

RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION.

Sub-Committee No. 9 (Sub-Committee on House Planning and Design, including Furniture, Fittings and Equipment).

Minutes of the first meeting held in the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Board Room, on 14th October at 10. a.m.

Present:

- Mr. D.M. Cowin (Chairman) (Institute of South African Architects.)
- Mr. N.L. Hanson (Chairman, Main Committee).
- Mrs. M.G. Sherlock (National Council of Women).
- Mr. van Beijma (National Housing and Planning Commission.)
- Mr. P.H. Connell (Organising Secretary).

In attendance: Miss S. de Beer. National Building Research Institute.

Apologies: Major Collings, Dr. Gordon Laing, Mr. Nel and Mr. Nicolson.

Convening of the Meeting.

In convening the meeting, the Organising Secretary, on behalf of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, thanked members for their presence, and introduced the Chairman, Mr. Douglas Cown.

Introductory Statement.

Mr. Connell gave the Committee a brief history of the setting up of the Research Committee on Minimum Standards of Accommodation. It was common knowledge that the regulations of different local authorities were notoriously at variance, even in regard to fundamental necessities of housing and it was generally felt that much of the legislation governing standards of housing accommodation was arbitrary and out of date. In a number of countries research had been carried out into minimum standards of accommodation, and such research had always resulted in better housing, governed by improved legislation. The National Building Research Institute in common with many similar organisations elsewhere had felt that in South Africa too there was a great deal of room for improvement in housing accommodation standards. To begin with, some definition of the needs of the people to be housed was necessary. In South Africa, with its wide range of climatic conditions and its mixed population the needs to be met by housing differ greatly, and it was desirable therefore that a scientific study of the problem as a whole should be undertaken. A start was made by setting up a research programme in the form of a survey of housing requirements from the users' point of view.

This survey had just been started when the National Housing and Planning Commission requested the National Building Research Institute to examine and report on a schedule of tentative standards of accommodation which it was proposed to apply to all housing schemes for which state loans were to be advanced. In this schedule, minimum standards and certain maximum standards were laid down, in an effort to improve on the existing standards which applied hitherto.

To/ ...

To carry out this work, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research set up a special Research Committee to direct and co-ordinate research into the whole question of minimum standards of housing accommodation and to prepare a report on the National Housing and Planning Commission Standards. This report would be issued in June, 1948 and would inevitably be in the nature of an interim statement. Thereafter, the Committee's work would take on a more long-range character and undertake fundamental research into housing standards.

The Organising Secretary then gave the names of the various organisations which were included in the Main Committee. The Main Committee would be responsible for bringing out final recommendations, but the work of collecting information would be done by nine working sub-committees. The organisation of the Committees and of the research programme was then described to members as outlined on the attached chart. Mr. Connell stressed that the object of the whole study was to bring about a better housing environment, both in town and country, and that every aspect of the housing environment would come under review and analysis.

This Sub-Committee had been set up to study the problem of the design of the dwelling, its planning and its furnishings, and to make recommendations under these heads. Members were reminded that the Sub-Committee had powers to co-opt additional members as and when required.

Terms of Reference.

The Chairman read the draft terms of reference to the meeting and asked for comments. Mr. Hanson suggested that it might be wise to go into the scope of the work first, before attempting to amend the Terms of Reference, and this was agreed.

Detailed discussion ensued, particularly with regard to the definition of the terms "installations", "equipment", "fittings", etc.

The following definitions were agreed upon.

- "Furniture" - to be taken to mean all moveable household furniture, including smaller equipment, such as pots and pans, etc.
- "Equipment" - to mean smaller household articles such as pots and pans, cutlery, cooking accessories, etc. This to be included in the general term "furniture" as above.
- "Fittings" - to mean all fixed and built-in furniture such as built-in cupboards, window seats, flap tables, ironing boards, etc.
- "Installations" - to include water supply, gas, electricity, sewerage, and appliances permanently attached thereto.

Planning and Design of Housing.

I. General Considerations. Housing for Europeans, Cape Coloureds, Asiatics and Natives.

- (a) Effects of Climate.
- (b) Effects of Custom.
- (c) Urban and Rural Differences.

II. Detailed Considerations - in respect of the four groups mentioned above.

- (a) Numbers, sizes, function and relationship of rooms.
- (b) Installations.
- (c) Furniture and Fittings.
- (d) Dwelling Types.
- (e) Relationship of housing to Estate Planning.

The Draft Terms of Reference were then discussed, and finally decided on as follows.

- (a) "To examine the standards of accommodation at present provided in dwellings in South Africa.
- (b) To consider and make recommendations as to the accommodation and facilities required in new dwellings in South Africa, and as to their design, planning and siting."

Allocation of Work.

It was agreed to tackle the detailed considerations first.

III. (a) Numbers, sizes, function and relationship of rooms.

Institute of Architects' Representative.) to report on these
Mr. van Beijma.) aspects of the
Mr. Connell.) planning and design
of houses.

(b) Installations.

Institute of Architects' Representative.) to report on the in-
Mr. van Beijma.) stallations already
Mr. Connell.) provided in houses,
and make suggestions
as to what should be
provided in future.

