



Final Report

At home and in place? The role of housing in social inclusion

authored by

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ACRONYMS

ALMOs	Arms Length Management Organisations (UK)
ASBOs	Antisocial behaviour orders (UK)
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government (UK)
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
HMR	Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders (UK)
NAHA	National Affordable Housing Agreement
NDC	New Deal for Communities (UK)
NRAS	National Rental Affordability Scheme
NRF	Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (UK)
NRV	Neighbourhood Renewal Victoria
NSNR	National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (UK)
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (UK)
PSAs	Public Service Agreements (UK)
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aim

This is the Final Report from a project that aims to enhance understanding of aspects of home, housing and place which interact with social and economic disadvantage and the ways in which housing-related policies and programs can promote social inclusion.

The project has three broad research questions:

1. How do housing processes affect the ways in which low-income households experience disadvantages?
2. How effective are current housing-related programs in promoting social inclusion?
3. What lessons can be learnt from international good practice in the evaluation of housing policies that aim to achieve social inclusion?

Research approach and methods

The research approach comprised two stages. Firstly, conceptual development to understand the linkages between housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion, based on an extensive review of relevant academic and policy literature. Secondly, an empirical component that consisted of two case studies—Australia (South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria as embedded units of analysis) and the UK (with England as the unit of analysis). The case study method involved interviews with key informants, a review of policy documents, and an analysis of evaluation material.

Conceptual framework

The concept of social inclusion/exclusion has been used to refer to reform within the administration of government and more broadly in changing the relationships between government, markets and civil society. The aim is to provide more effective services that start with the needs of individuals or families, or people living in particular places, and include new ways of people participating in decisions that affect them through:

- 'Joined-up' or 'whole of government' approaches which refer to mechanisms for coordination across levels of government (vertical coordination) and portfolio areas (horizontal coordination).
- Network governance arrangements in which the not-for-profit sector, and sometimes the for-profit sector, play an important role in addressing social exclusion and promoting social inclusion.
- Membership of a community involving social connectedness and economic participation.

Having a home, living in appropriate housing and belonging to place all have a role to play in social inclusion/exclusion. All are affected by the interaction of housing market factors, government policies and the preferences and actions of individuals/households over time, which we refer to as housing processes. It is widely recognised that people can be excluded from housing. They can also be excluded from society through housing processes, for example, living in poor quality accommodation, living in housing types or neighbourhoods that are unsafe, being restricted to accessing housing in areas with poor transport links or few job prospects, or living in places with inadequate facilities and poor access to services. It is neither accurate nor useful to think in terms of a dichotomy between those who are housed (included) and those who are not housed (excluded).

Housing-related policies and programs within a social inclusion framework

The research identified several different types of housing-related policies and programs using a threefold typology of social exclusion developed in the UK (Miliband 2006):

1. *Deep social exclusion* refers to relatively small numbers of people who are disadvantaged and marginalised as a result of multiple and overlapping factors that often accumulate over time. Examples of housing-related policies and programs include homelessness prevention and intervention, targeting 'at risk' population groups, and addressing behaviours associated with disadvantage that have an impact on place.
2. *Concentrated social exclusion* refers to a clustering of people with multiple disadvantages in particular locations, where this might in itself result in further disadvantage. Examples of housing-related policies and programs are targeting services to people in disadvantaged places and comprehensive area-based initiatives.
3. *Wide social exclusion* refers to situations where a large number of people may be excluded on one or two dimensions of disadvantage. Examples of housing-related policies and programs are: improving the condition and standard of social housing, increasing the supply of social and affordable rental housing, and interventions to improve the functioning of housing markets to enable social inclusion.

The social inclusion/exclusion agenda in both case-study countries placed considerable priority on addressing deep social exclusion through services to individuals and targeting services to people with complex needs living in disadvantaged areas. In England, and to a lesser extent in the Australian states, comprehensive place-based approaches have also been an important part of the social exclusion agenda. The areas which are the subject of these initiatives typically have a concentration of social housing. Housing-related interventions in regard to wide social exclusion are generally part of mainstream programs.

Key learning

Deep social exclusion

In many respects, the most important learning from the deployment of the social inclusion/exclusion concept in the two cases is in understanding that the experience of homelessness is a complex, multifaceted, cumulative and sometimes enduring process. Different groups of homeless people have different needs at different stages of the life cycle, and require customised and coordinated responses rather than 'one size fits all' interventions. Focused attention and resources over a long period are important but can be difficult in the context of short-term political cycles. Effective interventions are based on housing accompanied by support services and there is growing evidence that the best strategies are those where support follows people, rather than people moving to get the support. The availability of resources not tied to traditional mainstream programs, and agencies working together to develop 'whole of government' approaches that entail developing a culture which supports this, including developing reporting and accountability mechanisms, can stimulate innovative approaches.

Housing market factors are an important contributor to homelessness. A common underlying theme in both countries is the way in which the private rental sector operates. In tight market conditions, landlords can screen out 'high risk' people and

charge rents that stretch people's finances, leaving them vulnerable. This is more of an issue in Australia where the private rental sector is not only considerably larger but also plays a much more significant role in housing lower income and vulnerable households than in the UK where the social housing sector plays a much greater role in housing such households.

Concentrated social exclusion

- There are two main approaches to addressing the housing-related consequences of concentrated social exclusion: targeting services to people living in disadvantaged places and comprehensive area-based approaches (aiming at improved outcomes for people and places and addressing spatial inequalities). In addition, housing improvement and housing market programs (primarily about improving housing/place as a catalyst for improving outcomes for people) could be regarded as addressing concentrated social exclusion, to the extent that they focus on disadvantaged areas, or wide social exclusion in other circumstances.
- The selection of an appropriate approach requires a detailed understanding of the processes that underlie spatial inequalities, including the economic and social context. Focusing on individuals and local neighbourhoods has limited impact on economic participation unless there is attention to broader regional economic development and the type and location of jobs available. Housing markets, in conjunction with housing and planning policies, shape the options available to households about where to live. As a result of these processes, stigma attaches to living in some areas. Concentrated social exclusion is a process, not just another way of describing spatial disadvantage. Disadvantaged areas vary, as does the role they play in housing and labour markets. Tailored interventions are required that take into account the economic and social context of particular locations.

Comprehensive area-based approaches are expensive and require sustained commitment over a long period to produce results; however, the scale of investment is relatively small in the context of mainstream service provision to such areas. They generate considerable local activity and innovation. 'Whole of government' approaches are widely supported but are difficult to achieve in practice as some mainstream agencies have national/state agendas and it is difficult for them to focus on small areas (education, health, workforce development and even housing).

Local partnerships are an important part of place-based approaches. They extend beyond 'whole of government' approaches to include some local residents, third sector representatives and business. Involvement of residents is beneficial at a number of levels but most residents do not engage with these processes and some move away if their personal circumstances improve. Expenditure on housing improvement and other physical improvements is costly but does signify serious intent in improving an area and helps residents to feel better about living there.

Large programs take time to scale up and it is important to be realistic about what can and cannot be achieved within particular time frames to prevent cynicism and burn-out. There are variable results in improving outcomes for people in terms of education, health and worklessness. Clear strategies are required to 'end' place-based programs and to ensure that the benefits generated over a long period do not simply dissipate when the program ends.

Evaluation

Evaluation has been an important part of the social inclusion/exclusion agenda in Australia and the UK, in part stimulated by other developments in governance including performance management, value auditing and evidence-based policy making. These developments mean that, while process evaluations remain important,

the social inclusion/exclusion agenda has placed considerable emphasis on evaluation of outcomes and cost efficiency and effectiveness of social policies.

It is critical to recognise that good evaluation is not an 'add-on'—it requires planning and the development of clear and robust evaluation frameworks that specify targets, establish baseline data, and develop clear indicators to measure change over time. Evaluation design must address issues of causality, including addressing the following questions:

- How do the outcomes for the population group/area compare with those for similar groups/areas and in relation to national/state benchmarks?
- How do the outcomes compare with what would have happened if the policy or program had not been introduced (the counterfactual)?
- How we know that it was the intervention that led to the changes that have been identified and not some other factor?

Assessing the outcomes of housing-related policies and programs to improve social inclusion and address social exclusion is complex. It is desirable to engage independent evaluators to ensure that the evaluation is credible. There is typically a period of at least two or three years before a baseline is established or any interim findings are available. It is important to generate findings progressively and disseminate them widely, since political policy cycles are often quite short.

Evaluation of housing-related policies and programs has mostly applied to new initiatives rather than mainstream policies and programs. It is important to have independent strategic evaluation of the 'big picture' in relation to the ways in which home, housing and place affect social inclusion/exclusion. In Australia, there is some developmental work on strategic evaluation, although further work is required on indicators of change in disadvantaged places, and the social and cultural aspects of housing in contributing to social inclusion/exclusion.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

Public policy debates in Australia and elsewhere have used the paired concept of social inclusion/exclusion to draw attention to the multiple and interrelated dimensions of inequality (economic, social, cultural and political), and the processes through which some people experience socio-economic disadvantage. The concept has also provided a framework for governments in developing public policies to address inequality and disadvantage across what are often separate functional policy domains (health, housing, education, employment etc). In some contexts, it is also used to denote membership and belonging to a community more broadly. Put simply, social inclusion has multiple layers of meaning.

There is increasing recognition of the role of home and place in contributing to social inclusion. Having a home involves not only having a roof over one's head but also provides a safe and private environment in which intimate relationships can be developed and children nurtured. A home is the base for the routines of daily life, from shopping and socialising to schooling and working. A home is connected to place through a physical dwelling, and place may be important for self-identity, attachment and a sense of belonging. More practically, place shapes access to transport, facilities, jobs and services. Home and place thus provide a foundation for participation in social, economic, cultural and political life. Some people, for various reasons, do not have a home in either a literal or an emotive sense, nor a sense of belonging to place; it is difficult for them to be socially included.

Traditionally, housing policies have been the main vehicle for governments to assist people to have a home who might not otherwise be able to do so. However, housing policies have often been at the periphery of social policy debates in Australia. They centred on financial assistance and the development and management of physical dwellings and were disconnected from policies to address homelessness and socio-economic disadvantage more generally. More recently, the importance of home and place has been recognised in contemporary social inclusion agendas, supported by research which indicates the importance of adequate and appropriate housing to health and wellbeing, often mediated through home and place (reviewed in Dunn 2000; Easterlow et al. 2000; Evans et al. 2003; Hulse et al. 2010).

At the beginning of the 21st century, Australian governments individually and, increasingly, collectively have been developing new ways to address some of the most acute issues associated with a lack of home through homelessness strategies and the effects of concentration of disadvantaged people in some places, including intergenerational disadvantage. A focus on addressing the disadvantages experienced by Indigenous households under the Australian government's Closing the Gap strategy explicitly recognises the importance of both home and place, including the effects of concentration of disadvantage in remote communities.

There has been less attention to the effects of housing processes on experiences of home and place and the consequent effects on social inclusion for other groups in the community. Housing processes refer to the interaction between market factors, public policy settings and the perspectives, actions and experiences of individuals and households that occur over time. The National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) 2009 refers to these processes in its 'aspirational objective' that:

... all Australians have access to affordable, safe and sustainable housing that contributes to social and economic participation. (COAG 2009, p.3)

1.2 Aim and research questions

This is the Final Report from a project which aims to enhance understanding of the ways in which housing processes interact with socio-economic disadvantage. It considers how housing-based interventions could be effective in enabling social inclusion and considers the best ways to evaluate such interventions. Housing-related interventions in this context refer to those that focus on home, housing and place. It is centred on the policy context in Australia and also draws on the experiences of more than a decade of housing-related policies to address social exclusion (and promote social inclusion) in the UK. The project is intentionally selective in that its focus is primarily on the role of housing and housing-related policies rather than other policies and programs under the rubric of social inclusion, e.g. health, education, employment and social welfare.

There are three broad research questions:

1. How do housing processes affect the ways in which low-income households experience disadvantages?
2. How effective are current housing-related programs in promoting social inclusion?
3. What lessons can be learnt from international good practice¹ in the evaluation of housing policies that aim to achieve social inclusion?

The Final Report addresses each of these questions. It follows a Positioning Paper (Hulse et al. 2010) which was based on a review of the academic and policy literature on social inclusion and housing processes and which addressed the first research question. This Final Report is a self-contained document that summarises the main conclusions from that review. The Positioning Paper is available online at http://www.ahuri.edu.au/publications/download/50566_pp for readers who are interested in further detail and who may wish to access some of the source material.

1.3 Structure of the Final Report

The Final Report proceeds as follows:

- *Chapter 2* outlines the research approach and methods.
- *Chapter 3* presents the conceptual framework and provides a brief summary of some important conceptual issues.
- *Chapter 4* considers the opportunities and challenges in pursuing a social inclusion agenda through housing policy interventions, and introduces the main housing-related policies and programs identified in the case studies as contributing to this agenda.
- *Chapter 5* presents key learning about housing-related policies and programs that have as their primary aim addressing deep social exclusion.
- *Chapter 6* distils key learning in respect of place-based initiatives that aim to address concentrated and wide social exclusion.
- *Chapter 7* presents learning about evaluation of housing-related policies and programs and place-based initiatives within a social inclusion/exclusion agenda.
- *Chapter 8* presents the conclusions of the research.

¹ While the question refers to international good practice, the research focuses on evaluation of housing-related policies and programs to promote social inclusion in the UK, for reasons discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.1).

2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODS

The purpose of the project was to open up and inform discussion of the ways in which housing processes interact with socio-economic disadvantage and to consider whether, and to what extent, housing and related policies and programs can be effective in ameliorating these disadvantages. In this chapter, we outline our research approach and the research methods deployed.

2.1 Research approach

The first task was to engage in a critical reading of the academic literature on social inclusion and the policy (grey) literature in Australia and the UK. This informed the conceptual framework for the project which had to address a number of methodological challenges. Some of the issues that came to the fore were questions such as:

- How should social inclusion in relation to home, housing and place be conceptualised?
- What is encompassed by 'housing processes'?
- Is inadequate housing an underlying cause of socio-economic disadvantage or a symptom of social inequality?
- How should we adjudicate between competing views about the efficacy of housing-related interventions to promote social inclusion?
- How should we evaluate housing-related policies and programs that are established to reduce disadvantage?

After working through these issues, we wanted to explore further how experienced policy-makers and practitioners in Australia view the role of housing processes in relation to social inclusion or exclusion, and their views on the effectiveness of housing-related policies in promoting social inclusion, including effective linkages with other types of public policies. We also wanted to learn from more than a decade of experience with policies and programs directed at ameliorating social exclusion in the UK through interviewing researchers who were in a position to have an informed overview of the effectiveness of housing-related interventions.

The research team reviewed specific documentation on policy design, implementation and evaluation in respect of housing-related policies and sought to elicit the views of those who are involved in different stages of the policy process. This approach is under development in Australia, but there is more than a decade of experience in the UK to draw on, including some major evaluations of housing-related interventions to address social exclusion. The project did not aim to investigate the views of people who might be affected by housing-related policies to promote social inclusion except insofar as their views are captured in the evaluation of such policies.

We used a multiple case study method involving two cases, an Australian and a UK case, with the former including four embedded units of analysis, namely three state jurisdictions (Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania) and a national perspective; and the latter including one embedded unit of analysis (England) and a national perspective (Yin 2009, p.50). The method involved intensive and in-depth investigation of particular cases to answer questions of *how and why*. An overview of the research design is set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Research design

<i>Research question</i>	<i>Research method</i>
RQ1 In the context of contemporary economic and social change, how do housing processes affect the ways in which some people, and people living in some places, experience disadvantages?	Review of the academic and policy (grey) literature (reported in the Positioning Paper for the project) Australian and UK case studies: → Interviews with key informants
RQ2 What are the implications of the above findings for housing and related policies that aim to contribute to social inclusion and how effective are current programs?	Australian and UK case studies: → Review of policy documents → Interviews with key informants → Identification/review of further documentation
RQ3 What are the lessons for Australia of international good practice in evaluation of housing and other relevant policies aimed at achieving social inclusion?	UK and Australian case studies: → Review of the literature on evaluation → Review of relevant evaluation frameworks and reports → Interviews with key informants

2.2 Research methods

The research had three main stages with considerable iteration between them.

