying them themselves or to cooperatives and other investors which purchased buildings or entire city blocks from the municipal housing societies. Privatisation brought about diversity and competition.

The housing enterprises developed comprehensive customer care in the form of the retrofitting of the flats according to the tenant's wishes, the improvement of the residential environment, and the cooperation with the authorities of the city quarter.

Images

- 1 Façade renovation and spatial planning could be funded from public subsidies, own capital of the housing enterprises, and bank loans.
- 2 Cooperative-owned properties are frequently identifiable by distinctive self-representations on firewalls. Housing cooperatives focusing on ownership development were subsidised by the city of Berlin.
- 3 Ownership structure of Berlin's quarter of Hellersdorf at the beginning of the 1990s: only three parties own all residential areas, two housing cooperatives and the municipal housing society. After the municipal society sold residential complexes it was holding, there are more than 25 new owners today.
- 4 Tenants talking to the housing administration. Renovations are planned in cooperation with the tenants and upgrades are generally applied only when the tenants desire them and in consultation with them. This also keeps the rent at levels that the particular households can afford.
- 5 Residential properties occupied by their owners strengthen the inhabitants' ties to their quarter.

Poster 5 Funding and Management



Poster 6 Improving the Quality of Living

Standardised lay-outs for mass serial production correspond to the technical concepts that prevailed at the time of construction. Today interested parties ask for flexible lay-outs that allow individualised concepts of life. Supplied housing that varies in terms of total size and size of single rooms and that matches the changing demands of the inhabitants, ensures consistent and continued development of the housing estate.

Good living presupposes a safe environment. Where large numbers of different people live together, rules for their daily common routines are required. Clear-cut functional and open entrances and access pathways improve the safety standards for all tenants. Entrance lobbies with personnel provide an opportunity for service offers and enhance social control.

Images

- 1 Although the load-bearing walls and the sizes of the windows, just as the location of bathrooms and kitchens, which is determined by shafts, do not change, existing lay-outs can be matched to modern needs. A and B show an eat-in kitchen with the integration of a former conservatory; C and D show the conversion of two small flats to one large flat with full comfort and an extra balcony.
- 2 Generous spatial sequences that the tenants can design themselves with their ideas and furniture, can be created by removing non-bearing walls.
- 3 Part of what makes living good is a safe and finely designed arrival: a lobby with a driveway and well lighted entrances protected from the rain sustainably improves the quality of living.
- 4 The bathroom of a renovated apartment is indistinguishable from the standard of a newly constructed apartment.
- 5 Clear-cut entrance lobbies that are easy to survey add attractiveness and safety; a concierge means a functional, inviting, and safe atmosphere for tenants and visitors.

Poster 6 Improving the Quality of Living



Poster 7

Comfort of Living Through Engineered Building Services

Any change of the building services aims at sustainable improvements. In this respect, a distinction can be drawn between technical enhancements in a single flat, such as sanitary fixtures, heating, and electrical installations, and improvement of the comfort of living by lift systems, energy-saving heating systems, and reliable wiring. Well equipped bathrooms, cost-efficient and effective heating systems, and state-of-the-art electrical installations are an immediate enhancement of a flat. However, thermal insulation of the outside walls and the installation of new windows also contribute to a cosier atmosphere and help save energy and reduce utility charges.

Improved fire protection, better protection from burglary, the revised organisation of waste disposal as well as the installation of disabled-accessible entrance ways are major steps to make living in the large housing estates more comfortable.

Images

- 1 Porches protruding from the entrance and added lift shafts are not only a means to improve the comfort of living, but also to redesign the exterior. Single buildings or entire neighbourhoods get their distinctive character by high-quality materials and targeted colour selection.
- 2 Upgraded engineered services require regular technical maintenance to remain reliable, safe, and cost-saving in the long run.
- 3 An award-winning example of the combination of energy savings, climate protection, and management of charges and utilities: by blending various innovative measures into each other, among them a transparent thermal insulation of the façade facing south, the thermal heat demand could be reduced by 70%.
- 4 Comfort of living through innovative technology: flat roofs are suitable for fitting solar collectors or photovoltaic panels, good for the environment, good for achieving reduced operating expenses.
- 5 Innovative technologies: in the course of the renovation of the façades, more than 400 sq. metres of modular panels with photovoltaic elements were fitted. By setting off the solar power supply against the charges and utilities, the monthly cost for the tenants is reduced.