(c) Furniture and Fittings.

Dr. Gordon Laing.) It was suggested that Dr. Laing be approached
Mr. van Beijma.) to collect information on the furniture and
Mr. Connell.) fittings provided in existing houses; Mr.
Mrs. Sherlock.) van Beijma and Mrs. Sherlock to make sug-
gestions as to what to be provided in future.

It was further suggested that Dr. Murray, manager of the Johannesburg Municipal Social Welfare Department, and Dr. Nelson, Medical Officer of Health, Pretoria, should be approached and asked to assist in this work.

(d) Dwelling Types.

Mr. Cowin.) To report on the various types of dwelling
Mr. van Beijma.) to be considered.
Mr. Connell.)

(e) Relationship of housing to Estate Planning.

Mr. Cowin.)
Mr. Connell.)
Mr. Fassler.) to be)
Mr. Mitchell.) co-opted.)

) A study group of sub-committee 4, headed by Mr. Fassler, has been appointed to study this relationship. It was agreed that this group should submit its report to both Sub-Committees 4 and 9. Mr. Cowin undertook this work on behalf of Sub-Committee 9.

It was agreed that the various study groups would be required to present their evidence to the Sub-Committee in the form of a written statement or chart.

General.

It was agreed that Mr. Wale and Dr. Nelson should be asked to become members of this Sub-Committee, and also that the Institute of Architects be asked to nominate a second representative.

It was further suggested that valuable information would be obtained from housing manageresses. It was agreed to approach the Association of Housing Manageresses with a view to their appointing a representative on this sub-committee. In the meantime the names of Miss Martin and Miss Pienaar, of Pretoria, were mentioned. Mr. Connell undertook to arrange for a member of his staff to contact them for a general discussion on the problems under review by this sub-committee.

The next meeting to be held on 26/11/47 in the Board Room of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.

The meeting closed at 12.45. p.m.

Confirmed,

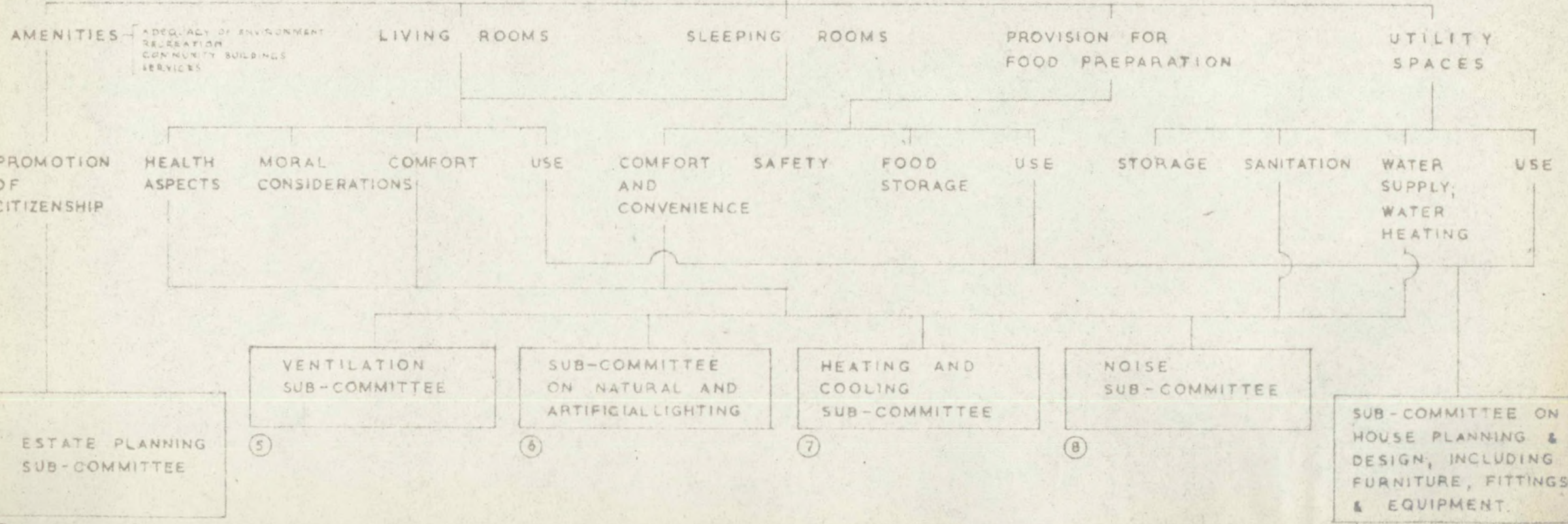
CHAIRMAN.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM STANDARDS OF ACCOMMODATION.

① SUB-COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL TRENDS, POPULATION NEEDS, FAMILY STRUCTURE & FAMILY ECONOMICS.

② SUB-COMMITTEE TO SURVEY EXISTING LEGISLATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, AND RELEVANT LEGISLATION IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

③ SUB-COMMITTEE TO SURVEY THE ATTITUDE OF OCCUPANTS TO EXISTING HOUSING.



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