1. Exploration and ‘unpacking’ of the ways in which housing processes affect social inclusion, through a desk-based review of the Australian and UK literature.
2. A case study of Australia, involving a detailed review of relevant policy documents and evaluations on aspects of housing and social inclusion and interviews with key informants in three states, as well as a small number who have knowledge of the national situation.
3. A case study of the UK, focusing on major housing-related initiatives designed to address social exclusion or promote social inclusion, including a detailed review of policy and program evaluations and interviews with senior researchers who had been involved in policy development and/or evaluation.

The research team comprised researchers from the AHURI Swinburne-Monash Research Centre and Southern Research Centre. The project received ethics approval from Swinburne University of Technology and this approval was subsequently endorsed by the ethics committees of the University of Tasmania and Flinders University of South Australia, reflecting the university affiliation of the team members.²

2.2.1 Conceptual development

The first stage of the project involved an extensive review of the Australian and international policy and academic literature on homelessness, housing and social inclusion. The output was a Positioning Paper (Hulse et al. 2010) which included:

- A review of the Australian policy context in respect of housing disadvantage social inclusion.

² Swinburne University Human Research Ethics Committee, Certificate of Ethics Clearance, SUHREC 2009/284, dated 4 January 2010, subsequently confirmed by the Flinders University and Southern Adelaide Health Service, Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (No 4714) and the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network (No H11252).

- An exploration of the ways in which housing processes have been and could be considered in debates about social inclusion.
- The current foci of debates about homelessness, housing for Indigenous people and spatial concentration of disadvantage particularly in public housing.
- Broader consideration of the linkages between housing process, economic inequality, social connectedness and political inclusion.
- Insights from the housing research literature about the ways in which the varied dimensions of home and belonging to place can have a profound impact on social inclusion.

2.2.2 Australian case study

The research investigated housing-related policy development, implementation and evaluation where this was seen as part of a social inclusion strategy. The case study had two methods: interviews with key informants with practical experience in these areas and a review of relevant policy documentation, some of which was elicited through the interviews.

We identified three states as the most appropriate locales for interviewing policy makers: South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria. These states have pursued broadly similar objectives to promote social inclusion, including comprehensive strategies on homelessness. However, the policy context in which these policies have been developed has a different emphasis. In Victoria, governments have emphasised a balancing of economic development and restructuring with improving social outcomes for those who are left behind. In South Australia, governments have sought to address the impact of uneven economic development through a program of urban regeneration along with other strategies such as a focus on overhauling mental health services and initiatives to increase school retention. In Tasmania, governments have been concerned with countering the negative impacts associated with dispersed settlement and demographic ageing. We also wanted to interview a small number of policy informants who have an overview of the national policy context in relation to social inclusion.

We approached selected key informants who have expertise in the areas of housing and social inclusion. They were provided with information about the project and advised that they would be interviewed as an individual who has expertise in this area rather than as a representative of the organisation that they currently work for (see Appendix 1 for Information statement and informed consent form).

A schedule was developed to guide the semi-structured interviews and to ensure that key themes were considered (given in full in Appendix 2). These were:

- Views on the concept of social inclusion and its relation to housing processes.
- The role and effectiveness of policies on homelessness, housing and place in promoting social inclusion.
- Indicators of social inclusion relevant to homelessness, housing and place.
- Linkages between housing and other public policies in promoting social inclusion, for example, health, education and community services.
- Governance issue in implementing policies and programs to improve social inclusion.
- Evidence on outcomes (evaluations).
- Innovations.

Using semi-structured interviews enabled the interviewer to probe in detail some of the responses to the questions using a conversational style. This encouraged our interviewees to be forthcoming and open about the problems in respect of service delivery and resources. We also encouraged them to be as frank as possible about the challenges that arise in delivering services, to reflect upon the factors that undermine policy success, and to consider the obstacles that can affect effectiveness.

Twenty-five interviews were completed in Australia: eight in Tasmania, seven in South Australia, six in Victoria, and four with people with a national overview (see Appendix 3). The researcher took notes and, with the interviewee's consent, also made an electronic recording as back-up for later checking of the comprehensiveness of the notes and accuracy in relation to verbatim comments. The interviews lasted on average for an hour. They were also important in eliciting a second round of policy and evaluation documentation for review by the research team.

2.2.3 UK case study

The case study of the UK was to learn from the experiences of housing-related policies to address social exclusion developed and implemented between 1998 and 2010. We were especially keen to hear the views of key informants on the efficacy of these interventions and to ascertain the difficulties encountered during their implementation.

Research was conducted in two phases. Background research was conducted between October and December 2009, towards the end of the Labour government which had placed a high priority on its strategy to combat social exclusion. This involved a review of documents and some interviewing. In July 2010, after the election of the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government, interviews were conducted with senior researchers and policy people, a total of nine interviews. Some had played key roles in the evaluation of housing-related social inclusion initiatives of the Labour government which were published shortly before the general election of May 2010. These interviews provided considerable insights above and beyond the published material and also elicited further documentary material that the research team had not previously been aware of. The interviews, and the review of policy and evaluation documents, were invaluable in addressing the third research question on best practice in evaluation. This round of interviews enabled a more holistic and post hoc review and reflection away from the immediate pressures of policy and program development and implementation.

In practice, and in contrast to the Australian interviews which indicated a positive view of social inclusion, the UK interviews indicated a diminishing focus on the lens of social inclusion and exclusion during the latter years of the Labour government, alongside a growing focus on 'social inequality', and the new Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government's preferred use of the term 'big society'. The potential implications of the cuts introduced by the new government were also a recurring theme.

2.2.4 Data analysis and reporting

Both the documentary material and the interview notes were analysed by the research team under three broad headings that align with the overall aims of the project:

1. The role of home, housing and place in social inclusion.
2. Opportunities, challenges and effectiveness of pursuing a social inclusion agenda through housing policy interventions addressed at deep social exclusion, spatially concentrated social exclusion and broad social exclusion.

3. Best practice for evaluating policies aimed at achieving social inclusion.

This was a thematic analysis across the two cases, that is, we report by analytical themes rather than juxtaposing the cases. However, to assist the reader, we outline and compare some of the main ways in which housing-related interventions were located in the social inclusion/exclusion agendas of the two countries, with some examples of these approaches (Chapter 4).

3 SOCIAL INCLUSION AND HOUSING PROCESSES: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter we present the conceptual framework for the research which was developed following an extensive review of the Australian and international literature on social inclusion and housing processes (Hulse et al. 2010). This framework was developed in response to research question 1: *'How do housing processes affect the ways in which low-income households experience disadvantages?'*

The chapter:

- Highlights key elements of the social inclusion concept and briefly discusses some controversies that are relevant to this research.
- Explores some of the linkages between housing processes and social inclusion that have been documented in the literature.
- Identifies some of the ways in which disadvantage is mediated through experiences of home and place.

3.1 What is social inclusion/exclusion?

3.1.1 Insights from the literature

Social inclusion/exclusion has often been used broadly to denote opportunities for all members of society to participate in economic, social, cultural and political life. The concept is deployed and used in different ways in the literature. A key policy usage is social inclusion as a means of promoting a 'whole of government' approach to ameliorate the problems that are manifestations of socio-economic disadvantage. Thus policies developed under the banner of social inclusion/exclusion have sought to enhance the capacity of those excluded from accessing mainstream services and employment opportunities (Hayes et al. 2008; Vinson 2009a). In the more specific context of housing, the literature indicates that the concept of social inclusion has been used in relation to strategies to address deep socio-economic disadvantage experienced by some people and in respect of the concentration of disadvantage in particular areas often, but not always, centred on large public housing estates (e.g. Vinson 2009c). In Australia, there is also a particular focus on the disadvantages experienced by Indigenous people, particularly those living in remote areas (e.g. Vinson 2009b).

The academic literature gives extensive consideration of what is social inclusion/exclusion, whether it can explain the processes that lead to socio-economic disadvantage and, more practically, how to operationalise and measure levels of social inclusion/exclusion (e.g. Byrne 2005; Levitas et al. 2007). In general, the academic literature gives greater prominence to the structural inequalities that underlie social exclusion, such as those associated with restructuring of labour markets (Silver & Miller 2002; Levitas 2005; Millar 2007).

While there is no unambiguous definition of social inclusion/exclusion, a broad consensus, however, is emerging about the key elements (Somerville 1998; Sen 2000; Arthurson & Jacobs 2003; Millar 2007; Hayes et al. 2008). Social inclusion/exclusion:

- Includes multiple dimensions of inequality (economic, social, political and cultural) and the sometimes complex linkages between these.

- Provides an understanding of inequality as dynamic, not static, focusing attention on the processes that cause inequality as well as opportunities for policy interventions.
- Is relational in that it is located in specific economic and social contexts.
- Includes the ways in which people respond to inequality as well as structural factors such as labour market changes.

The term 'social inclusion' has generally proved popular in policy discourse. For example, the Australian Government in an overview of its social inclusion agenda articulates the vision of:

... a socially inclusive society in which all Australians feel valued and have the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our society (Australian Government 2009a, p.2).

The UK Government preferred the term 'social exclusion' to frame a set of policies between 1997 and 2010, with an early and much quoted definition being:

... a short-hand label for what can happen when individuals or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown (DSS 1999, p.23).

The UK government used social exclusion as an umbrella concept to frame its policies and programs in England and Wales,³ whereas in Australia the term social inclusion has been adopted. Social inclusion and exclusion are 'inextricably intertwined' and one can only conceptualise inclusion by identifying people who are excluded (Lister 2007). Perhaps for this reason, there has been a much greater focus on identifying social exclusion than social inclusion, with the latter seen as a metaphor for a better society in which people are able to be fully included through participation in the economic, social, political and cultural spheres of life (Levitas 2003). Social inclusion is an imagined future state, while social exclusion refers to current circumstances in which some people are marginalised and unable to live a full life for a variety of reasons that may include, but are not restricted to, a lack of material resources. These reasons include lack of family support, social isolation, ill health and disability, not having a home or living in unsafe or inadequate housing, low levels of education, and inability to get a job.

Whether they adopt the term 'social inclusion' or 'social exclusion', public policies that reference the concept typically aim to tackle the interconnected and overlapping aspects of disadvantage through establishing linkages across service delivery agencies. Implicit in the governmental approach to social inclusion/exclusion is the assumption that such innovations are an effective mechanism to tackle disadvantage although, as we note later in this Final Report, some academic commentators doubt the efficacy of policies that pay insufficient heed to addressing the structural causes of exclusion, in particular, increasing inequality. As a way of measuring success, those charged with implementing social inclusion policies have developed targets against which progress can be measured, using indicators. One of the advantages of the concept of social inclusion/exclusion is that it is broad enough to attract wide support. In this sense, a contrast can be made with terms such as 'poverty' that have been eschewed because of the obvious connection to economic inequality.

³ In Scotland (not considered in the case study), the term 'social inclusion' was adopted.

Social inclusion/exclusion has also been widely used to refer to reform within the administration of government and more broadly in changing the relationships between government, markets and civil society. There are two clear and overlapping themes:

- 'Joined-up' or 'whole of government' approaches refer to mechanisms for coordination across levels of government (vertical coordination) and portfolio areas (horizontal coordination). The rationale is to provide more effective services that start with the needs of the individual or family rather than providing services in 'silos' which individuals have to access separately.
- Network governance arrangements where the not-for-profit sector, and sometimes the for-profit sector, play an important role in addressing social exclusion and promoting social inclusion. Such arrangements may also include new ways of people participating in decisions that affect them, either as clients of services and/or as residents of particular areas.

In recent years, policy-makers and researchers have sought to provide more detail on the different forms of social inclusion/exclusion. Consider for example the threefold typology advanced by the UK Labour government (Miliband 2006):

- Deep social exclusion—refers to relatively small numbers of people who are disadvantaged and marginalised as a result of multiple and overlapping factors that often accumulate over time.
- Wide social exclusion—is where a large number of people may be excluded on one or two dimensions of disadvantage (for example, low income and poor quality housing).
- Concentrated exclusion—is where there is a clustering of people with multiple disadvantages in particular locations where this might in itself result in further disadvantage (often called neighbourhood or area effects in the literature).

In the area of homelessness, the social inclusion/exclusion concept has been deployed as a component of a case management and 'continuum of care' model in which service providers seek to address homelessness through a suite of support mechanisms in areas such as addiction rehabilitation, employment training, domestic violence and health (Silver 2010, p.197). The individual is provided with the support they require rather than having to access services individually and separately. The same approach can be used in respect of disadvantaged places in which governments have adopted place management policies, recognising some of the limitations of relying on mainstream service delivery, such as in the large area-based improvement approaches. Case management and place management involve not only 'whole of government' approaches but also people experiencing disadvantage; the not-for-profit sector as service providers; and in some contexts the private sector in a number of roles, including job generation and housing redevelopment.

3.1.2 Some controversies about social inclusion/exclusion

In the academic and policy literatures there has been extensive debate about the concept of social inclusion/exclusion and its use to further our understanding of the processes that create inequality and disadvantage and effective mechanisms for improving outcomes for people and places. There have been a number of ongoing controversies that we discuss briefly below.

How broad is the concept of social inclusion/exclusion?

Much of the literature focuses on social exclusion rather than social inclusion. In many respects, social exclusion operates as a signifier for a suite of government policies to assist groups that are vulnerable or that have become marginalised, such as remote

Indigenous households, homeless families, jobless families, and people who are disadvantaged in the labour market. Some commentators argue that social *inclusion* is much broader than improved service provision to the most disadvantaged. It is best understood as dealing with issues relating to membership of a community, while social exclusion focuses on social problems (Silver 2010, p.194). However, there is a danger in extending the concept too far that it will become an aspirational goal rather than a clear statement of objectives against which progress can be measured and governments (and societies) held to account.

Does the concept of social inclusion/exclusion have explanatory value?

There are divergent views over whether a social inclusion/exclusion lens enables identification of the processes that shape disadvantage and assessment of the effectiveness of strategies to ameliorate disadvantage. Causal relations are complex and difficult to verify. For example, households who are excluded may experience further disadvantage as a consequence of their housing circumstances. Certain health conditions can be accentuated by acute overcrowding and dampness, while poor transport can impede access to medical services (Marsh 2004). As we discuss further in Chapter 7, establishing causal relationships between housing and social exclusion can only be achieved at the level of generality. For example, researchers in the field of homelessness point out that mental health and drug addictions may be both a cause of homelessness but also an outcome of being without a secure home (Chamberlain et al. 2007; Johnson & Chamberlain 2008). It is difficult to demonstrate empirically the direction of causality in respect of housing processes and social exclusion (Cameron & Field 2000). As we show in Chapter 7, this point has implications for the selection of evaluation methods to gauge the outcomes of policies.

Does the concept of social inclusion/exclusion have advantages over traditional concepts such as income poverty?

Some academics argue that a focus on social inclusion/exclusion has proved popular with governments because it switches attention away from material poverty to areas of social policy that are not as resource intensive, namely, administrative changes such as partnership and joined-up government protocols (e.g. Byrne 2005). Others have suggested that social inclusion/exclusion helps foreground the relational aspects of poverty, in particular the linkages between economic, social and cultural deprivation (e.g. Levitas et al. 2007). For example, disadvantages in terms of housing can accentuate disadvantage in other areas such as access to good quality schooling or location distant from jobs.

To what extent is social inclusion/exclusion the result of individual choices and behaviours and/or broader structural factors?

On the whole, the academic literature suggests that it is important not to attribute social exclusion to individual factors such as life choices and behaviour, over and above the systemic inequalities that structure contemporary society. There is often an a priori assumption that, while individual factors can exacerbate and compound problems of poverty, they are best understood as symptoms rather than as underlying causal factors. This is in contrast to some of the policy literature where there has been an increasing emphasis on individual factors (such as mental health issues) and behaviours (such as non-participation in the workforce). In similar vein, there is a strong thread in the academic literature which argues that labelling some places as disadvantaged may contribute to an ecological fallacy in which people are assumed to have certain characteristics and demonstrate behaviours simply by living in an area. Put simply, not all people living in areas of concentrated disadvantage are themselves

disadvantaged, and unwarranted assumptions may be made about their values, aspirations and decisions. This is a challenge for agencies seeking to develop policies which focus on place.

3.2 Housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion

The focus of this project is on the link between housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion. In our view, they are best seen as being intertwined or nested. For example, housing processes can have an influence on financial circumstances, health, education and employment, but different housing circumstances also reflect broader inequalities in income and wealth as well as the attitudes, preferences, decisions and behaviours of individuals and households. The literature focuses predominantly on ways in which housing can contribute to and exacerbate disadvantage and social exclusion.