Poster 7

Comfort of Living Through Engineered Building Services



Poster 8

Cityscape: Preserving and Designing

The style of rationalism which was developed in the large estates of the 1920s: rationalised façade organisation and functional relationships between the single building and the cityscape are complements to each other. The initial design of the prefab concrete buildings emphasised:

- functional areas, such as loggias, stairwells, attics, and foundation sections;
- where horizontal and vertical organisations mostly comply with the principle of serialisation;
- and where relationships relevant to the cityscape are achieved by continuing the series from building to building.

The renovation and the redesigning of individual parts of the housing estate have to be done in consultation with the neighbours' plans. Co-ordinated design rules and redesign committees involving owners, building administrations, architects, and urban planners are the most effective means to preserve the characteristics of the cityscape and to enhance the value of individual parts of the estate.

Images

- 1 The towering residential blocks are given both importance and a human measure by the contrast of their structural assertiveness and a seemingly weak work of art.
- 2 In Hellersdorf, the building estates were redeveloped as distinctive quarters of the city.
The use of a master colour for balconies, lift shafts, and façades, and even for outdoor installations, gives the quarter a distinctive appearance the inhabitants can identify with.
- 3 Light, air, and sun: the classic goals of building developments out in the country are expressed most immediately in generous open spaces of balconies and loggias.
- 4 The dynamics of the large: with the regularity of their large shapes, the coloured bands of the renovated loggias express the power and the dynamics of the process of renovating the large housing developments.
- 5 Loggias protruding from the building can be like an open book spelling out the desires of the tenants and expressing a new lifestyle.

Poster 8

Cityscape: Preserving and Designing



Poster 9

Façade Renovation: Sustainable Quality of Design

Mass-fabricated housing has resulted in a large variety of types of designs with their construction variants. By its characteristics, every type of building allows certain ways of redesigning. Independently of the location and the extent to which it is renovated, a few fundamental redesign solutions can be distinguished:

1. solutions based on the existing stock;
2. design solutions involving changes of the building organisation;
3. façade redesign.

In doing so, the constructive and structural properties of the various types of buildings have to be kept in mind. Besides typological considerations, as well the urbanistic situation as economic and technical requirements form the framework within which the goal of achieving a sustainable quality of the design has to be pursued.

Images

- 1 For the renovation of this part of the estate, which reminds of Le Corbusier's "Ville Verte", emphasis was placed on the preservation of the coherent relationships of urban planning, rationalised façade organisation, loggia balconies, colouring, and ceramic surface. Open spaces and entrance areas were redesigned.
- 2 High-quality thermal insulation of the façade, new windows, and redesigned loggia balconies stress the rules of design of rationalism, which are at the base of many typical residential buildings of the large housing estates.
- 3 Long rows of buildings are given the atmosphere of a city neighbourhood by spacious loggia balconies, newly planted trees, and parking spots assigned to individual apartments.
- 4 To preserve for the future a distinctive urbanistic ensemble listed as a historic monument, the original colouring and materiality of all its visible components was reproduced in the process of renovation and thermal insulation.
- 5 Highly visible residential high-rises always set standards for their environment in terms of design and properties: attached, rear-ventilated metal panels represent sustainable façade renovation; the colouring of the loggias identifies the high-rises for the tenants.

Poster 9

Façade Renovation: Sustainable Quality of Design



Poster 10 Building Complements

New structures designed as free-standing buildings can be a complement that makes sense both for the provision of housing and for the cityscape of the large housing estates. New buildings can form an urbanistic improvement of the developments and contribute to an economical housing supply matched to the needs of a population that is heterogeneous by age and income. Complementing buildings, just as converted and extended attics, can be used for flats designed for groups of people with special needs.

By developing the street-side perimeter of blocks laid out in the shape of a comb and by closing gaps and corners, the planning achieves urban density. The street-side separation creates residential courtyards.

Within the large housing estates, in some cases sizeable areas have been left without structures. New buildings on these reserve areas may compensate for structural deficits of the housing estates and offer the opportunity to reinforce the inhabitants' ties to their quarter by constructing privately owned homes. Integration into the surrounding urban structure can be achieved by perimeter developments that link to the environment by their design and the patterns of their use.

