1. Brief History

Housing used to be divided into two parts:
(a) Government resettlement and low-cost housing, with Urban Council guiding policy & management;
(b) Housing Authority, better type housing, allocate from a waiting list of people wanting better housing, from private sector or public sector.

Both actually came under Urban Council guidance.

For many years, Urban Council tried to get it unified into one body. Eventually this was done, but in the process it was taken away from UBBCO.

(c) 1973, Governor set up ONE Housing Authority: purpose to set up a high-powered body, to get on quickly with the job - advantages

1. 180,000 units of housing per year, to house 1.8 million in ten years.

2. Better housing, with 35 square feet instead of the maximum 24 in Group B. To be on standard nearly as good as Group A for everyone. Toilets, water, private balcony, improved.

3. Improved management - trained as for Group A.

4. Proper hawker bazaars and better shops.

2. Results of Plan

1. Slower than ever, not reaching 100,000 units p.a. let alone 180,000.

2. Quality not as good as Group A - e.g. Shatin has been criticised as jerry built, flimsy.

3. High rents - 8 times more expensive than Group B, twice as expensive as Group A. Standard Room $25.

4. Emphasis on clearance for development, not on badly house people e.g. only 1000 families from waiting-list getting housing this year. (150,000 families)

Rest going to MTR, clearances for development etc.
Other Housing Problems

1. Overcrowding on Group B Estates:

Prisons - 3/4 in 40 Square feet - housing, 9/10 in 120 square feet - even worse!
Over 100,000 families need relief of overcrowding. How is it solved?
Don't allow additional tenants to count in reckoning density, and picture looks better.
Only 1000 new flats are allocated for relief for these over 100,000 families.

2. Redevelopment Programme

Plan to demolish and rebuild Group B Estates. Has taken over five years to do one. Having second thoughts - just put two rooms together, makeshift toilet and tap, give 35 square feet, and multiply rent by four ($25 to $120)

Residents of Tai Wo Hau are leading a protest against the higher rents.

RENTS

Workers now earn less than before - most on daily basis, many only $600.
Cannot pay rent, told to ask SWD - so taxpayers subsidize industry.

3. Resites

Originally any homeless family given hut space. Now very difficult.
Build illegally - demolished
Triads no problem in building - Victim who buys has problem.
Conditions improved in some resites, but still many with 1 toilet for hundreds, 1 tap for 400/500 people. Rent, raised from $3 to $10 a head - 3 times cost of Group B estate rent.

If these appear to be a conflict of opinion it is keen. It is up to you to make pronouncements for the public.