3.2.1 Exclusion from housing and through housing processes

A distinction should be made between exclusion *from* housing and exclusion *through* housing processes (Cameron & Field 2000). Homelessness is a prime example of exclusion *from* housing. Homeless people often have to deal with complex personal difficulties, but recent research has hypothesised that the risk of becoming homeless is higher in societies that are socially unequal and where there is an acute shortage of accommodation available (Stephens & Fitzpatrick 2007). However, individuals with problems arising from factors such as drug dependency, domestic violence or poor schooling may be at greater risk than other sections of the population.

The advantage of conceptualising homelessness in this way is that it shifts the focus of analysis to the context and material factors in which individuals are situated rather than only taking into account individual pathologies. Since homelessness is often intertwined with multiple disadvantages, whatever the causation, this constitutes deep social exclusion as we have defined it earlier in this chapter. However, it is helpful to see homelessness as akin to a continuum in which individuals experience episodes of homelessness rather than seeking to establish a binary divide to distinguish those who are literally roofless from those who are not. Thus, exclusion from housing encompasses not only homelessness but also the effects of risk assessment processes in the private rental sector, discrimination against particular groups in letting housing, and the management practices of housing providers (Short et al. 2003, 2008; Hulse et al. 2011).

Exclusion *through* housing processes includes living in poor quality accommodation, living in housing types or neighbourhoods that are unsafe, being restricted to accessing housing in areas with poor transport links or few job prospects, living in places with inadequate facilities and poor access to services. Previous research for AHURI highlighted the dimensions of housing insecurity which results from inability to have much control over one's housing circumstances and which contribute to a cycle of precarious living for people who are neither homeless nor adequately housed (Hulse & Saugeres 2008). It is neither accurate nor useful, therefore, to think in terms of a dichotomy between those who are housed (included) and those who are not housed (excluded). Rather, housing processes result in a continuum of housing experiences that both reflect and can contribute to social inclusion/exclusion.

It is widely recognised that housing processes generate or exacerbate inequalities. This may result in wide social exclusion, for example, where households are not able to buy a home because of their low income and therefore denied opportunities to build up assets that are available to high-income households, or where households experience unaffordable housing with little security in the private rental sector.

Housing markets can accentuate forms of concentrated social exclusion, as in areas of low cost private rental housing that are not well located in regard to services, facilities, education or jobs (Randolph & Holloway 2007). Further, government housing policy settings, past and present, may contribute to social inclusion/exclusion, for example, through allocating those with the highest and most complex needs to public housing which is concentrated in particular areas. In this sense, the linkages between housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion are recursive.

3.2.2 *Housing processes and the dimensions of social inclusion/exclusion*

The review of the literature established clear links between housing processes and economic inequalities, social participation and membership of a community and polity:

- *Economic inequalities*: In the context of housing provision, the major factor impeding social inclusion is inequalities in terms of income and wealth. The high cost of home ownership operates as a barrier for lower-income, low-wealth households and effectively limits their housing options to either the private rental market or social housing. As access to social housing is increasingly limited to the most vulnerable, other lower-income households have to access private rental or forms of marginal housing which are expensive and which do not enable them to build up assets. Housing processes are a primary means of generating and exacerbating inequalities not only between households currently but, importantly, also across generations (e.g. Yates et al. 2008).
- *Social participation*: Housing affects how people interact with others, for example, those in poor housing built in areas lacking adequate public transport are disadvantaged when it comes to maintaining social ties and friendships. The research literature indicates that home is a base in which people construct their sense of identity and establish connections with their friends, neighbours and wider community (e.g. Somerville 1998; Easthope 2004; Mallett 2004).
- *Membership of a community and polity*: The literature places some emphasis on the political dimension of social inclusion/exclusion. It refers to the capacity of people to have a voice in matters that affect them, including through involvement in community organisations and local government as well as less formally. There are often difficulties in accessing structures and processes that enable and facilitate effective participation (Arthurson & Jacobs 2004). Concentrated disadvantage is often associated with a lack of opportunity to participate in local community affairs. Consequently, strategies to address such disadvantage often include mechanisms to include residents in decision making about the areas they live in. As we shall see in Chapter 6, such mechanisms (partnerships, community boards etc.) have been widely used in programs to address concentrated disadvantage in the UK and some Australian states.

As indicated above, much of the literature explores the linkages between housing processes and social exclusion, perhaps reflecting the types of policy 'problems' that have generated interest in the concept. It is, of course, possible that housing processes can promote social inclusion. Work for the European Commission, for example, suggests that housing can have some effect on the distribution of resources that is to some extent independent of underlying welfare regimes.⁴ A long-held argument for home ownership, for example, is that it can offset the effects of low current incomes of many older people when they retire from the workforce, preventing or ameliorating income poverty. Further, housing policy interventions such as social housing or housing allowances may help mitigate income poverty (Stephens et al.

⁴ In this context, welfare regimes are defined as the operation of labour market institutions and tax and social security systems that determine the levels and distribution of incomes (Stephens et al. 2010).

2010). While this work focuses primarily on income poverty, the social inclusion concept offers researchers the potential to make explicit the redistributive effects of housing on incomes in interaction with a range of social, cultural and political factors.

3.3 The role of home and place

It is evident from the literature that there are two methodological paradigms: a social policy paradigm that is largely a-spatial, and a paradigm that focuses on place-based poverty (Griggs et al. 2008, p.1). In many respects, housing processes provide a link between these two approaches. Housing is both a manifestation of, and a contributor to, material poverty and non-financial aspects of disadvantage through insecurity and instability and through linkages with other indicators of precarious living (Hulse & Saugeres 2008). As we noted in the Introduction, having a home is a foundation of social inclusion. However, housing is a necessary although not a sufficient prerequisite for social inclusion. For example, people may find adequate housing that they can afford only in areas with inadequate infrastructure and services that can accentuate the problems of social disadvantage and exclusion:

Disadvantage is embedded in the distribution of and access to social networks, role models and a range of essential services necessary for inclusion and participation in society. The scars of disadvantage are not randomly distributed in either space or time (Baum & Gleeson 2010, p.136).

Housing processes shape *where* people live. Housing market factors, including access to economic resources (wealth and income) and the price/rent of housing, are critical in shaping access to place. Government policies are also important, ranging from the direct (e.g. allocation of social housing) to the indirect (planning policies). Social and cultural factors underlie the trade-offs that individuals/households make between preferred housing types and locations. These include connections to family, friends and neighbours, affinity with particular places, and more practical considerations such as access to jobs, schools and transport. Place may also have cultural and spiritual significance for residents, as has been highlighted by research into Indigenous disadvantage.

Places are physical entities as well as sites of economic transactions, social relations and cultural significance. Housing is important in constituting the physical dimension of place through factors such as design, style, type and size as well as its quality and state of repair. The people who occupy housing also constitute place through their daily practices which are affected by their economic position, social status, cultural background, age and household composition. Experience of place is thus a product of the physical environment, including housing, and the people who live there:

All people live in places, contribute to places and are affected by places. Poverty and disadvantage are mediated by place, and places are affected by the poverty or otherwise of their inhabitants. (Griggs et al. 2008, p.1)

Whether, and how much, it matters if people who are disadvantaged live in areas where there are many such people is the subject of much debate. A strong version of this is the so-called area or neighbourhood effects thesis, which postulates that living in places with a concentration of disadvantaged people can in itself create further disadvantage. This idea has had considerable currency in the US where it has been linked with ideas about a 'culture of poverty'. In Australia and the UK, the evidence for area/neighbourhood effects is accumulating but sometimes disputed (e.g. Kintrea 2008), and the proposed mechanisms that lead to such effects are less certain (Atkinson & Kintrea 2001). A different perspective is that while housing processes (market factors and/or government policies) may lead to concentrations of people

experiencing disadvantage in particular places that have poor access to opportunities such as jobs and resources such as services and facilities, the concentration of disadvantaged people does not in itself result in further disadvantage.

Whatever the causal explanation, households who are deemed to be most at risk of social exclusion often reside in neighbourhoods where opportunities are already limited. Critical factors within such neighbourhoods include poor dwelling design and the absence of good social amenities such as schools and hospitals. Arguably, while investment by governments can address concentrated social exclusion, it is through business and social investment in disadvantaged neighbourhoods that ongoing gains can be made. Such investment is necessary for households to access employment opportunities. International research indicates the importance of also investing in support to assist the most disadvantaged to get jobs, such as the long-term unemployed (de Souza Briggs 1998; Ziersch & Arthurson 2005). It also appears that opportunities to access welfare services are more important for households in deprived neighbourhoods than for the wider population (Atkinson & Kintrea 2004). There is also a body of research that has shown that the problems of disadvantaged neighbourhoods can be compounded by the attitudes and opinions of the wider community. The effects of stigmatisation can be especially pernicious in that it can both reinforce social division and further a sense of disconnection (Darcy 2007; Arthurson 2010; Jacobs et al. 2011).

Notwithstanding a growing body of research, it is difficult to find conclusive evidence to establish a clear causal link between deprived neighbourhoods and social exclusion. For example, people in such neighbourhoods may live on very low incomes and have few material resources but may be active participants in social and economic life. In the language of social capital, they may have high levels of 'bonding' social capital. However, it is difficult to measure in any precise way the impact of exogenous variables, and therefore any claim to link cause and effect can never be conclusive (Feins & Shroder 2005). It is for all the above reasons that, while we can argue that inadequate housing is symptomatic of wider social exclusion and labour differentiation, it also performs in a generative sense to exacerbate existing inequalities.

Housing and place have a central role in any strategy to promote social inclusion insofar as they provide material evidence to measure the impact of disadvantage and inequality. The effects of social inequality are often hidden and difficult to fathom, yet the neighbourhoods within cities can be viewed as symptomatic of deep social fissures. Policies that are focused on housing and place, such as housing renewal programs, are often expensive and there is often an increasing focus on individuals living within disadvantaged neighbourhood; for example, putting in place incentives for the long-term unemployed to seek work opportunities.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a commentary on some key concepts that have been used to interpret the data collected for this project. Firstly, it has been suggested that the concept of social inclusion is used as a signifier in policy discourse to denote a commitment to holistic service welfare delivery and recognition that exclusion can be attributed to a complex range of factors that can include location and personal pathologies such as poor health. Yet the major factor that impedes a household's capacity to experience a sense of inclusion may be a lack of income. In the context of housing, this effectively limits the opportunities to secure good quality housing, often forcing households to accept accommodation that is too expensive and/or unsuitable.

The second key point in this chapter is that the link between housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion is intertwined and, in terms of analysis, it is difficult to disentangle in any precise sense the ways in which causal processes generate specific effects. As we made explicit by the example of homelessness, housing processes can both shape social disadvantage but also reflect the effects of disadvantage.

Our final point focused on the role of place and its influence in establishing the conditions for social inclusion. Households who reside in disadvantaged neighbourhoods have only limited income at their disposal and this may impede their capacity to access educational opportunities and health and welfare services. In addition, they often experience a sense of stigma and social isolation. Policies to address the physical manifestation of inequality are often being eschewed in favour of more individually focused and targeted forms of intervention. As we discuss in the following chapters, together these issues present significant obstacles to policy-makers seeking to devise strategies to promote opportunities for social inclusion.

4 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN PURSUING A SOCIAL INCLUSION AGENDA

The chapter explores the perspectives of policy-makers and researchers in the two case studies on the opportunities and challenges in pursuing a social inclusion agenda through housing-related interventions. In terms of perspectives, we focus primarily on Australia where discussion of the opportunities for housing-related policies and programs as part of a social inclusion agenda is still current. Key informants in the UK have had longer exposure to the concept of social inclusion/exclusion (since 1997) and the chance to reflect on more than a decade of research and evaluation into policies and programs designed to address social exclusion. They were most interested in what had been achieved, rather than the opportunities and challenges.

The chapter proceeds as follows:

- It presents perspectives on the potential and limitations of the concept of social inclusion/exclusion generally.
- It discusses the ways in which key informants involved in policy/research and program delivery see challenges for a social inclusion agenda in the context of housing processes, in particular, market factors and government policies.
- It briefly introduces some housing-related interventions to address social exclusion or promote social inclusion in the two cases.

4.1 Potential and limitations of the concept of social inclusion/exclusion

Key informants in Australia were generally positive about the idea of social inclusion and there was strong agreement on two aspects: the value of the concept in encompassing multiple dimensions of disadvantage and the need for a 'whole of government' approach.

4.1.1 Potential value of using the concept

The concept was seen as adding value in recognising that disadvantage is entrenched and multidimensional for some people and that policies and programs have not been successful in addressing this. According to this view, policy action on a single dimension will be insufficient to address deep social exclusion. The key is to find an entry point; for example, to focus on getting people into housing which is accompanied by a range of services to address a broad range of pertinent issues that cause people to become socially excluded.

The idea is well intentioned in talking about enabling people to participate in all parts of society and drawing attention to connected aspects. That is, multifaceted rather than single dimensional in seeking to deal with complex problems. (interviewee SA)

As a corollary, those interviewed in Australia were unanimous that priority had to be given to improving service responses to people with complex and interrelated issues. They were supportive of 'whole of government' approaches to address deep social exclusion and considered that deployment of the concept had led, and is leading, to more innovative service responses, proffering many examples of collaboration across government departments and innovations in service delivery.

Many viewed social inclusion as providing opportunities for disadvantaged people to participate economically and socially. This was primarily about 'whole of government'

approaches, but it also involved governments working in conjunction with third sector organisations as service providers. It involved coordination of services to those experiencing deep social exclusion, often expressed as case management or 'wrapping services around' vulnerable people.

For the most disadvantaged people and families then there are multiple things going on that prevent them from getting on their feet and participating fully, either socially or economically. (interviewee national)

For some, promoting social inclusion had a broader meaning and did not just involve governments and the third sector in providing more effective and coordinated services but also referred to the way in which a range of people and organisations could work together to develop innovative solutions to problems in their community, sometimes seeking support from governments. According to this view, social inclusion is about a sense of belonging to the community more generally. It is about the way in which all Australians (including those involved in the third sector, businesses and government) could work together 'to get things done' rather than necessarily relying on additional government expenditure on programs and services.

Disasters like the Victorian bushfires show what you can do with high levels of belongingness. If you kept this in mind all the time you could get a lot more done without necessarily spending a lot more money. (interviewee national)

While the Australian interviewees elicited generally positive responses about social inclusion, there was some ambivalence on two counts: the malleability and politicisation of the concept. While there is a general view that social inclusion is about the opportunity to participate fully in society, the concept was often viewed as being quite malleable in that policies developed to counter this could be wide ranging. There were different perspectives on whether this was positive or not. On one hand, the malleability of the concept could prevent a clear sense of direction and guidance between competing interests and concerns; on the other hand, it had wide appeal in that it stresses both community/government and individual responsibilities and could be attractive across the political spectrum.

Social inclusion is a useful concept; whether it is the best one is another question. (interviewee Tasmania)

Some of those interviewed felt that the social inclusion agenda in Australia is still in the 'nursery stage', whereby there is a sense of waiting to see if there is fully-fledged support for it. Whether this was the case varied somewhat between jurisdictions, with most recognising that there is political will to frame policies in terms of social inclusion/exclusion as well as broad acceptance from a range of government and third sector agencies. This suggests that social inclusion is 'here to stay'.

Social inclusion is broader than other approaches, for example, homelessness policies are more inclusive. South Australia is a leader in this area. For success, social inclusion needs to have political imprimatur as it does in South Australia. (interviewee SA)

4.1.2 Some limitations and reservations

There were a number of specific reservations about the concept in an Australian context which echoed some of the debates in the literature discussed in Chapter 3. Firstly, there was questioning of whether policies framed in terms of social inclusion/exclusion are useful in addressing poverty and inequality or whether they divert attention from it. This ambivalence was reflected in some questioning of whether social inclusion/exclusion focuses on 'inclusiveness' rather than structural

inequalities. There was some suggestion that there is a lack of genuine political will to address socio-economic disadvantage in that social inclusion:

... can occlude the issue of social inequality and poverty. While poverty is the real problem, adopting the term 'social inclusion' is more palatable and less controversial [than talking about poverty]. (interviewee Tasmania)

Secondly, there was a view that while social inclusion/exclusion was important, it did not provide an all-encompassing framework and that other concepts should still be important drivers of public policy. One way of putting this was:

Openness, tolerance and diversity are important as well as social inclusion. (interviewee national)

Thirdly, questions were raised about the extent to which social inclusion/exclusion could provide guidance in the allocation of resources. It was suggested that many groups have a claim for additional resources using this framework and it is difficult for governments to know where to concentrate their resources. It was also suggested that while governments have good intentions, funding mechanisms tend to be one-off rather than recurrent and that their effectiveness is limited.