Images

- 1 Serialised rows of buildings are given attractive interior spaces, where the rush of the street is kept out, by perimeter developments.
The creation of clearly defined urban spaces results in the supply of new flats in which the diversity of living may also be enriched by new commercial entities.
- 2 City houses enrich the cityscape not only because they contribute to urbanistic diversity, but also because they allow the building of special apartment types, such as penthouses and maisonettes.
- 3 On top of the diversification of cityscape structures it generates, the construction of townhouses in the middle of rows of multi-storey buildings offers the opportunity to develop small-scale home and real estate ownership, hence gardens managed by their owners.
- 4 Making space: a particularly effective urbanistic means are building complements that address deficits of the cityscape, e.g. lack of space developed as squares, thereby contributing to the formation of city quarters.
- 5 Building complements that speak an architectural language which contrasts with the existing stock, may enhance, by their assertiveness, the value of a given section of the large estates, provided they fit in as far as material and shape of the building are concerned.

Poster 10 Building Complements



Poster 11

Improvements of the Residential Environment and the Open Spaces

The generously dimensioned, public open spaces and the greened residential courtyards are the hallmark of the large housing estates. These private and public points of identification, leisure, and relaxing, which shape the image, have been enhanced considerably. They form a global system designed as a network into which the differently shaped residential neighbourhoods are integrated. From a greened courtyard close to the flat and small parks at neighbourhood level, moving on to greened street spaces and public squares and to the major greenways and the large park of the housing estate, all open spaces were designed for individuality and were enhanced functionally and ecologically, even though they remained parts of the global green network.

Insofar as single buildings are dismantled, an opportunity exists to add new open spaces to the cityscape of the quarter—even as a temporary, intermediate use of future building land.

Images

- 1 A the moment of building the large housing estates, no shaping of the living environment occurred at all. The photograph shows Kastanienallee in Berlin's large estate of Hellersdorf in 1986.
- 2 Designing public open spaces may achieve extremely diverse results, such as here in the case of the park of "Hellwichstorpp" meant to remind of the origins of the settlement of Berlin-Hellersdorf.
- 3 Various recreational facilities can be found in the greenway of the Wuhle valley between Marzahn and Hellersdorf.
- 4 The recreational park of Marzahn offers a beautiful view of the large housing estate.
- 5 Even when funding resources are limited, attractive outdoor design solutions are achievable, for instance by including existing pathway finishing and plants and by shaping the cityscape by balancing volumes rather than adding soil.
- 6 Randow Park, in Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, was established on the land where two schools dismantled for city redevelopment had been.

Poster 11

Improvements of the Residential Environment and the Open Spaces



Poster 12

Social Infrastructure as a Location Advantage

Flats in Berlin's large housing estates, when they were first rented, were assigned primarily to young families with children. This resulted in a high demand for places at day-care establishments for children and at schools, which are no longer needed to the same extent. What was missing, however, were specific leisure time and educational opportunities for adolescents.

Furthermore, the demand for facilities for the elderly is growing. Besides the conversion of existing, vacant buildings, the construction of new structures is required. The aim is to offer facilities close to the flat for all ages and socioeconomic groups, in line with a complex community and open for use by people of the surrounding areas.

Images

- 1 The University of Applied Community Working and Social Pedagogy relocated from its crowded location in the city centre to Berlin-Hellersdorf's newly built town centre.
- 2 Playgrounds for children, which stimulate imagination, are especially appreciated.
- 3 Adolescents using a multifunctional sports field.
- 4 Many elderly inhabitants have developed firm ties to the area where they live and contribute to the stability of the neighbourhood.
- 5 Tutors assist with homework every day in a blockhouse for children in Clara Zetkin Park of Berlin-Marzahn.
- 6 Existing schools, too, have to be renovated and adapted to the needs of their users functionally and in terms of design.
- 7 Talent is fostered in sheltered workshops.
- 8 The Kinderkeller ("Children's Cellar") in one of Berlin-Marzahn's high-rises has been active since 1994. In this open children's club, among other things, artistic projects are performed.

Poster 12

Social Infrastructure as a Location Advantage



Poster 13

Employment in the Quarter

Originally the large housing estates were planned as purely residential areas, without employment or apprenticeships. Reserve areas and the inhabitants' multiple qualifications are an important potential for creating employment close to their flats. From mostly private investments, new employment was created in the scope of the extension or construction of shopping malls.

