

achieving similar density several decades later, and here completely reversed the emphasis on community and privacy (Plate 14). The decks were placed on the south side of the dwellings, which had their kitchens and main living spaces overlooking the deck. In fact there was wall-to-wall and floor-to-ceiling glazing in the living rooms, which were also set back a short distance from the deck, providing a small amount of transition space from public to private. The decks were never longer than about ten dwellings. An indication of the different atmosphere here is that to take these photographs it seemed necessary to ask the permission of the residents. Indeed, several asked me who I was and what I was doing, something which has never happened in all my visits to the Park Hill, Hyde Park and Kelvin complexes. Two things had happened here of crucial importance. The residents had actually taken possession of the deck as it passed their dwelling – a small planting trough provided by the architects on the balustrade had invited this. Some had even put down outdoor carpets or Astroturf®, so as you walk along this deck you literally invade a series of territories. Secondly, the residents can see each other and soon get to know all on their deck. Regular visitors such as postmen and milkmen also know their customers and are likely to report anything strange or worrying. Strangers then are easily detected, as a community has formed and another level of territory, that of a deck as a whole, has become defensible and defended. When I returned to this development some 20 years after it was first occupied to take photographs for this book, I found a group of residents singing its praises very loudly indeed. They appreciated exactly how it worked socially, and felt safe, secure and among friends. ‘We never want to leave here’, one of them said to me, and they all agreed. When I asked if they were worried about any lack of privacy with such large windows opening directly onto the decks, they all dismissed this as not a problem. ‘You know everybody anyway’, one of them said. The community was clearly able through this architecture to care for its members. They told tales of how if anyone was ill it was soon picked up by the others. They recalled the one incident in living memory when an intruder tried to walk into one of the flats, but of course was quickly chased and caught. An apparently small design difference here has undoubtedly contributed to a huge variation in the quality of life of the residents of these two housing schemes.

Care must be taken here also to relate these behaviours to culture. The Malaysian culture is of course more eastern in its orientation, and is distinctly Asian rather than European in spite of invasions by the Portuguese, Dutch and finally British. The traditional Malay Kampong, or village, is a much more communal affair than a British one (Fig. 7.5). There are few markers of territory on the ground, with dwellings occupying space often raised off the ground for environmental reasons. However, again here we find great stability and little