Fourthly, there was some concern that much work under the banner of social inclusion is about processes ('whole of government' approaches) and outputs (reconfiguration of policies and programs) and that a key challenge is to ensure that policies and programs can lead to improved outcomes, particularly for people who are disadvantaged.

How can you afford housing at the moment if you are in a vulnerable group, if, for instance, you have a mental illness? How can you address social problems when you leave housing to the market? (interviewee SA)

Finally, there was some discussion as to whether social inclusion would get long-term traction in policy terms, for example, with the concept of sustainability, or whether it would have a policy 'shelf life'.

4.1.3 Learning from the UK

The UK case study illustrates that adoption of a concept such as social inclusion/exclusion does have a clear political life cycle. Following the election of the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government in May 2010, there is no longer any reference to social exclusion. The UK interviews indicated, however, that there had been a decreasing emphasis on the concept as a driver of public policies after 2004 when the Social Exclusion Unit was moved from the Cabinet Office to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, where it had less of an activist and more of a monitoring role. Based on this experience, it may prove difficult to sustain support for social inclusion/exclusion over a longer term. In other words, the 'window of opportunity' to reconfigure public policies and engage in new ways of working may be quite short.

The UK experience did, however, indicate that the concept was useful in drawing attention to the variety of ways in which people can be socially excluded. In effect, it is useful because it encapsulates various dimensions of inequality, rather than being one-dimensional like the term 'poverty' which is only about income deprivation. As in Australia, they saw the multidimensionality of the concept and the way in which it can stimulate coordinated government action to tackle disadvantage as being positive.

For our purposes, we looked at this in terms of four dimensions: being able to participate in society in terms of consumption, that is, to do with economic forces, cash poverty and so on; participation in terms of having a productive role that is to do with work ... There are other things that give people a role in

society, including their social interaction and whether they are isolated or not, and also whether people are included in decision making—political participation at one level or another. (interviewee UK)

A clear benefit seen in the UK context was the deployment of the concept to allocate very substantial additional resources, and ring-fencing of resources, to address disadvantage both in terms of both people-focused policies and programs and those directed at disadvantage places. However, there was some concern that social exclusion had become regarded as an outcome in itself rather than enabling attention to the processes that create inequality and disadvantage. In other words, people were regarded as being excluded because of where they live and/or their own personal characteristics which diverted attention from more structural issues such as changes in the labour or housing markets. It was suggested that this indicated some strengthening of the neoliberal view that the main problem is ‘welfare dependency’ rather than poverty and inequality.

Social exclusion has come to be understood in the UK as an outcome rather than a process, and how people have got into that situation then leaves an issue for debate and discussion, and what is increasingly dominating policy understanding about why people are socially excluded is that it’s essentially the fault of the neighbourhoods in which they live, or it’s their own fault; it’s not because of structural determinants. I think that’s where we’ve ended up now. (interviewee UK)

4.2 Housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion:

some challenges

Key informants had a variety of perspectives on the ways in which housing processes reflect and reinforce socio-economic disadvantage.

4.2.1 Homelessness as part of a continuum

There was strong agreement that homelessness manifested in rough sleeping is an extreme form of social exclusion:

At the extreme end, if you are homeless then you can’t wash or dress yourself, which leads to a commonly accepted form of social exclusion. Not having somewhere to live is at the basis of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, at the bottom, so you need this to move up. (interviewee SA)

In both countries, however, definitions of homelessness employed are broader than rough sleeping and interviewees indicated that housing processes were a contributing factor to homelessness, for example, through displacement of people by loss of some types of accommodation in inner city areas, such as rooming houses. However, homelessness often involves more than a lack of housing and there were other contributing factors such as domestic and family violence, mental health issues and substance abuse. In other words, homelessness is best seen as a manifestation of complex and multifaceted social disadvantage and is ideally suited to a social inclusion/exclusion approach which includes effective case management involving multiple agencies.

Some interviewees identified a risk of delineating between the ‘homeless’ and ‘not homeless’ populations as though they were different groups of people, with different personal characteristics and lifestyles. Governments might focus on increasingly small sections of the ‘most excluded’ population, primarily those sleeping rough and/or those who are the clients of homelessness services, rather than looking at processes of disadvantage more broadly. The risk of this occurring was highlighted in work in the

UK which indicated that social exclusion is best seen as a gradient (Hills et al. 2009, 2010). In this sense, poor quality, unaffordable or inappropriate housing can lead to social exclusion, as well as a lack of housing, often allied with other factors, manifested in rough sleeping.

4.2.2 Housing affordability and lack of affordable housing supply

Many of the Australian interviewees raised two issues which have been at the centre of housing policy debates in Australia: difficulty in affording housing in contemporary housing markets, and lack of supply of affordable housing.

Deteriorating housing affordability was seen as a problem for households wanting to buy and to rent. Home ownership is often associated with social inclusion but there was a suggestion that too much focus on home ownership can drive processes of social exclusion, with some suggesting that it is not always the bolster against social exclusion that is commonly assumed. One interviewee suggested that the focus on home ownership in Australia represents a social integration view of social inclusion in much the same way as Levitas (2005) identified a social integration view of social inclusion centred on employment in the UK.

People with housing are feeling good about their personal wealth. Others can't get into the market. Some are focusing on renting as they can't get in. It's a huge shift in Australian culture. (interviewee SA)

As a number of the Australian interviewees pointed out, the real issue with affordability is the effect of paying high prices/rents on disposable income. However, most of those interviewed were primarily concerned with the affordability of rental housing rather than home ownership. They pointed out that, in some cases, too little income is left after paying for rental housing to afford food and other necessities of life, thus fuelling poverty and, in combination with other factors, leading to social exclusion. The degree of financial hardship was affected not only by rent levels but also by the level of income from wages, income support or a combination of two. As was pointed out by some interviewees, levels of income support affect housing circumstances but, in the long term, inability to buy will put pressure on the income support system which depends on high rates of home ownership in older age.

Australian interviewees also pointed to the challenges posed by an acknowledged lack of supply of rental housing that those on low incomes can afford. Some saw income support and tax policies as critical in shaping demand and supply for housing, and hence the level of prices and rents. Housing policies per se were seen as quite limited in their ability to address these wider issues.

The fundamental policy lever is the supply side in all the tenures. There are a number of policy levers working contrary to social inclusion measures, for example, negative gearing is pushing in the wrong direction, plus the lack of support to get people into home ownership, and lack of money spent on social housing. The private rental market also works against social inclusion at the moment in terms of the quality of accommodation and lack of security of tenure. (interviewee Victoria)

4.2.3 Housing processes and the spatial restructuring of Australian cities

In addition to the two issues of housing affordability and lack of supply of affordable housing, several other issues were raised. Firstly, the increasing spatial-social polarisation in Australian cities was seen by many interviewees as contributing to social exclusion. This was not only about lower-income households being displaced to less well-serviced areas but also about a trend for some more affluent households to withdraw into 'gated communities' or behind high fences. The primary concern,

however, was about the spatial consequences of social exclusion, referring to concentrations of disadvantaged people in particular areas that were seen as 'resource poor' and lacking in opportunities for work or study.

Many Australian interviewees highlighted the ways in which housing markets had restructured such that lower-income and vulnerable households were being displaced from inner city areas with good transport, jobs, services and facilities to outer suburbs, and peri-urban and regional areas, which were less well serviced on all these dimensions. This was a particular issue for people with disabilities who faced greater challenges in accessing services.

Housing and place can have a negative or positive effect on access to services, particularly for people with limited mobility. Difficulty in access is a major disincentive to get to services. (interviewee SA)

They suggested that purchasing housing in the city, which is close to services, is inaccessible for people on lower incomes, but also that there are very few units with affordable rents in these areas except for those provided by government or not-for-profit agencies, despite often high levels of private investment in new apartments.

The numbers of apartments have gone up in the city but the level of affordability has gone down. (interviewee SA)

A second and related issue raised by most interviewees in both case studies concerned concentrations of disadvantaged people. This was seen as partly about housing market failure but also about ways in which government housing policies could exacerbate social exclusion, for example, increased targeting of social housing to people with high and complex needs who lacked other options. While this might be designed to improve outcomes for individuals/households, housing people in what were already areas of concentrated disadvantage on older public housing estates could exacerbate social exclusion. For some respondents it was clear that localities associated with public housing suffer the most, not only in terms of opportunities and resources but also through stigma and negative attitudes to certain places that exacerbate social exclusion.

You can't place vulnerable people in under-resourced or violent neighbourhoods. You need communities with higher levels of community engagement, opportunities to belong to a range of community groups, plus opportunities for relationships to flourish, as well as access to general resources. (interviewee SA)

Finally, a number of issues were raised about the way in which government policies influence housing markets through planning processes, which may have positive or negative effects on social inclusion/exclusion. One view expressed in the Australian case study is that land use planning has resulted in disadvantaged suburbs built on greenfield sites that have been 'a total failure'. On the other hand, planning was raised as a key policy area in which governments can make a difference to social inclusion. To make communities work, it is essential to have transport and access to other resources. This is often hard to implement in practice, but some interviewees noted there is now more awareness of the need to ensure that critical infrastructure is in place, such as schools and health services.

4.2.4 Housing processes, location and employment

A further and related issue raised by many interviewees in both case studies was the link between housing, unemployment/worklessness and social exclusion. Having a home and being able to participate in paid work, education or training was seen as being at the heart of a social inclusion/exclusion agenda.

For those who are able to work, that is where the best social inclusion outcome is achieved ... In our culture you are measured by your work, it's a way of developing friends and support networks, and it's the best route out of poverty. (interviewee Victoria)

There were a number of ways of looking at this issue, including the labour market restructuring, which resulted in a spatial mismatch between areas with jobs and areas with housing, such as some regional areas that had employment but a lack of affordable rental housing for households wanting to take up work. A major concern, and an issue of some contention in both policy and research debates, was whether social housing provides a foundation for people to move into work, enabling economic and social participation, or whether there is something about social housing that traps people out of work over and above the characteristics of the people who live there. One type of explanation is about resident experiences and cultural expectations.

The communities here in Tasmania who live on public housing estates are very family focused, for some households being out of work is the norm, the world of employment is not their normal milieu. (interviewee Tasmania)

Other reasons suggested for low rates of employment included the interaction of the tax/benefits/rents system which provides a disincentive to work for some social housing tenants (particularly in public housing in Australia), discrimination by employers against those living in particular areas, and industrial restructuring which meant that manufacturing employment had declined or been relocated elsewhere. This issue also resonated in the UK context with interviewees raising some additional explanations for high unemployment and low rates of worklessness among social housing tenants. These include the cumulative effects of long-term and multidimensional disadvantage on ability to work, difficulty of moving within social housing for employment reasons, and a locally bounded concept of area in which to live and work.

4.3 Housing-related interventions relevant to a social inclusion/exclusion framework

Finally in this chapter, we introduce some of the main types of housing-related interventions that were seen by interviewees as being relevant to the social inclusion/exclusion agenda in the two countries, giving examples of each. It is not our intention to scope the field completely or to provide extensive detail. Further detail about individual policies and programs is provided in Chapters 5 and 6 in the discussion of the effectiveness of these approaches.

Although the concept of social inclusion/exclusion has had considerable traction in Australia, some governments have used alternative terminology. Within the two case studies, the South Australian government (2002 onwards), the Australian government (2007 onwards) and the Tasmanian government (2008 onwards) have deployed the term 'social inclusion'. The Victorian government (1999–2010) referred to its strategy for a 'whole of government' approach to address social disadvantage as 'A Fairer Victoria' and the Australian government (1996–2007) had a 'Stronger Families and Communities Strategy'. In the UK, the selected housing-related interventions are those that applied to England, as other parts of the UK developed their own strategies, policies and programs after devolution (Percy-Smith 2000, p.2).

4.3.1 Types of housing-related interventions that contribute to social inclusion/exclusion

In considering the main types of housing-related interventions, we draw on the categorisation of deep, concentrated or wide social exclusion which we discussed in

Chapter 3. We also draw on a useful conceptual schema for examining policy interventions developed in work for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in the UK. This work suggests a policy matrix with two dimensions: the major focus (people or place) *and* the intended impact of policies (people or place) (Griggs et al. 2008, p.2). In addition, this work suggests that more comprehensive interventions are possible which try to improve outcomes for people and places at the same time through different types of interventions which might be most effective in combination (Griggs et al. 2008, p.3). Table 2 below enables a comparison between the two countries in terms of both types of interventions and particular examples.

Table 2: Types of housing-related policies and programs and examples, Australia and UK

<i>Type of housing-related policies and programs</i>	<i>Examples from Australia (federal, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania)</i>	<i>Examples from the UK (England)</i>
<i>Deep social exclusion</i>		
Homelessness prevention and intervention	Homelessness strategies including rough sleepers and chronically homeless and Indigenous households.	Homelessness strategies including rough sleepers and chronically homeless.
At risk populations	Indigenous households (Closing the Gap) 'At risk' households nominated in homelessness strategies Tenancy sustainment programs	Public Service Agreement 16 (socially excluded adults) Supporting People program
Behaviours associated with disadvantage having an impact on place	Anti-social behaviour strategies	Anti-social behaviour orders Family intervention projects
<i>Concentrated social exclusion</i>		
Targeting services to people in disadvantaged places	Communities for Children Centrelink place-based trials. Family Centred Employment Program Local Connections to Work	Sure Start
Comprehensive area-based improvement	Victorian Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy State-based neighbourhood/ community renewal projects	New Deal for Communities National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal
<i>Wide social exclusion</i>		
Additional investment in social housing	Additional investment in social housing (Nation Building and Jobs Plan)	Additional investment in social housing
Improving housing quality and standard of repair of social housing	Repairs to public housing (Nation Building)	Decent Homes Standard
Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing	National Rental Affordability Scheme Inclusionary zoning for affordable housing	Additional investment in social/affordable housing Section 106 Agreements ¹
Functioning housing markets	Housing Affordability Fund	Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders

Note: the table excludes income support and tax measures

¹ Section 106 Agreements under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 refer to legally binding agreements with the owner/developer for the provision of a component of affordable housing (in this case) as a condition of granting planning permission.

4.3.2 Housing-related interventions to addressing deep social exclusion

In both countries, there are a range of housing-related policies and programs that address deep social exclusion; they focus on people and aim to improve outcomes for people. This is sometimes stated quite explicitly. For example, the South Australian Social Inclusion Initiative is self-described as a 'people priority' approach to policy development (Government of South Australia 2009, p.9). The main groups that have been targeted for housing-related interventions are people who are homeless, Indigenous people (Australia) and other 'at risk' groups.

Homelessness

In both countries there has been a strong emphasis on preventing and addressing homelessness as a manifestation of deep social exclusion. In Australia, this has been manifest in the Australian government's White Paper on Homelessness, *The Road Home* (Australian Government 2008) and the homelessness strategies, plans and programs of state/territory governments (South Australian Social Inclusion Board 2003; Government of South Australia 2004; DHS 2010; DHHS 2010) as well as specific-purpose funding agreements and new governance arrangements that we discuss in Chapter 5. In many respects, preventing and addressing homelessness is the most worked example of the social inclusion agenda in Australia, and all of the interviewees talked about homelessness in the context of social inclusion.

Because the homelessness strategies were developing perhaps at the same time as the social inclusion agenda, I think that it is a very useful, potentially practical, or applied, example of the agenda. (interviewee national)

In the UK, the incoming Labour government in 1997 made rough sleeping an early priority for its social exclusion agenda for England (ODPM 2003a). Subsequently, a national homelessness strategy (*More Than a Roof*) was developed. This was accompanied by legislative change via the *Homelessness Act (2002)*⁵ to strengthen local authority assistance available to people who were homeless or threatened with homelessness, with more of a focus on prevention than previously (ODPM 2003a). This led to some controversy about the role of prevention vis-à-vis the statutory rights of homeless people to assistance (Pawson 2009), which we discuss in Chapter 5. The homelessness strategy was subsequently updated and, as in Australia, was the subject of specific governance and funding arrangements during the period of the Labour government. The Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government subsequently affirmed its commitment to a strategic approach to addressing rough sleeping/street homelessness although without deploying the social inclusion/exclusion concept (DCLG 2011).⁶

Indigenous Australians

All Australian governments agreed in 2008 to a comprehensive and long-term strategy to eliminate 'within a generation' the considerable gap between the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people compared to non-Indigenous people⁷ in a landmark National Indigenous Reform Agreement. The Closing the Gap strategy aims at eliminating or narrowing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

⁵ This legislation covered England and Wales. Scotland has its own legislation and policies on homelessness.