To create employment outside the new malls, joint efforts of economic, administrative, housing management, and political players were needed, in order to promote "local economy" run by other players. This has resulted in new employment in former ground-floor flats, vacant buildings, and "Traders' Yards". Reserve spaces in the centre of Hellersdorf were used to establish the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences.

Images

- 1 The development of Traders' Yards within the housing estate, yet not in the residential towers, has created employment in the manufacturing crafts and trades.
- 2 The strategic establishment of institutions of supra-local importance in the large housing estates, such as Berlin's Emergency Hospital at Marzahn, has created employment.
- 3 In many of the large housing estates, shopping malls were established, bringing about employment.
- 4 The conversion of unused apartments on the ground floor of a residential high-rise enables the establishment of services that do not disturb the tenants.
- 5 The subsequent development of commercial parks at the margins of the large housing estate may create employment for its inhabitants.

Poster 13

Employment in the Quarter



Poster 14

Transport Connections to and in the Large Housing Estates

In line with the former motto of a “car-aware city”, over-dimensioned thoroughfares and intersections dominated the public space, along with assertive bridges. Another challenge has been the traffic “at rest”. A parking spot in front of the house is an important aspect for tenants, hence for the possibility to rent out a flat. The need for parking areas could be met, frequently, by using the street spaces; as a consequence, the costly construction of underground car parks or multi-storey garages and the use of interior courtyards could be avoided.

As early as at the time of completion, East Berlin’s large housing estates were well connected by rail-borne rapid transport (S-Bahn, U-Bahn, tramways) to Berlin’s public transport system, which has been further strengthened in the meantime.

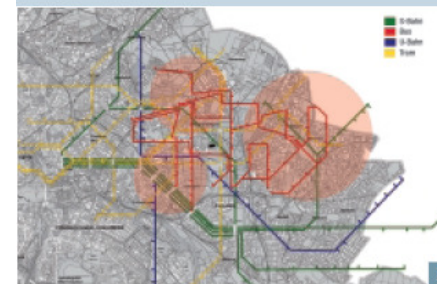
Since types of use related to work, shopping, and social infrastructures have been improved within the housing estate, the trips they entail can today be accomplished by bicycle, train, or bus rather than by car.

Images

- 1 The centre of the large housing development of Hellersdorf is easily accessible by public transport. An U-Bahn line runs directly to Berlin’s city centre. Furthermore, several bus and tramway lines are operated.
- 2 The map shows the very good connections by public transport to Berlin’s North-East, where the large housing developments of Fennpfuhl, Hohenschönhausen, and Marzahn-Hellersdorf are located.
- 3 Mobility by bicycle is also promoted by the establishment of safe bike park areas.
- 4 The design of the parking areas with luxurious greenery allows their successful integration.
- 5 In some rare cases, the development of street-level car parking areas was impossible. This prompted the establishment of park decks, which are a cost-efficient alternative to underground car parks and multi-storey garages.

Poster 14

Transport Connections to and in the Large Housing Estates



Poster 15 The Inhabitants

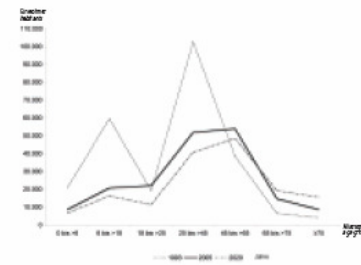
“Demographic cycles” are characteristic of the age structure of the tenancy in a large housing estates. As large numbers of young families moved there in a relatively short period, young people are the majority at first; then the tenancy structure matches the biological lifecycle and the number of inhabitants finally decreases. Community building and public facilities have to respond to this development in order to avoid a constant back-and-forth between shortage and oversupply.

Large housing developments may become a problem if they turn to be the living place of deprived groups of the population. This might result in everyday life being under the influence of social tensions and ethnic conflicts. Therefore, fostering cohesion is a task that the municipality, the housing enterprises, and socio-political bodies have to tackle in a joint effort by a socially responsible rental policy and multiple initiatives.

Images

- 1 This diagram depicts the typical “demographic cycle” for a period of approx. 30 years in the large housing estate of Marzahn-Hellersdorf: note the high share of children at the beginning, which then develops into a high share of adolescents and, later, adults. When children move out, the density is reduced for individual families and the total number of inhabitants decreases. The share of the elderly gradually starts to rise.
- 2 The green environment of the residential areas and the safety of the trips to the day-care centres for children, which are usually nearby, make the large housing estate a particularly child-aware place to live. This image should be maintained to be able to promote young families' moving in also in the future.
- 3 Adolescents need meeting points, preferably outside their neighbourhood. Even more important are school and vocational opportunities matched to their needs, in order to keep the young adults in the area.
A stimulation not to move out may also be supplied by owners who provide low-cost, adolescent-aware housing.
- 4 The quality of school education is a decisive factor determining parents not to move out, remain, or even move in.
- 5 The inhabitants' ties to “their” quarter also depend on the utility of the environment they live in. Tenant's gardens, accessible from the flat or in the courtyard, are a means to reinforce these ties.
- 6 The large housing estates would be well advised to take the growing share of elderly people into account. For instance, care homes have been thoroughly renovated in Marzahn-Hellersdorf. The photograph shows the conversion of a former 11-storey residential block to a 6-storey residential home for the elderly.
- 7 The major challenge the large housing estates will have to face in the future will be to ensure community life free of social tensions and with opportunities for all, while people are of extremely diverse ethnic and social backgrounds.
- 8 Many places of Marzahn-Hellersdorf have already responded to the people's need for assisted living with various levels of care and assistance.

Poster 15 The Inhabitants



Poster 16

A New Strategy: Urban Consolidation

The extensive residential building activities since Berlin's reunification and the offer of low-cost building land in the surrounding regions have given the inhabitants new opportunities for living. As a consequence, vacancies are found in almost all segments of Berlin's apartment housing, including in the large housing estates. These large housing estates, therefore, have to be further developed in a way that ensures sustainable housing supply at lower total numbers of flats. This process is supported by the support programme Stadtumbau Ost ("Urban Consolidation East"):

- A precondition of any subsidies is an integrated action plan determining both enhancement and dismantling targets from the perspective of the housing estate as a whole, based on a tenancy and demand forecast that is on a sound footing.
- Close cooperation of flat owners and the public is presupposed—urbanism and issues related to housing management have to be concerted.
- The planning process should follow a participative approach involving the tenants.

The overview of the measures put into practice so far shows the many expressions of urban consolidation in Berlin's large housing estates, from partial dismantlement and demolition of individual houses to the upgrading of existing stock to be maintained for the future and to the building of new structures.

Images

1 Integrated action plan of Marzahn-Hellersdorf

The figure shows an overview of the steps of urban consolidation in Berlin's two largest residential developments. The urban consolidation plan involving 102,000 residential units is meant to turn the compact suburban housing estate into a varied cityscape by the dismantlement of flats and public establishments no longer in use and the enhancement of the living environment.

2 Strategy of existing stock-related enhancement

Improvements in the existing residential stock combined to an enhanced design of open spaces in the centre of the residential development (urban consolidation of the quarter of Gelbes Viertel).

3 Strategy of demolition

Large-scale dismantlement of flats was applied to the quarter. A total of 611 flats were demolished from 2004 through 2006, to be replaced with larger green spaces (quarter of Alte Hellersdorfer Straße).

4 Strategy of partial dismantlement

A jumbled mass of 11-storey residential block, formerly accounting for 1670 flats, was developed into a city quarter with 3 to 6-storey buildings and 409 upgraded, comfortable rented and owner-occupied flats, every one of them with a balcony and 45 of them with an appealing roof deck (Berlin pilot project of Ahrensfelder Terrassen).

Examples of what other cities have done:

5 Turning high-rises into city houses:

6 In Cottbus' residential development of Sachsendorf-Madlow, the housing society GWG dismantled a high-rise and recycled the prefabricated concrete slabs for city houses (architect: Frank Zimmermann).

7 Turning a row of blocks into houses:

8 In Leinefelde, Thuringia, the municipal housing society removed segments from a serialised block, thereby creating a string of attractive houses (architect: Stefan Forster).