⁶ In October 2010, the incoming Conservative/Liberal Democrat government established a Ministerial Working Group on preventing and tackling homelessness which reported in July 2011 (DCLG 2011).

⁷ Ministerial Council for Federal Financial Relations, National Agreements, http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/national_agreements.aspx, last accessed 6 April 2011.

in six areas related to life expectancy and childhood mortality rates, education and employment. There are a number of elements to this strategy that concern housing, including the priority given to reducing homelessness through the federal and state homelessness strategies discussed above and improved access to mainstream social housing. In addition, there is particular emphasis on improving housing conditions in remote communities, including significant overcrowding and severe housing shortage.

'At risk' groups

In both countries there has also been a focus on other 'at risk' groups who are seen as having particular needs over and above their housing circumstances. In Australia, three specific groups are identified as being at risk in terms of homelessness in addition to achieving the headline targets of the White Paper: chronically homeless people (rough sleepers); private and public tenants who need support to help sustain their tenancies (including advocacy, financial counselling and referral services); and assistance for people leaving child protection, jail and health facilities, to access and maintain stable, affordable housing.⁸

In England, the Supporting People program (2003–09) aimed to provide housing-related support to vulnerable people in order to prevent homelessness, hospitalisation or institutional care, and to help a smooth transition to independent living (ODPM 2004b). There was also an agreement with local government about the priority to be given to four client groups: adult offenders under probation supervision; adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities; care leavers at age 19; and adults in contact with secondary mental health services (DCLG 2010b). The program appears to have incorporated many aspects of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) in Australia (now superseded by new arrangements following the White Paper on Homelessness discussed above). Also in England, family intervention projects aim to work with the most challenging families in order to tackle social exclusion related issues such as anti-social behaviour, youth crime, school absenteeism, drug and alcohol addiction, domestic violence, poor mental health and intergenerational disadvantage (National Centre for Social Research 2010).

Finally, in both countries, there are examples of initiatives to work with the most challenging families to address some of the behavioural manifestations of deep disadvantage that not only affect individuals but also have the potential for causing public disquiet and concern. As such, although they focus on people, they can also be seen as one means of improving place outcomes. These approaches often include attempts to address anti-social behaviour, such as anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) of the UK Labour government and lower-key strategies in Australia that are directed at some people living in social housing (Habibis et al. 2007).

In summary, in both cases, there was a strong focus on ameliorating disadvantage for very disadvantaged people in specific groups including 'rough sleepers' and chronically homeless people, people exiting correctional facilities or state care, and people seen as being at risk in terms of child protection issues. The policies/programs in respect of Indigenous disadvantage in Australia differ in that they are inherently about addressing inequality as well as preventing and ameliorating disadvantage for individuals/families. In both countries, issues of homelessness and/or insecure housing experienced by groups such as recent migrants and refugees and people

⁸ Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/progserv/homelessness/national_partnership_agreement/Pages/NAHomelessness.aspx, last accessed 18 April 2011.

with physical and intellectual disabilities appear to be regarded primarily as discrete policy areas.

4.3.3 Addressing concentrated social exclusion

The Australian government's social inclusion strategy, *A Stronger, Fairer Australia*, identified as a priority for action 'breaking the cycle of entrenched and multiple disadvantage in particular neighbourhoods and communities' (Australian Government 2009a, p.57). It was recognised that while policies with a 'people focus' would assist in addressing the concentration of disadvantage, additional measures were required, including more effective mainstream services and community-wide initiatives that built on community strengths and existing governance structures (Australian Government 2009a, p.58). In the UK, the social exclusion agenda from the outset reflected a concern with what were seen as largely dysfunctional council housing estates (Social Exclusion Unit 1998). Area-based initiatives that centred largely on these housing estates were a defining component of the Labour government's social exclusion strategy.

There are two distinct approaches to addressing concentrated social exclusion: strategies that target disadvantaged areas as a means of connecting with, and improving services to, 'at risk' people, and comprehensive area-based initiatives.

Targeted strategies to access and improve services for disadvantaged people living in the most disadvantaged places

In both countries, federal/national governments had major policy initiatives designed to improve the life chances of children living in disadvantaged families. A primary means of accessing these children has been through programs that target families living in disadvantaged areas. In Australia, the Communities for Children initiative aimed to enhance early childhood development through establishing prevention and early intervention programs for families with children under 12 years at risk of disadvantage, who lived in 45 disadvantaged locations (Edwards et al. 2009). In England, the Sure Start program announced in 1999 aimed at assisting infants, pre-school children and their parents in up to 500 very poor neighbourhoods in the 80 most deprived local authority areas (Power 2009). Sure Start reflected a high-profile commitment by the government to eliminate child poverty (Stewart et al. 2009, p.10). Although these involve improvement to services in particular locations, they generally take little account of the housing processes that result in concentrations of disadvantage.

There are also in both countries national initiatives that use location as a focus for improving access to employment and reducing the number of workless. For example, the Australian government has a number of location-based initiatives to trial different means of improving services to people with multiple disadvantages to assist them in moving into employment. These include Centrelink place-based trials in areas such as Fairfield in Sydney and Broadmeadows in Melbourne (Darcy et al. 2009), mobile offices, and three sites in which Family Centred Employment Projects are being operated.⁹ A further example is Local Connections to Work which is based on the New Zealand Community Links model and is being implemented in four sites across Australia (Horn 2010).¹⁰ These are not housing-related interventions per se but rather target the most deprived areas as a means of improving services and connecting with the most disadvantaged people.

⁹ Broadmeadows (Victoria), Goodna (Queensland), and Mansfield Park/Angle Park (South Australia).

¹⁰ Frankston (Victoria), Campsie (New South Wales), Ipswich (Queensland), and Elizabeth (South Australia).

Comprehensive place-based approaches designed to improve outcomes for people and places

In Australia, place-based programs, which are intended to improve disadvantaged neighbourhoods and outcomes for people who live there, have been developed primarily by state governments. Arguably, this is because the effects of concentrated disadvantage are more visible at this level and it is state governments that are responsible for the delivery of services, facilities and infrastructure, as well as dealing with manifestations of disadvantage, such as crime in public places. They also have an ongoing responsibility for the public housing estates which comprise some of the most disadvantaged areas.

Most states have programs to improve concentrations of disadvantage, particularly those associated with large public housing estates, many of which predate the Australian government's social inclusion strategy. Victoria implemented a Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and program from 2002, eventually encompassing 21 sites (NRU 2008, p.1). There have also been selected comprehensive renewal projects in the other two states. In South Australia, the main examples are the Westwood Urban Renewal Project (The Parks) (South Australian Social Inclusion Board 2005) and Playford Alive, a partnership between the state government, the City of Playford and the local community. In Tasmania, the Bridgewater Urban Renewal Project was a high-profile place-based approach (Cica 2007). The Victorian Labor government (1999–2010) implemented a parallel series of community renewal projects in areas which were not based on social housing estates as part of its 'A Fairer Victoria' strategy (Government of Victoria 2005).

Comprehensive place-based approaches were a key part of the national social exclusion agenda in the UK. The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) was launched in 2001¹¹ with the aim of closing the gap between England's most deprived neighbourhoods and other neighbourhoods (Social Exclusion Unit 2001, p.8). It built on, and incorporated, a comprehensive program to improve the most deprived areas in England, the New Deal for Communities (NDC) which had been launched in 1998 (DETR 1998, p.1). These two programs were in some respects the latest in a long line of area-based initiatives in the UK but were intended to be more comprehensive.

In summary, there are two types of interventions that aim to address concentrated social exclusion in the two countries. The first comprise programs to improve outcomes for people through more accessible and effective services in places where there is a concentration of disadvantaged people, many of which have focused on improving life opportunities for children and 'breaking the cycle' of disadvantage. In Australia, most place-based initiatives are of this type. The second involves comprehensive area-based initiatives that aim to improve outcomes for people and places through the cumulative effects of policies and programs focused on place.

4.3.4 Addressing wide social exclusion

As noted in Section 4.3.2, interviewees in Australia saw issues around rental housing as being of most significance to a social inclusion agenda. There are two housing-related approaches that address aspects of wide social exclusion: improving the supply of social and affordable housing, and addressing housing market failure more broadly.

¹¹ Previously in 2000 the Blair Labour government had launched the Neighbourhood Renewal Program, but this was subsequently wrapped up in the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.

Improving the supply of social and affordable housing

In Australia, there is recognition of housing market failure, particularly in respect of inadequate new supply of affordable housing (National Housing Supply Council 2010) and the lack of affordable and available rental housing for lower-income households (Wulff et al. 2011). Strategies to address this include base level funding under the National Affordable Housing Agreement 2008 and substantial additional funding for two years for social housing construction and repair following the global financial crisis. The intergovernmental agreement for the latter includes a social housing reform agenda,¹² which reflects the priority given to addressing homelessness and improving access for Indigenous people, as well as job creation and participation in employment. In addition, the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), mentioned by some Australian interviewees, could be regarded as addressing wide social exclusion. It recognises that some people cannot access rental housing because it is not available at prices that they can afford. The scheme subsidises construction of new rental units that are let at sub-market rents to eligible households.

In the UK, there was also recognition of a lack of housing, including for rental in the early 2000s (Barker 2004) which led to considerable investment in new social/affordable housing. There was also a strong focus on improving the standard of social housing as part of the social exclusion agenda. The Decent Home Standard was set by the Blair government in 2000 with a target that it would 'ensure that all social housing meets set standards of decency by 2010' (HCA 2011). This was to be done in stages with clear targets along the way and most of the improvement was to take place in the most deprived local authority areas.

There are also measures in both Australia and the UK to increase affordable housing in more advantaged areas, such as inclusionary zoning (as in South Australia) and Section 106s (in England). These represent a different type of area-based approach that is intended to improve outcomes for people (access to well-located areas) and places (more diverse communities). They are typically the responsibility of lower levels of government and represent a potentially valuable means of promoting social inclusion. However, to the degree that they promote inclusion of disadvantaged people into more advantaged communities, and as mentioned by some of those interviewed, they are often controversial.

Addressing broader housing market factors

The Australian government's Housing Affordability Fund was mentioned by a very small number of those interviewed. It supports the reform of planning and development assessment processes, including through funding of infrastructure, as a response to problems of affordability and supply, but this is not clearly connected to the social inclusion agenda.¹³

In the UK, there was an attempt to address broader housing market issues through the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinder. These attempted to reinvigorate housing markets in some regions in the Midlands and North of England which were failing. It is of note that these areas had much higher levels of social and private rental than general, including hard-to-let and vacant social housing (Leather et al. 2007).

¹² Council of Australian Governments (2009) National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan: Building Prosperity for the Future and Supporting Jobs Now: Schedule C, http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2009-02-05/docs/20090205_nation_building_jobs.pdf, last accessed 6 April 2011.

¹³ FAHCSIA (2011) Housing Affordability Fund, <http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/housing/progserv/affordability/haf/Pages/default.aspx>, last accessed 7 April 2011.

In brief, housing-related interventions to address housing market failure focused mainly on additional funding for new social housing and improving the quality of existing social housing. There are limited examples of approaches to address more directly the ways in which housing processes contribute to spatial inequalities.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has highlighted a number of ways in which those interviewed considered that housing processes can affect social inclusion/exclusion through experiences of home and place. The ways in which households come to live in housing in particular places, the nature of occupancy, the quality and cost of housing, and whether households want (and are able) to remain or leave, all centre on housing processes. Government policies can affect each of these through a range of measures including the allocation of social housing, measures to improve housing quality, and the relative amenity of different areas (including transport infrastructure) as factored into house prices and rents.

The social inclusion/exclusion agenda in both countries placed considerable priority on addressing deep social exclusion. There was also a priority given to concentrated social exclusion, although some difference in emphasis. In Australia, place-based initiatives have mainly involved projects that focus on improving services to people with complex needs living in disadvantaged areas, with the notable exception of neighbourhood renewal projects/programs in three states. In England, comprehensive place-based approaches were an important part of the social exclusion agenda. In all cases, the areas which are the subject of these initiatives typically have a concentration of social housing. Interventions in regard to wide social exclusion are more limited and the HMR Pathfinders in the UK are the only example raised in the interviews of a place-based program designed to improve place-based outcomes.

5 KEY LEARNING: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF HOUSING-RELATED POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN ADDRESSING DEEP SOCIAL EXCLUSION

In the next two chapters, we present key learning about the effectiveness of housing-related interventions which have been associated with the social inclusion/exclusion agenda. Chapter 5 distils key learning from policies and programs that have the primary aim of addressing deep social exclusion through improving outcomes for people, and Chapter 6 does the same in respect of policies and programs that aim to address concentrated social exclusion through place-based initiatives.

In this chapter, we focus mainly on homelessness, as investigation of service linkages for Indigenous households is the subject of another AHURI study (Milligan et al. 2010). In Australia, there is little formal evaluation material about policies and programs and we rely primarily on the perspectives of those interviewed for early learning about their effectiveness. In the UK, we have the benefit of some longer-term evaluation. It is beyond the scope of the chapter to assess each of the interventions individually or to undertake a systematic review since these would be enormous tasks. Rather, the chapter identifies some key learning based on an enormous but somewhat patchy policy literature and the insights of policy-makers and researchers.

We discuss key learning about interventions to address deep social exclusion through the example of homelessness on six areas:

1. Strategic approaches.
2. Resources.
3. Governance arrangements.
4. Innovation (new service models).
5. Outcomes.
6. Challenges.

5.1 Strategic approaches

Interviewees in both the case studies viewed a more strategic approach to preventing and addressing homelessness associated with deployment of social inclusion/exclusion as good public policy. In Australia, interviewees talked of the importance of the Australian government's White Paper on Homelessness and state-based homelessness strategies and plans in enhancing an understanding of the multiple and linked causes of homelessness as an acute form of deep social exclusion.

The importance of homelessness strategies is to emphasise the need to assist those who can be the hardest to assist. I think that it's actually important in that sense. Also, homelessness strategies have emphasised the importance of sustained effort with individuals, recognising that people might need long-term support in order to participate, but also in terms of coordination between services, between agencies of government, and between levels of government. (interviewee national)

A social inclusion perspective enabled better understanding of the ways in which the different dimensions of disadvantage are manifest, and link together, with cumulative consequences for people who are homeless. This was important in highlighting the need to rethink and reconfigure interventions and to prevent homelessness, as well as

address homelessness once it has occurred. It also highlighted the range of interventions that may be required to address acute or chronic homelessness, starting with the particular needs of the person concerned. Further, while homelessness always includes a housing issue, housing interventions by themselves are not sufficient to address deep social exclusion. They must be coordinated with other means of enabling people to be included in economic and social life.

For those who are able to work, that is where the best social inclusion outcome is achieved. Many homeless people have the capability to be employed in a few years time, and that is what they aspire to. They have been constrained by a ... reactive approach which is inadequate. In our culture, you are measured by your work. It's a way of developing friendships and support networks, and it is the best route out of poverty. (interviewee Victoria)

Interviewees in Australia were generally enthusiastic about strategic approaches to preventing and addressing homelessness, not least because they focused attention on, and generated additional resources for, people who had the most chronic or acute needs who had been 'too hard to reach' with conventional mainstream policies. There was general support for the Australian government's strategy as outlined in the White Paper and the headline targets of halving overall homelessness by 2020 and offering supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it by 2020 (Australian Government 2008).

In particular, there was a positive response to seeing homelessness not just as a discrete and marginalised policy area, but one which linked with mainstream policies in education, employment, health and housing.

Social inclusion is a positive influence in policy development which has moved from crisis in homelessness to more sustainable outcomes. It's a fantastic shift in the way you deliver services. (interviewee SA)

As indicated in Chapter 4, the states have developed homelessness strategies that in part predate and in part respond to the new federal priority on homelessness. The key elements identified by interviewees are presented in Box 1.