Poster 16

A New Strategy: Urban Consolidation



Poster 17

Public Facilities—Where Change Is Normality

Public facilities are of critical importance for the supply of utilities and the assistance to the inhabitants, especially in peripherally located large housing estates. Their quality is, for many tenants, a factor decisive of whether they stay or move out.

Therefore, adjusting structures such as day-care for children, schools, establishments for adolescents, cultural institutions, etc. to the demand, which changes rapidly because of the social and demographic developments, is the centre of attention both of the public sector and the housing enterprises.

Since 1990, new schools have been built and several public facilities have been fundamentally upgraded in the large housing estate of Marzahn-Hellersdorf. Numerous day-care centres for children could be converted—while some schools and day-care centres, which would remain unused for long periods, were torn down. An integrated approach of new buildings, demolition, upgrading, and conversion at various points in time and for different social environments presupposes careful analysis of the demand and continuous monitoring of the social and demographic developments.

Images

- 1 Use-related upgrading of the “Hella Club for Girls and Young Women”
- 2 Newly built socio-cultural centre “Kiezspinne” at Berlin-Lichtenberg
- 3 Mothers’ meeting at the Hella Club
- 4 Conversion of a former day-care centre for children to the social neighbourhood centre “Kastanie”
Subsidies in the form of a 980,000 euros grant were allowed to fund it; 180,500 euros were brought to the project by the operator.
- 5 Conversion of the building of a former day-care centre to the Start-up Centre “Hafen”
Two floors of modern offices and studios are available for woman entrepreneurs establishing themselves and starting up their business.
- 6 Conversion of a day-care centre to the community centre “Südspitze”
Services such as social assistance, lunch provision, nutritional consulting, recreational classes for children, music in the home, consulting to migrants, all offered under the same roof.
- 7 Conversion of residential blocks to nursing and residential homes for the elderly in Sella-Hasse-Straße, Berlin-Marzahn
- 8 Newly built recreational centre “East End”, a meeting point for adolescents in Berlin’s large housing development of Hellersdorf

Poster 17

Public Facilities—Where Change Is Normality



Poster 18

Demolition... and what comes next?

What happens to an area after building demolition? The easiest thing is to sow grass seeds. Nature reclaims a bit of cityscape. However, this will be possible only in marginal areas. Where existing neighbourhoods are affected, their inhabitants will want more. For the owners, too—whether private or public owners—simply writing off a plot of building land does not go without saying either for reasons of end-of-year balance and land value. Because interests are different, different approaches have been chosen:

- Holding the cleared area as building land, frequently in the perspective of low-rise housing suitable for purchase by a new owner at a later stage;
- High-quality design of a lasting park or greenway;
- Intermediate uses based on license agreements, in order to eliminate “eyesores” temporarily;
- Establishment of tenant’s gardens for the tenants in the neighbouring buildings.

Images

- 1 Large-scale dismantlement enables the development of housing with smaller subdivisions in some locations. Wastelands and open spaces can be activated as building land in the medium and long term. Urbanistic concepts and land use plans for ownership-aware housing construction are being elaborated at present.
- 2 Cleared ground visited temporarily by Circus Aron.
- 3 Demographic developments required the demolition of schools and day-care centres for children. As a consequence, numerous open spaces have appeared. The coloured arrows point to areas that are suitable for potential intermediate uses of the plot.
- 4 For large areas that are the result of the demolition of residential blocks or public infrastructures, new vegetation typologies are being developed to allow attractive open space atmospheres with less intensive management.
- 5 After the demolition of a day-care centre for children, a public greenway of high quality was established. With the participation of the inhabitants, an open space for children and adolescents with a diversity of possibilities was built.
- 6+7 By appropriating their environment and actively participating in designing it, the inhabitants themselves contribute considerably to the improvement of the quality of living in their quarter.

Poster 18

Demolition... and what comes next?



Poster 19 Dismantlement, a Strategy of Enhancement

A special “dismantlement project” was performed in the most northern neighbourhood of Marzahn: the conversion of several 11-storey towers to apartment houses—the largest project of Berlin’s Urban Consolidation East scheme.

For Ahrensfelder Terrassen, the aim was to use the dismantlement and the enhancement and comprehensive renovation of the maintained housing supply that was to be re-used, as a lever for positive impacts on the entire neighbourhood. The assertive colour supports the appealing aspect of the converted buildings compared with the remaining prefab concrete structures.