Box 1: Strategic approaches to homelessness in three Australian states

South Australia

Homelessness was one of the first priorities of the South Australian Social Inclusion Board when it was set up in 2002, with a strong emphasis on assisting rough sleepers and chronically homeless people. Over time, there has been consideration of how different groups become homeless, such as young people, Indigenous people and families with pre-school children, and the different interventions that may be required. For example, strategic interdepartmental partnerships have been developed to engage with children and families identified as at risk of homelessness and child protection issues, both of which are factors in social exclusion. Different approaches have been developed to try to intervene earlier rather than just when the families are at crisis point.

Victoria

In Victoria, the homelessness crisis response had centred on transitional housing for more than a decade, but had been found not to provide long enough, or deep enough, support for some homeless people. Instead a life-stage approach is being trialled that recognises that homelessness differs between groups, such that the needs of young people are, for example, quite different from those of the chronically homeless. Flagship projects are being piloted for five different lifestyle stages which involve a more holistic approach to identifying needs and accessing support. For example, support to homeless families would concentrate on keeping

children in school, making sure health checks are done, and help with finding employment. There are three prongs to the new approach. Firstly, placing services where 'at risk' people are more likely to visit, such as community health and Centrelink agencies, to assist in early detection and intervention. Secondly, providing more private rental brokerage rather than automatically accommodating homeless people in public housing which is not appropriate for some. Thirdly, new approaches are being piloted to try and link homeless people with employment.

Tasmania

Homelessness, along with literacy/numeracy, was the first area for action under Tasmania's Social Inclusion Strategy (Adams 2009) and strategic development was also influenced by a report by the founder of Common Ground (Haggerty 2008). A Tasmanian Homelessness Plan (DHHS 2010) was subsequently developed following community consultation. It emphasises prevention and early intervention and revolves around specialist housing services delivered by the community sector and based on an Integrated Continuum of Support model. The key components are case management and interim accommodation, with support services following the person rather than being tied to the property.

Sources: South Australian Social Inclusion Board (2003); Government of South Australia (2004); DHS (2010); DHHS (2010); interviews with key informants.

Many of those interviewed in Australia saw strategic approaches to homelessness as being important in connecting what had previously been separate policy areas of homelessness and housing, each with its own policy framework and funding stream. This meant that rather than seeing homeless people as a separate and marginalised group, strategic approaches enable homelessness to be conceptualised as part of a continuum as reflected, for example, in the South Australian continuum on homelessness/housing (Government of South Australia 2004, p.3). It also highlighted that homeless people are not a homogenous group and that assistance has to be customised for different groups, which may entail linking with mainstream services in different ways.

The UK case study illustrates also the value of strategic approaches to homelessness in focusing political attention and resources on deep social exclusion. The homelessness strategy of 2002 had six objectives, including reducing rough sleeping by two-thirds and reducing the use of bed and breakfast hotels for homeless families with children, the latter reflecting growing recognition of, and concern about, family homelessness (Wilson 2010, p.6). The strategy was subsequently updated (ODPM 2005b) indicating a priority for preventing homelessness and reducing the use of temporary accommodation for homeless people. Specifically it aimed to halve the number of households living in temporary accommodation by 2010 (Wilson 2010, p.7). In 2008, the Labour government committed to ending rough sleeping in London and England as a whole by 2012 (Pawson 2009), a commitment maintained by the incoming Conservative/Liberal Democrat government (DCLG 2011).

What distinguished the UK strategy from the Australian ones was the use of legislation (in England) regarding the role and responsibilities of local authorities in respect of homelessness. This approach was not new as local councils were first given statutory responsibilities in respect of homelessness in 1977. Key to this approach was 'acceptances' of people for whom the council had statutory responsibilities which, for example, excluded people who were 'intentionally homeless'.

While there was strong support for preventing homelessness, the implementation of the strategy attracted some controversy. There was concern that provision of a wider

range of 'housing options' to prevent homelessness, such as 'top-up' rent supplements and rent deposit schemes to enable access to private rental accommodation, should not 'impose a barrier to the statutory safety net for those entitled to rely on it' (Shelter 2007, p.3). In other words, such assistance was regarded by some as 'gate keeping' by local authorities to lower their 'acceptances' of homeless people, which in practical terms often meant priority access to the social housing managed by local authorities (Pawson 2009).

Notwithstanding this controversy, what was learnt during this period appears to be the need for more diversity in ways in which councils could discharge their responsibilities, for example, through a combination of intensive support (using Supporting People program funding) and accessing longer-term rather than temporary housing such as bed and breakfast hotels. While there were attempts to improve access by homeless people to longer-term social housing, other approaches were also trialled, including assistance in accessing private rental housing, such as rent supplement and rent deposit schemes similar to those that were introduced in Australia in the early 1980s (Pawson 2009).

Interviewees described the period to 2005, and sometimes to 2008, as one of great optimism in which there was increased policy attention to homelessness and additional resources. The learning from this appears to be the need to sustain enthusiasm and momentum from governments over the longer term, as new priorities emerge, demanding attention and resources.

While the strategies in both countries place considerable emphasis on preventing homelessness, this was primarily seen as identifying people at risk of homelessness based on their personal characteristics and information about their living circumstances, rather than addressing structural factors that may precipitate homelessness. There are some exceptions: for example, the Australian government funded a review of the linkages between residential legislation and homelessness (National Shelter 2010) and the Tasmanian government, in its recent review of tenancy legislation, started to raise questions about the link between regulation and problems in accessing and remaining in affordable housing (Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading Tasmania 2009).

5.2 Resources

In both the case studies, governments had invested in homelessness prevention and intervention as a result of the strategic directions discussed above. These resources were typically provided within a framework which set specific targets for lower levels of government, including new accountability mechanisms.

In Australia, the mechanisms for allocating resources are National Partnership Agreements under the National Affordability Housing Agreement 2009 (NAHA). These provide federal funding to the states and include agreed goals, objectives/targets, funding, outcomes and accountability requirements. The resources allocated indicate two priorities in addressing deep social exclusion: the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness¹⁴ with funding of \$1.1 billion over five years (to June 2013) and the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing with a commitment of \$5.5 billion over 10 years.¹⁵

¹⁴ Council of Australian Governments, National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, http://www.coag.gov.au/intergov_agreements/federal_financial_relations/docs/national_partnership/national_partnership_on_homelessness.pdf, last accessed 6 April 2011.

¹⁵ Council of Australian Governments, National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, http://www.coag.gov.au/intergov_agreements/federal_financial_relations/docs/national_partnership/national_partnership_on_remote_indigenous_housing.rtf, last accessed 6 April 2011.

Less certain is the extent to which allocation of resources to provide additional social housing is seen as part of a long-term strategy to prevent homelessness rather than enabling exit points for people from homelessness services. Initially, additional resources for social housing were limited to a National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing with funding of \$400 million over two years to June 2010 (now expired). As introduced in Chapter 4, in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, there was an additional Nation Building and Jobs Plan National Partnership Agreement with funding for social housing of \$5.6 billion over three years (2008–09 to 2011–12).¹⁶ This was to retain jobs in the construction sector, build new social housing and repair existing social housing. This is in addition to substantial funding for new affordable housing via the NRAS.

Interviewees were generally appreciative of this funding, suggesting that it had stimulated new approaches to homelessness prevention and intervention. However, there was a view that long-term funding streams were required to provide sustainable long-term housing options as well as to provide support to people with complex needs.

There has been \$125 million invested in new affordable housing, including NRAS, far more than we expected to happen, but it is still a drop in the ocean compared to need. The homelessness strategy is now aimed at early intervention, but much hinges on the level of recurrent funding in areas like education, youth justice, post-prison support, job training etc. (interviewee Tasmania)

There was also some tension between those who believed that an asset-based approach is more effective in addressing homelessness and those who prefer a people-based approach. Some wanted to see a stronger commitment to recurrent funding for services and support workers while others sought additional funding for social and affordable housing.

The Tasmanian government's homelessness plan is encouraging and comprehensive, but it can never make up for the lack of investment needed to boost the supply of the social housing stock. (interviewee Tasmania)

The UK case study (England) also highlights the importance of dedicated resources to address homelessness. Funds have been allocated in tranches with relatively short time lines, for example, 'Settled Homes: Changing Lives' (ODPM 2005b) emphasised continued investment in homelessness prevention, stating that £200 million would be spent over the following three years. Subsequently there was a settlement of £200 million in funding to local authorities and voluntary organisations, 2009–09 to 2010–11 (Wilson 2010, p.9).

These additional resources were dwarfed by expenditure on the Supporting People program (2003–09) which cost an estimated £1.6 billion per annum (House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee 2009, p.3). Initially the funding was ring-fenced (i.e. had to be used for this purpose), but this was changed in 2008 when local authorities were given local discretion, and as a result the amount of money spent on housing-related support markedly reduced. The UK interviews indicated that the Supporting People program had brought about some really positive changes in terms of assisting with social inclusion.

¹⁶ Council of Australian Governments (2009) National Partnership Agreement on the Nation Building and Jobs Plan: Building Prosperity for the Future and Supporting Jobs Now, http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2009-02-05/docs/20090205_nation_building_jobs.pdf, last accessed 6 April 2011.

There was a single, coherent system of housing-related support between 2003 and 2009. There is still a distribution formula, but it is not now paid for in a separate grant. There is debate about whether it should still be called Supporting People. (interviewee UK)

In short, considerable additional resources were invested in preventing and addressing homelessness in both countries, in Australia through the mechanism of National Partnership Agreements between the federal government and the states, and in England via specific funding settlements between the central government and local authorities. Interviewees in both countries said that additional resources were helpful in stimulating new approaches to addressing homelessness. They raised issues, however, about longer-term prospects, in particular, the effects on homelessness services if dedicated funding is removed, and as tied funding arrangements expire or are terminated. The primary lesson appears to be that there is likely to be an ongoing need to invest in preventing and addressing homelessness; it is not a matter of investing once or twice for short periods.

5.3 Governance

In both countries, there has been considerable emphasis on new governance arrangements to address deep social exclusion. These have included 'top-down' arrangements, joined-up services and local level partnerships with stakeholders, as well as matching services to the needs of individuals (Smyth 2010). In this section we examine what has been learnt about vertical integration (between levels of government) and horizontal integration (between government agencies and also with not-for-profit agencies and the business/philanthropic sector).

5.3.1 Top-down governance arrangements

In Australia there are a number of new governance arrangements designed to prevent homelessness for 'at risk' people and families and to address homelessness once it has occurred, at both federal and state government levels. At a federal level, these include:

- The Australian Social Inclusion Board which advises the Prime Minister on social inclusion, including deep social exclusion.
- The Prime Minister's Council on Homelessness, an advisory body which investigates areas for improvement in service delivery (chaired by a member of the Australian Social Inclusion Board).
- The Homelessness Delivery Review Board, comprising deputy secretaries of relevant federal departments including central agencies, an arrangement designed to deal with any issues and ensure coordination in meeting the goals of the White Paper.

Governance arrangements around social inclusion/exclusion have also been introduced at a state level. They are most developed in South Australia where the Social Inclusion Initiative has been evolving since 2002, with homelessness being one of seven priority areas:

- The South Australian Social Inclusion Board is responsible for policy advice, and the Commissioner for Social Inclusion (who chairs the board) has an office which is responsible for monitoring implementation. The Commissioner also sits on the executive committee of state cabinet and has priority access to the Premier (Government of South Australia 2009, p.7).

- A Homelessness Inter-Ministerial Committee chaired by the Minister for Families and Communities and the Commissioner for Social Inclusion is responsible for monitoring the achievement of the government's homelessness strategy.
- A Chief Executive Co-ordinating Committee supports the HIMC.

In addition, there is a new mechanism for coordinating policy and funding across different levels of government through a Select Ministerial Council on Homelessness (from July 2011) which comprises federal and state ministers with responsibility for homelessness.¹⁷ These arrangements are responsible for overall planning and assessment of the COAG National Partnership Agreements which we discussed in the previous section.

These governance arrangements signal the high priority given to addressing homelessness and to ensuring that the additional investment achieves results. One of the challenges at a state level, as identified by some of the interviewees, is in the multiplicity of funding agreements and protocols, each with its own objectives and reporting framework. For example, in South Australia, a specific governance framework (SAFE TRACKS) has been developed to coordinate strategy and development across seven policy drivers and funding sources in respect of Indigenous homelessness, including Closing the Gap, three National Partnership Agreements, one national plan (on violence against women and their children) and two separate targets in the South Australian strategic plan. These arrangements also involve stakeholders across policy domains, including Indigenous community leaders (Beck and Shard 2010, p.25).

Many of the interviewees were positive about the potential of better linkages between levels of government to produce better outcomes. However, there were some reservations about how effective this was in practice. Three main points were made about improvement to governance through top-down approaches. Firstly, there was some questioning as to whether this approach was more efficient.

Having three main levels of government is an obstacle to using resources in the most efficient way. The COAG reforms mean that there is a slightly more national approach now ... There needs to be a bit more consistency on who is responsible for which silo. (interviewee Victoria)

A second point was the need to connect the top-down and bottom-up approaches, since practitioners on the ground often understood the area in more detail and were the source of innovation. This type of linkage was likely to take some time to bed down.

The top-down approach is important, but it is also important to get the 'bottom' to inform people at the top about what is happening ... it's very challenging. It's a new thing and might take time to see results. (interviewee national)

A third and related issue raised was the extent to which top-down approaches to strategy and funding are compatible with the need for innovation and flexibility in customising responses to meet needs.

Policy is still centralised, top-down and prescriptive in terms of what you need to do. If you want strength-based things, and you don't want people to feel worse when dealing with government, they need time to develop their

¹⁷ Select Ministerial Councils are time-limited and will address critical and complex issues of national significance (Council of Australian Governments, minutes of February 2011 meeting, Attachment C: More Effective Ministerial Council System), http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2011-02-13/docs/communique_attachmentC-more_effective_ministerial_council_system.pdf, last accessed 8 April 2011.

capacities based on where they are at the moment rather than having to fit in; policy should be tailored around this. (interviewee national)

Finally some issues were raised about the need for integration of policies and plans at a sub-state level. There are already some initiatives in this respect with regional roundtables on homelessness and housing in South Australia. There was little suggestion by the Australian interviewees that local government might be in the best position to integrate local services, reflecting the relatively weak role of local government in Australia.

Turning to the UK, it also appears that reshaping of central government arrangements to highlight the priority given to homelessness is important. In England, this was done initially through a Homelessness Directorate established in 2001. In a strategic move, this was merged with the Housing Care and Support Division in 2003 to form a new Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This was the first time in England that policy responses to homelessness and housing-related support had been brought together in a formalised way at the highest level. This type of coordination has continued and the latest manifestation is the Ministerial Working Group on preventing and tackling homelessness, established by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government, to share information and resolve issues about homelessness. It is chaired by the minister with responsibility for housing and homelessness and includes ministers for other relevant areas¹⁸ as well as their lead policy officers.

In England both social housing and homelessness are the responsibility of local government and, as indicated in chapter 4, the central government has long used legislation as a means of transmitting its priorities to local government. The *Homelessness Act 2002* ensured that a strategic approach to tackling and preventing homelessness was taken, partly by requiring a written homelessness strategy from all local authorities that was based on a review of all forms of homelessness in their district (ODPM 2003a). The requirement to hold regular local reviews forced local housing authorities to consult with social service and other government departments, and with relevant not-for-profit service providers and advocacy groups. In this way, accurate up-to-date information was used in order to determine appropriate strategic priorities such as which groups were most likely to be at risk of homelessness.

5.3.2 Linkages and partnerships (network governance)

Most of those interviewed argued that the value of the concept social inclusion in a policy sense was in the potential for linking across different government policy portfolios, and with not-for-profit organisations, to develop and deliver more innovative service responses. It was argued that social inclusion has added considerable value because it has broadened the emphasis on looking at issues for vulnerable people from a collective rather than from a single agency point of view. This has involved integrating policies across government, especially at the senior executive level. As expressed by a number of interviewees, the starting point is the person and their needs; the job of service agencies is to provide services in a coordinated way. The Australian public sector reform process, for example, is attempting to make people's interaction with federal services more efficient so that they do not have to tell their story multiple times. In this respect, the rest of government is 'in the background' (Advisory Group on Reform of Australian Government Administration 2010). There is also a practical toolkit about social inclusion for federal government agencies (Australian Government 2009b).

¹⁸ These are veterans, adult skills, health and care, housing benefit, criminal justice, crime prevention, and children and youth services.

While this was the aspiration, there were some practical concerns as to how achievable it was. Some suggested that 'whole of government' approaches were too complex to be achievable in view of established policy and budget accountability mechanisms that focused on particular functional areas.

There is a tendency by departments to resort to the 'tried and true'. There is a lack of risk assessment in terms of compliance requirements. Departments don't want to do the wrong thing, but they don't assess the scale of the risk; they give the same level of risk and threat to everything. (interviewee national)

There was also a concern that, despite the high-profile intergovernmental agreements and funding, some mainstream services might not understand their role in addressing homelessness. It was suggested that this reflected a quite limited understanding of homelessness in the community and among other service providers.

For example, in hospitals, they just saw them as 'smelly people' presenting at emergency departments. Some would follow up, but others would not realise that there was no stable contact address to ensure that follow-up happened. (interviewee SA)

The client should be at the centre of activity, but it is very fragmented. The [name] hospital was concerned about the number of homeless people using their emergency room and created an outreach position. But this was a silo-centred approach designed to turn the tap off. These clients probably have a SAAP worker, too, and a drug outreach worker and a mental health outreach worker. (interviewee Victoria)

A related issue was that homelessness still tends to be seen as the responsibility of housing agencies, even though a variety of factors are usually involved. However, housing agencies are reluctant to allocate housing to homeless people without adequate support. While there are some examples of joint working to address this issue, this was an enduring problem, particularly where budgets and lines of accountability for budgets created difficulties.

One big problem is gate-keeping. There are limited resources, and some agencies try to hold on to their budgets because they are so stretched, so we get blockages in the system. (interviewee Tasmania)

Better linkages and partnerships with the not-for-profit sector were seen as important means of addressing deep social exclusion. The need to give these linkages higher priority is reflected in the Australian government's Not-for-Profit Sector Reform Council and Office. Interviewees saw a number of advantages in developing such linkages, including the advantage of not-for-profit organisations in knowing local context. However, it was suggested that these types of linkages cannot be imposed in a top-down way and are hard to achieve in practice, with protocols and memoranda of understanding meaning little unless there is a commitment 'on the ground'. In this respect, staff turnover in community sector jobs that are not well paid can undermine attempts to develop and sustain effective linkages.

A further challenge identified was that addressing the cultural and other differences between parts of the not-for-profit sector (e.g. homelessness, domestic violence, youth issues), and even between organisations within a sector, took time. This is due to the diversity of historical origins, philosophies and mandates of community organisations which range from those with a traditional charity approach to those that take on a strong advocacy role.

This causes issues when trying to develop state wide strategies when the community sector is so diverse. For example, in devising models for youth that

needed support. Talking to the youth sector was different to the accommodation sector. The domestic violence sector had a highly developed advocacy approach. (interviewee SA)

Some interviewees also commented on the willingness and capacity of the business and the philanthropic sectors to be involved in initiatives to address deep social exclusion. They considered that these sectors can play a positive role in brokering deals which make projects work 'on the ground', given their interest in initiatives that produce social outcomes, their contracts, resources and, in particular, their strength in getting things done quickly. A number of highly successful examples were given, but not all of those interviewed were as optimistic. The key learning here appears to be that people involved in the business and philanthropic sectors are not likely to be interested in strategies and plans, but will commit to getting up projects 'on the ground' that have clear social outcomes.

Finally, an innovation of the UK Labour government was Public Service Agreements (PSAs), which were intended to drive cross-departmental priorities. PSA 16 was the first to focus on socially excluded adults, with an aim of ensuring that the most excluded groups of 'at risk' individuals had an increased chance of securing both settled accommodation and employment, education or training. These groups find it difficult to access, and remain in, settled accommodation for a variety of reasons including previous rent arrears or a breach of tenancy conditions, poor life skills and limited ability to budget or to look after themselves effectively. A lack of pre-tenancy training, access to rent deposit schemes, early intervention schemes and ongoing support was recognised as heightening their disadvantage. One of the UK interviewees suggested that a key feature of PSA 16 was that it had 'actively encouraged' agencies to work together and that, as a result, complicated housing solutions for some vulnerable people had been achieved.¹⁹ Previously, organisations had tended to work across and between these clients but not together within coherent effective partnerships.

In summary, in both countries there were high-profile changes to governance to try and achieve national priorities in respect of homelessness as a form of deep social exclusion. There was an emphasis on top-down approaches with targets to drive the governments' agenda. It appears that 'whole of government' working is difficult to achieve in practice, not because public sector workers are opposed to it, but rather because they still work within hierarchical structures with budgets and accountability for particular functional areas.

This does not mean that 'whole of government' approaches cannot work, rather that they take longer and progress is patchier than originally anticipated.

When you are trying to change systems, you require sustained effort for a decade, not a short period, as people want to go back to the old ways of doing things. (interviewee SA)

It is evident that network governance arrangements involving partnerships with the not-for-profit, for-profit and philanthropic sectors also take time to develop. There are many cultural and other differences that have to be worked through to establish effective local partnerships. In this respect, the availability of additional funding is an incentive to work differently.

¹⁹ PSA 16 was not compulsory and local councils did not have to choose it, but it was a national indicator and they were required to collect data against it.

5.4 Innovation and good practice

Interviewees in Australia raised a number of examples of innovation and good practice which they felt had been stimulated by new approaches to homelessness associated with a better understanding of the complex nature of deep social exclusion.

Many of the examples revolved around intensive support for rough sleepers and the chronically homeless:

- Street to Home in South Australia is a case management model for chronically homeless people. It involves intensive outreach designed to reach people who are sleeping rough in Adelaide. Upon contact, there is an individual assessment of risk to identify their immediate housing and health needs. There is a focus on 'housing first' and support is provided until the person has been made stable in long-term accommodation or another agency takes on the primary case-management/support role.
- City Watch House in South Australia is an inner city emergency response that asked police and doctors to identify the most well-known rough sleepers. Twelve people were identified and a service response was developed that was a 'whatever it took' approach. Most had been rough sleeping for 15 years or more. Previously services had seen them as too hard or too complex to deal with. However, once they engaged with the process, service providers were able to see options for them. Eleven of the chronic rough sleepers are now in longer-term sustainable housing (interviewee SA). Similar programs have been put into hospital emergency departments as many homeless people attend emergency departments regularly (interviewee SA).
- Journey to Social Inclusion in Victoria is a three-year project to provide intensive, long-term support for chronically homeless people linked to affordable and appropriate housing (Johnson & Wylie 2010).
- Specialist Intervention Tenancy Service in Tasmania comprises multidisciplinary teams providing assistance to the chronically homeless, those with multiple needs who are at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, and people at transition points such as leaving state care or correctional facilities.

Other examples were given of approaches to develop more sustainable long-term housing options and support:

- Many interviewees mentioned Common Ground projects, based on a model developed in New York which provides a safe place to live along with allied supports and networks. A key benefit seen by those interviewed was that people can stay as long as they need to, and that this is an advance on previous SAAP models of crisis and transitional housing where people were never sure whether and when they would have to move.
- Application of the Integrated Continuum of Support model in Tasmania. This involves a care assessment plan with professional and other services with a combination of interim accommodation and active referrals. The innovation is that the support service follows the client, unlike the property-based approach in some jurisdictions. One aspect is the Same House Different Landlord program which aims to prevent people experiencing repeat episodes of homelessness through enabling them to remain in the property at the end of the support period once their tenancy is stabilised.
- In South Australia, some services are now delivered on a regional basis. One service now has all the options available in the region rather than people

experiencing homelessness needing to go to five different service providers. They are now in the process of building a data base and online case management system so that clients only have to tell their story once, at the initial case meeting. The idea is to develop consistent services across the state, so that it does not matter where the person lives.

In the UK, the Supporting People program was designed to provide housing-related support to vulnerable people. The primary purpose was to develop and sustain individuals' capacity to live independently in their accommodation (ODPM 2004b). This could include gaining the skills to maintain a tenancy including budgeting and managing debt, safety and security, reporting and arranging repairs, and accessing the correct benefit entitlement. Supporting People services were fundable regardless of the tenure in which the recipient lived. The funding stream stimulated a range of service approaches.

In brief, it appears that a focus on social inclusion/exclusion with additional funding for homelessness did stimulate innovation in practice in both Australia and England and many of those interviewed were positive about both the scope for, and effectiveness of, innovations. There appear, however, to have been few systematic attempts to gather information about good practice in either country. The question that we consider next is: Did a combination of new strategies, additional resources, governance arrangements and innovative approaches improve outcomes for people who are homeless or 'at risk' of homelessness?

5.5 Outcomes

In Australia, a social inclusion approach to homelessness is relatively new and there is little evidence about the effectiveness of new approaches to homelessness, despite the obvious enthusiasm of many of those involved.

There is little hard evidence on the effectiveness of new approaches nationally against two headline indicators in the White Paper (offering assistance to all rough sleepers who need it by 2015 and halving homelessness by 2020). The Australian government has a homelessness research program which will add to the evidence base, including a longitudinal panel survey of people identified as 'at risk' (FaHCSIA 2011a). Evaluations are also underway on a number of the projects.

There are also numerous evaluations at a state level that should help build up an evidence base. In South Australia, where an explicit social inclusion approach to homelessness was adopted earlier, the state government reported improved outcomes in 2002–08 on some headline indicators (Government of South Australia 2010, p.3), specifically:

- A halving of rough sleeping in Adelaide (2007–09) from more than 100 to less than 40.
- Better health and housing outcomes for 292 homeless people through the Street to Home program.

It should be noted that the numbers involved are relatively small and, in the words of one interviewee:

Only small numbers of people are homeless so it should not be an insolvable problem. Expensive models have been successful. (interviewee SA)

In addition, more than 20 600 people 'vulnerable to homelessness' have been assisted through the South Australian government's Homelessness Action Plan. This is a measure of output rather than outcomes, and it is difficult to draw any conclusions.

In England, there has been longer to assemble an evidence base on the outcomes of homelessness measures. Assessing outcomes depends largely on administrative data: the number of people newly accepted as homeless by local authorities in a year and a snapshot of the number of 'accepted households' living in transitional housing at the end of the year.²⁰ On both these measures there has been a dramatic decrease after 2003–04 according to annual monitoring of poverty and social exclusion by the independent New Policy Institute using a homelessness indicator based on this data (Parekh et al. 2010). It also appears that allocations of social housing to homeless households increased from 25 per cent to 28 per cent. However, there is a note of caution about figures based on administrative data. In particular, they do not include many single people who may not apply to the local authorities since there is no statutory duty to offer them assistance (Parekh et al. 2010).

In both countries, there has been a focus on the numbers of homeless people and, in particular, the extent of rough sleeping. There is relatively little data on outcomes other than rates of access to social housing, for example, in terms of health and employment outcomes. The Common Ground projects established in the three Australian states in the study, and seen as a key part of homelessness strategies, have not yet been evaluated in terms of outcomes for residents (although this is planned or underway).

We still don't know the flow of homelessness. What does it really take to get them out of homelessness in the longer term? People still fall back into [homelessness] throughout their lives. (interviewee SA)

5.6 Challenges

Despite generally positive responses to new approaches to addressing deep social exclusion as manifest in homelessness, some interviewees were concerned that there was a risk of focusing on a small number of people and their personal characteristics at the expense of ignoring broader structural factors.

How do you keep the needs of people in sight and structural factors such as public housing not being available? People become vulnerable because of domestic violence and so on. A lot of homelessness discourse starts with what is wrong with individuals. It needs to start from what we have done in housing that disconnects people. (interviewee SA)

Interviewees in both countries also had some words of caution about the capacity of improved services 'wrapped around' people to achieve better outcomes. They considered that there was a need to take into account the effects of housing market price cycles, tenancy conditions in the private rental sector, and the need to work to minimise evictions from rental housing to prevent homelessness.

Affordable housing is the most important thing for people. There is a lot of stress as people struggle to pay the rent because it is very expensive. Pensioners spend half their money on rent and they can't afford to live on what is left. Then they get sick and this is a cost for the government. (interviewee Canberra)

The Tasmanian government's homelessness plan is encouraging and comprehensive, but it can never make up for the lack of investment needed to boost the supply of the social housing stock. (interviewee Tasmania)

²⁰ Temporary accommodation includes bed and breakfast places, hostel accommodation, private rental and other (Parekh et al. 2010, p.104).

A further challenge identified was the need for a better understanding of the spatial basis of homelessness. In the UK, three-quarters of all homeless households in temporary accommodation were in London (Parekh et al. 2010, p.104). This indicated housing market pressures in the capital, including its role in attracting people from elsewhere in the UK, which had the effect of displacing some existing residents from their accommodation. Some Australian interviewees were also well aware of demand pressures from incoming residents and the displacement effects as people had to move into cheaper housing away from services, facilities and transport.

Finally, some reservations were expressed about whether the community as a whole supports this type of approach to homelessness. This may be of significance in generating support, and resources, for an intensive approach to homelessness over the longer term.

Social inclusion has been a significant shift in helping to put homelessness on the agenda but it's hard because some communities still don't see it as something that can happen to them. (interviewee SA)

5.7 Summary

In many respects, the most important learning from the deployment of the social inclusion/exclusion concept in the two cases is in understanding that the experience of homelessness is a complex, multifaceted, cumulative and sometimes enduring process. Different groups of homeless people have different needs at different stages of the life cycle, and require customised and coordinated responses rather than 'one size fits all' interventions. The concept has also been valuable in developing an understanding that it is never 'too hard' to tackle the most entrenched form of exclusion manifest in chronic homelessness.

Strategies to prevent and address homelessness and deep social exclusion require focused attention and resources over a long period, which can be difficult in the context of short-term political cycles. Effective interventions are based on housing accompanied by support services, and both may be required for extended periods. There is growing evidence that the best strategies are those in which support follows people, rather than people moving to get the support.

The availability of resources not tied to traditional mainstream programs can stimulate innovation which provides customised approaches to do 'whatever it takes' to address deep social exclusion. In the long run there may be savings in mainstream services such as justice, child protection, hospital admissions and mental health, and further work is required to quantify this. Agencies working together can develop innovative service models, but vertical lines of responsibility and accountability present ongoing difficulties in developing and sustaining innovation.

There is widespread recognition that governance arrangements must provide the architecture for vertical and horizontal coordination between levels of government, between policy domains and with the not-for-profit sector. However, ensuring effective linkages that constitute a 'whole of government' approach requires more than formal structures: it entails developing a culture that supports working across agencies, and developing reporting and accountability mechanisms that support joint working.

The learning from the case studies is that it *is* possible to reduce the number of homeless people under conditions of high political priority, additional resources and coordination of effort. There is some early evidence that intensive housing and support models can produce good outcomes for individuals, at least in the short term, although some of the models are quite expensive in terms of direct and indirect costs and have not yet been evaluated. Little is known about the long-term outcomes for

homeless people who receive housing and intensive support in respect of economic and social participation. The voices of homeless people themselves are often absent in debates. It is important to ensure that there are long-term benefits for people who become homeless, not just a short- to medium-term decrease in their number.

Housing market processes are an important contributor to homelessness as a process. People become homeless for many reasons, but a common underlying theme in both countries is the way in which the private rental sector operates. In tight market conditions, landlords can screen out 'high risk' people and charge rents which stretch people's finances, leaving them vulnerable in the case of life events such as family breakdown, sickness or loss of employment. Targeting of social housing to those experiencing deep social exclusion presents challenges in terms of allocations and tenancy management. It also contributes to concentrated social exclusion associated with social housing estates, which we discuss in the next chapter.

6 KEY LEARNING: THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PLACE-BASED APPROACHES IN ADDRESSING CONCENTRATED SOCIAL EXCLUSION

This chapter identifies key learning about the effectiveness of place-based approaches to addressing concentrated social exclusion. It draws on documentary material, in particular, evaluations of some of the larger place-based approaches, and interviews with key informants in Australia and the UK, some of whom played a key role in design, implementation and evaluation of these initiatives. The interpretation of this data is that of the research team after consideration of these sources and taking into account the issues that are most pertinent in the Australian policy context. It should be noted that we do not discuss key learning from programs which target services to people living in disadvantaged places that do not have a housing component (see Section 4.3.2) as these are beyond the scope of this project, for example Communities for Children in Australia (Muir et al. 2010) and Sure Start in the UK (Belsky et al 2007). Nor are we able to include key learning from employment-centred place-based initiatives in Australia since these are predominantly at a very early stage.

The chapter presents key learning about:

- strategic approaches
- resources and timelines
- governance and innovation, including ‘whole of government’ working and local partnerships
- outcomes of place-based initiatives in respect of people and places
- challenges.