Of all dismantlement approaches at other Eastern German locations that have made it to a comparable level, this project makes a difference by its considerable formal attractiveness, which is achieved mainly thanks to the roof design with a very plastic formal language that harmoniously mirrors the existing floor plans. The many roof deck terraces thus created represent an enormous improvement of the quality of living, which likely has been critical in the prevailing acceptance, after initial scepticism, by the inhabitants of the area.

Images

- 1 Giving a new look to a residential neighbourhood.
- 2 Almost all of the approx. 400 flats of 2 to 4 rooms have been rented or sold after the conversion.
- 3 The project is named after the terraces of almost 20 sq. metres. Flats with a terrace were the first to be rented.
- 4 An acceptable, equivalent solution had to be found for every tenant whose flat was to be demolished, preferably in the residential environment in the vicinity. For 70% of them this was possible in the own stock.
- 5 The management of the housing enterprise considers this to be the major success of the urban consolidation programme because it took the fear of moving away from many tenants affected by subsequent urban consolidation projects. Accordingly, the acceptance with which dismantlement met rose.

Poster 19 Dismantlement, a Strategy of Enhancement



Poster 20 Centres

Centres supplying services of all kinds, including administration and entertainment, provide the large housing estates with what they are entitled to by their size and their number of inhabitants, viz. the rank of a city district in its own right.

The centres of the large housing estates have to be further supported as one instrument to avoid shopping malls being established "out in the open countryside".

Images

- 1 The photograph shows the town centre of Hellersdorf (contribution to a competition) with urban services and facilities such as town hall, cinema, secondary school, and university of applied sciences.
- 2 Shopping malls are landmarks within the centres.
- 3 Opportunities for shopping in a canopied shopping street are a complement to the traditional retail structure.
- 4 Neighbourhood centres may be a complement to the town centre of a large housing estate.
- 5 Successful design of the public space in the centre reinforces the strength of the inhabitants' ties to their housing estate.

Poster 20 Centres



Poster 21 Pooling Competencies

The stabilisation and enhancement of the large housing estates will be successful only based on the cooperation of all players. This involves the citizens, the contributing urban planning experts, the business community, the constructing parties and investors, the staff of administrations, and the political representatives.

Information and continued cooperation enhances a common understanding of the steps necessary to develop the housing estate further. Urbanistic, housing, design, and social political objectives are complementary to each other and have to be integrated into an overall concept. Participative approaches of various kinds are meant to include the inhabitants and the business community in order to take their knowledge and interests into consideration.

Urbanistic master plans promote consultation about desirable changes. With integrated planning and action approaches, the players jointly define the way in which their quarter should move forward.

Images

- 1 Community planning involving different stakeholder groups in a several-days workshop.
- 2 Straightforward exchange of information on site is the precondition for successful participation.
- 3 Involving children in the planning process reinforces the identification with the neighbourhood they live in.
- 4 To achieved a joint location marketing scheme for the large housing estate of Hellersdorf, several Hellersdorf housing enterprises joined forces in the form of the establishment of a "residence counter".

Poster 21 Pooling Competencies



Poster 22

The Association Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen (Competence Centre for Large Housing Estates)

After German reunification, residential quarters constructed with prefabricated concrete slabs had to be made ready for the future. With holistic innovation concepts, many of these residential areas were turned into sustainably viable city quarters—ecologically viable, with stable social structures, and a satisfied population.

The experiences we made have been seen as an opportunity for transfer and have resulted in numerous collaborations with other large housing estates across Europe undergoing a transition toward market-driven development.

The independent non-profit association recognised as working for the common welfare methodically pools the experiences gained in this transformation process in order to make it available to regional and local authorities and their housing societies, in particular in the formerly socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

All important stakeholders of the transformation process are members of the association: the authorities of the districts of Marzahn-Hellersdorf and Lichtenberg, professional associations of the housing sector, housing societies and cooperatives, banks, many architects and engineers, construction and service businesses, and individuals.

Images

- 1 Publications about expert conferences and projects are a focus of the association's public relations.
- 2 The "BAUKASTEN" (or, "Construction Kit"), the headquarters of the association **Competence Centre for Large Housing Estates**, which is located in the middle of Berlin's large housing development of Hellersdorf, doubles as a point of information about the development of the suburban housing estates.
- 3 Upon request, the association prepares and performs conferences, workshops, and tours about and in Berlin's large housing developments.
- 4 Experiences and findings on the enhancement of the large housing estates are communicated to the general public by national and international expert conferences.
- 5 Exhibitions are a means to make the findings and experiences related to large housing estate development available to other countries and, additionally, provide information to the inhabitants.

Poster 22

The Association Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen (Competence Centre for Large Housing Estates)



Poster 23

European Standards of City and Neighbourhood Development

In the scope of the structural support by the European Union (E.U.), European standards of urban development have been elaborated over the last years, in particular based on the experiences of the Community initiative "Urban". Today these standards, labelled "urban dimension", are the basis of the E.U. structural support.

The E.U. calls for, and supports, the sustainable development of cities and neighbourhoods in the scope of "integrated urban development concepts and projects" aiming to:

- improve transport connections and mobility within the city and its region;
- increase economic growth;
- preserve the natural and physical environment, or rehabilitate it as needed;
- re-use urban wastelands;
- preserve cultural heritage;
- promote private entrepreneurship, local employment, and enhancement of public and private services to the population.

The enhancement of the large housing estates of Eastern Berlin and Eastern Germany has fully complied with these standards and has resulted in the development of attractive residential quarters.

However, continued efforts are needed to enhance local employment and improve transport connections to the inner cities and the surrounding regions.

Poster 23

European Standards of City and Neighbourhood Development

"Urban Dimension"

Cities are considered the major driving force in improving the economic importance and competitiveness of European regions, hence to achieve the E.U. growth objectives ("Lisbon strategy"). They "are home to most jobs, firms and institutes of higher education and their action is decisive in bringing about social cohesion". They are places of innovation, entrepreneurial initiative, and business growth.

"Sustainable urban development" for attractive cities

With economic opportunities and a high quality of life, "European cities attract investment and jobs". To maintain this attractiveness, or to create it in the first place, efforts are needed in the following areas:

Transport, Accessibility, and Mobility:

"Sustainable urban mobility means making the best use of all the transport infrastructure, co-ordination between the various transport modes and the promotion of the least polluting modes." This also means affordability and efficiency of public local transport.

Access to Service and Facilities:

This means modern, efficient, and affordable services, in particular those provided by the public administrations, with easy access for everyone.

Natural and Physical Environment:

This addresses the rehabilitation of brownfield sites of industrial, commercial or military origin, the management of "urban sprawl" to make urban areas and city centres attractive places to live" as well as "investments to achieve compliance with E.U. laws on air quality, waste-water treatment, waste management, water supply and environmental noise" and finally "effective energy use in urban areas" and "economical management of energy resources".

Culture:

Cities should preserve their cultural and architectural heritage and promote a vibrant culture sphere. "An active cultural policy is a valuable tool for building bridges between communities and fostering the integration of immigrants and other newcomers to the city."

Economic Promotion by Innovation, Entrepreneurial Initiative, and Knowledge-based Economy

- by initiatives for the promotion of small and medium enterprises;
- by the elaboration of innovation strategies;
- by the creation of more and better employment;
- by improving the general and vocational education status to enhance employability.

Promotion of social inclusion and equal opportunities

Increased security for citizens

Governance

- Cities and regions: The E.U. recommends co-ordination between urban authorities and, on the one hand, the authorities of the surrounding area and, on the other, the regional/Länder authorities and the national government (see the Leipzig Charter of 2007).
- Integrated urban development concepts: "Cities should have a long term, consistent plan for all the different factors promoting sustainable growth and jobs in urban areas" to which all stakeholders of the public and the private sectors should contribute.
- Citizen participation
- Networks and exchange of experiences: "Cities should therefore make use of the knowledge gained and collected under URBACT as well as other European and national networks", such as EUKN.

Financing Urban Development and Renewal:

"Urban renewal has been extensively supported by the E.U. Structural Funds." In the new E.U. Member States of Central and Eastern Europe, investments into existing residential stock, e.g. into its energetic renovation, may exceptionally be supported provided the measures are a part of integrated urban development projects.

Source: Communication from the Commission to the Council and Parliament: Cohesion Policy and cities: the urban contribution to growth and jobs in the regions. COM/2006/0385 final, of 13 July 2006.