6.1 Strategic approaches

All the interventions we discuss in this section aim to improve outcomes for people living in places with a concentration of disadvantaged people, as indicated by factors such as unemployment and worklessness, poor health, and low levels of education and training. They also attempt to achieve place-based outcomes including better housing, improvements to the environment, lower levels of crime and more liveable communities. We discuss two main approaches: comprehensive area improvement strategies which have a housing component, and approaches that are more specifically targeted at housing outcomes.

6.1.1 *Comprehensive area-based improvement initiatives*

National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) England

The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (NSNR) was intended to address spatial inequalities in England. Its goal was that ‘within 10 to 20 years no-one should be disadvantaged by where they live’ (Social Exclusion Unit 2001, p.8). NSNR selected the 88 most deprived local authority districts in England (Power 2009, p.117). The objectives were to improve outcomes in five domains: lower worklessness and crime, better health, skills, housing and the physical environment and to ‘narrow the gap on these measures between the most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country’. A sixth domain, liveability, was added later (AMION Consulting 2010, ch.1).

NSNR included a number of strands:

- Partnerships funded through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF).
- Partnerships funded through the New Deal for Communities (NDC)²¹ which had two objectives: improving these neighbourhoods or 'turning them around', and 'reducing the gaps' between these neighbourhoods and the rest of the country (DETR 1998, p.1).²²
- Smaller programs, such as a Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder program (basically a local place management approach) and a neighbourhood warden program.

NSNR (including NDC) was based on the assumption that there were a relatively small number of very disadvantaged neighbourhoods, centred on council housing estates, which could be regenerated with intensive resources and new modes of operating. It was not a housing strategy per se but was intended to be a comprehensive strategy to address deep social exclusion and spatial inequalities manifest in some of England's most deprived neighbourhoods. NSNR (and NDC) were more comprehensive, longer-term and more expensive than previous area-based initiatives. They recognised that turning around disadvantaged areas would take time and require dedicated funding. There was some difference in emphasis, with NSNR described as having 'broader but shallower ambitions' than NDC (Power 2009, p.123).

Neighbourhood Renewal Victoria (NRV) and other Australian projects

Modelled on NSNR/NDC in the UK, Neighbourhood Renewal Victoria (NRV) was a strategy to address the concentration of disadvantage associated with some public housing estates. The overall goal was '*to narrow the gap between disadvantaged communities with concentrations of public housing, and the rest of the state*' (NRU 2008, p.1).

NRV had six outcome areas (similar to NDC): increase pride and participation; enhance housing and the environment; lift employment, training and education and expand local economies; improve personal safety and reduce crime; promote health and wellbeing; and increase access to services and improve government responsiveness (NRU 2008, p.1). It became part of the state government's strategy for 'A Fairer Victoria' which had as one of its four objectives: 'supporting high needs places (places with compounding effects of unemployment, poor services and infrastructure, low education levels and poor health)' (Government of Victoria 2005, 2010).

There have also been a number of urban/neighbourhood renewal projects in South Australia and Tasmania, although these were individual projects and not part of a more general neighbourhood renewal strategy, such as the Westwood Urban Renewal Project and Playford Alive in South Australia and the Bridgewater Urban Renewal Project in Tasmania.

²¹ NDC preceded the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and was implemented and evaluated separately. However, it was considered subsequently as a key part of the Labour government's neighborhood renewal strategy.

²² NDC also had six key outcome areas: three people-based (health, education and worklessness) and three placed-based (crime, local community, and housing and the physical environment (Beatty et al. 2010b, p.236).

6.1.2 *Housing improvement and housing market strategies*

In the UK (England), there were also strategic approaches to improving housing conditions and improving disadvantaged places through addressing housing market conditions more broadly.

Decent Homes Standard strategy

In 1997, there were 2.1 million poor quality social housing dwellings in England due to a lack of investment over many years. The UK government committed to bringing all these homes up to specified standards of decency by 2010, with the intention that most of the improvement would take place in the most deprived areas (DETR 1998). The government developed a clear and measurable Decent Homes Standard that was used to enable implementation and to measure progress. Bringing homes up to this standard involved repair work to achieve the acceptable conditions and improvements to quality and amenity, including new kitchens and bathrooms and better thermal performance including through installation of central heating. Improving the quality of social housing was to be a key part of the neighbourhood renewal agenda (ODPM 2003b). It was also used as an incentive in the transfer of social housing stock from local councils to Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) and housing associations.

Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinders (England)

Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Pathfinders aimed to address problems of declining areas in the Midlands and North of England where there was low and changing demand for housing associated with a range of issues including very low house prices, high vacancy rates, high population turnover, low demand for social housing and, in extreme cases, housing abandonment. Key causal factors were considered to be depopulation as a result of economic restructuring, a surplus of older terrace houses due to changing patterns of demand, and large and stigmatised areas of public housing (Bramley & Pawson 2002). In all, there were 12 Pathfinders.²³ There were also other social issues in these areas such as a predominance of rental housing, unemployment and worklessness, and a large number of older people on benefits.

The objectives of HMR Pathfinders were to reconnect Pathfinder areas with neighbouring functional housing markets, close the gap between the areas and their regions by a third in the level of house prices and vacancies, eradicate problems caused by low demand by 2020, and tackle low demand in additional areas outside the Pathfinders (ODPM 2005a). At first the objectives did not include overt social inclusion measures, but in 2005 worklessness, community cohesion and economic measures were added (Shelter 2009, p.2).

Summary

The comprehensive neighbourhood/urban renewal programs in the two countries had a lot in common. They aimed to, firstly, mitigate social disadvantage through arresting decline and 'turning around' people and place outcomes in the most disadvantaged areas; and secondly, and more radically, to address inequalities by narrowing/closing the gap between disadvantaged and other areas. The housing and housing market interventions, although they differed in type, had more explicit recognition of the role of housing processes in contributing to wide social exclusion. The approach was to

²³ Initially nine were selected but three more were added in 2005 (DCLG 2009a, p.8).

improve not only the quality of housing but, in the case of the HMR Pathfinders, to try to turn around housing markets as the key to improving place (and people) outcomes.

6.2 Resources and timelines

The comprehensive area improvement programs in the UK involved a very significant commitment in terms of time and resources. NDC cost an estimated £2 billion (A\$3.2 billion) over 10 years, with each of the 39 local areas allocated about £50 million (\$80.2 million) over that period. Between 2001 and 2008, almost £3 billion funding was made available to the local authority districts through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) of NSNR, with the aim of allocating about £30 million to each of 88 local authority districts over a 10-year period. There was also some specific funding for the smaller programs which were part of NSNR (neighbourhood management and neighbourhood wardens). The idea was that the additional funding was top-up funding provided via mainstream services to allow for some flexibility in local decision making. These funding arrangements changed over time. The Neighbourhood Renewal Fund became the Working Neighbourhoods Fund and was subsequently incorporated into a local authority block grant, while the funding for the smaller programs was wrapped up into a Safer, Stronger Communities Fund (AMION Consulting 2010, ch.1).

Originally funding for NRV projects was for four years but this was extended following a positive interim evaluation (Neighbourhood Renewal Branch 2005). Over the early years, 15 sites were selected, with four more starting in 2005–06 and another two in 2010, a total of 21 projects over time. Ten of the projects had finished at the time of writing and been 'mainstreamed' (NRU 2011). Expenditure on NRV sites was much less than in the UK and includes an estimated \$240 000 per site per year to cover the cost of three salaries plus some seed funding. Sites were to access funding for projects and activities through mainstream agencies, including the state housing agency.

Funding for the Decent Homes program in the UK dwarfed all the other programs referred to in Section 6.1. The National Audit Office estimated that the total cost to the social housing sector by 2010–11 would be £37 billion (NAO 2010, p.8). Not all of this was new money, but reflected some redirection of existing funds to meet the agreed standard. As indicated in Chapter 4, some of the funds from the Nation Building and Jobs Plan National Partnership Agreement in Australia were used for repairs to public housing, although they were only available over a two year period. There appears to be no available information about the expenditure of these funds.

The HMR Pathfinders were originally allocated £25 million in 2002 to enable their early development. A Housing Market Renewal Fund was then established which allocated £569 million to cover investment to March 2005 and subsequent tranches of £500 million to cover spending to March 2008, with a further £1 billion to cover the period to March 2011 (DCLG 2009a, p.9). The National Audit Office found that uncertainty about funding prior to the allocation of £1 billion to cover the 2008–11 period weakened local service delivery (NAO 2007, p.7).

In summary, comprehensive area-based initiatives and housing improvement and market initiatives in the UK were expensive and required sustained resources over up to a decade. Where central funds were spent locally, and outside of normal local government arrangements, there was considerable scrutiny about cost control, program effectiveness and value for money. The National Audit Office, the Audit Commission and the House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts all played an active role in this. In Australia, there is limited information about the resources allocated to area-based initiatives, but it is certain that expenditure was much lower.

6.3 Governance

A key feature of place-based approaches in Australia and the UK was new forms of governance. They were two related components: a 'whole of government' approach in which mainstream services worked together to achieve results in disadvantaged areas, modifying their services as required, and an emphasis on local partnerships and community-based boards. The latter had some additional funds with which to lever in support from mainstream agencies, develop new ways of working and implement some local initiatives to address priority concerns of local residents and partners.

The NDC was the forerunner in setting up local community-based partnerships. Each local area chose their own priorities in relation to the six NDC outcome areas and developed their own projects. While NDC funds were available for local level projects, improved outcomes were to be achieved by working with other agencies such as the police, National Health Service, Jobcentre Plus and local councils in order to improve mainstream services in these areas.

An important innovation in governance in NDC was local partnerships and boards, which included a majority of local residents as well as other key stakeholders. The boards assessed local needs and priorities, developed local projects aimed at achieving improvements on the six outcome areas and generally drove the process. NSNR also had Local Strategic Partnerships which were non-statutory, non-executive and non-elected organisations that worked alongside local government. They comprised government departments, local businesses and the third sector and residents (separate to NDC boards). In Victoria, NRV had a similar approach involving agencies such as health, education, employment agencies and local government, with a key feature being local partnerships. Each NRV steering committee has at least 50 per cent membership by residents (NRU 2008, p.14).

Decent Homes also involved partnerships, for example, between local councils, housing associations or Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs), and Primary Care Trusts, reflecting the intent that better quality housing would improve health outcomes. HMR Pathfinders comprised partnerships which had a high degree of independence from government to address local housing market issues and devise solutions (DCLG 2009a, pp.10–11). They typically comprised more than one local authority, other regeneration authorities, service providers and a variety of stakeholders including private sector partners (Leather et al. 2009, p.5).

6.3.1 *Did area-based initiatives change how mainstream services operate?*

The evaluations of the NDC and NSNR/NRF²⁴ found that mainstream services, such as health and education, work more to a national agenda and may not set a priority on achieving change in particular small areas. The biggest impact was on environmental services and policing which are often delivered locally. There was limited impact on service delivery in respect of worklessness, which is primarily national, and some impact on health services, including highlighting spatial inequalities in health outcomes. There was also very little impact on the delivery of housing services which were shaped by national policy.

Improvements in housing are delivered by national policy influences, though some housing providers may have been influenced by NSNR through the introduction of innovations in other service areas (e.g. wardens) and more responsive environmental services which have tended to engage housing

²⁴ NDC and NSNR/NRF were evaluated separately, although the latter evaluation also incorporates some of the NDC findings, in effect, a meta-evaluation of the neighbourhood renewal strategy (see Chapter 7).

providers in increased partnership at the neighbourhood level. (AMION Consulting 2010, p.103)

The evaluations suggest that the impact of local partnerships varied substantially in terms of mainstream service delivery. In a positive sense, the national evaluation of NDC indicated that an additional £730 million was generated from other public, private and voluntary organisations, in addition to £1.7 billion spent on some 6900 projects and interventions (Batty et al. 2010b, p.5). However, in some cases, although mainstream services could inform the ways in which local partnerships should spend their money, they could be less inclined to increase targeting of their own resources into the NDC area (Beatty et al. 2010a). The interview data also indicate that, at times, some agencies considered that NDC areas were already receiving additional money and would be less likely to redirect resources there themselves.

In Australia, the NRV program also faced the challenge of government departments which are focused on very specific outputs and have their own lines of accountability. As in the UK, the effectiveness of 'whole of government' approaches to local areas varied. The interviews reported examples of good collaboration and situations where those involved had to learn to do things in spite of the current structures, not because of them. The evaluation of NRV suggests that for each dollar of neighbourhood renewal funds allocated to 'community infrastructure projects', \$7 was leveraged from government, business and community organisations (NRU 2008, p.4). In general, it appears that the bulk of the additional funding for improvement of social housing came from the same government department that ran NRV.

One of the issues raised by interviewees in the Australian case was the dynamics of 'whole of government' arrangements centred on public housing estates and which were initiated by the state government department which also has responsibility for social housing. This could create some challenges for joint working, even within one housing agency. In some cases, as indicated by interviewees, social housing management and neighbourhood/urban renewal staff worked in parallel, but in others they meshed together from an early stage. The effectiveness of this joint working affected the progress of the project on the estate.

Some Australian interviewees also expressed the view that for a long time everything was just seen as a housing problem, echoing similar sentiments about the difficulty of developing 'whole of government' working in relation to homelessness, discussed in Chapter 5. So, while connecting with other agencies within a framework for addressing social inclusion was seen as a valuable approach to adopt, it was still identified as a difficult issue. Specifically, the joined-up bit was hard to implement in reality.

'Whole of government' is challenging. Different agencies each have different priorities and protocols. We can establish links, but making things work is another challenge and also resourcing is an issue. For a long time everything was just a housing problem. (interviewee SA)

It is noteworthy that although the place-based strategies were very expensive, as indicated above, their expenditure was often a fraction of that spend by mainstream programs. For example, NDC expenditure between 1999–2000 and 2007–08 was about 10 per cent of expenditure on mainstream services in the NDC areas (Batty et al. 2010b, p.8). As suggested by some of the interviewees, it may well be that expectations of area-based programs have to be more realistic in considering what they can achieve when mainstream services such as health and education operate to a different agenda and have much more substantial resources.

There are limits to the approaches now being applied. Managerialism can only go so far. Resources are more significant than joined-up government. (interviewee Tasmania)

Alternatively, it may be that the areas which were the subject of place-based social exclusion strategies were too small to enable effective coordination with mainstream services. This is a dilemma when trying to involve residents and local stakeholders who may be interested in relatively small areas, as we discuss next.

6.3.2 Local partnerships

How effective were they?

Generally, local partnerships were considered to be quite successful in the national evaluation of NSNR/NRF and NDC (AMION Consulting 2010, ch.6) and also in respect of NRV (NRU 2008, p.14). They engendered a good deal of enthusiasm and a real sense that disadvantaged areas could be improved. In this respect, having some dedicated and untied resources to support local initiatives was a very positive move.

The evaluations and interviews also highlighted a number of issues around partnership working. In addition to people working for government departments, there were some difficulties in attracting and retaining other partners. Those working in the not-for-profit sector were often over-stretched and found it difficult to commit to something else.

There were also issues in attracting the involvement of people from the private sector, which were particularly acute in the case of HMR Pathfinders which depended on such involvement. Views on the involvement of business varied in the interviews. Some saw the involvement of the private sector as critical in 'getting things done' and providing additional resources and expertise and cited examples of successful partnerships with business. Others were more cautious:

We found that partnerships with social enterprises that shared the ideology of investment in community worked better than partnerships with the private sector. (interviewee Victoria)

An innovation in all the partnerships was the involvement of local residents. There was generally strong support for this. Interviewees thought that it was important to get residents to engage, and for interaction between those experiencing acute disadvantage and other local residents. The 'voice of those experiencing it' was necessary to get policy implementation happening and to make it relevant.

There is evidence in the evaluations that residents on local boards were very positive about the experience and about the training they received. For example, the evaluation of NDC suggests that some of the lessons were:

... a clear strategy needs to be developed early on, underpinned by community development and capacity building. A dedicated community engagement team and a senior community champion are helpful, but the community engagement ethos needs to be embedded in the organisation. Partnerships should work around a core group of properly supported residents, and build connections to existing networks. Finally, a key element of succession planning should be to develop the capacity of community groups to act for and on behalf of their communities. (Batty et al. 2010a, p.6)

In Australia, the NRV evaluation is very positive about the role of local partnerships and in particular the involvement of local residents. In addition to community governance structures, many new community groups were established, residents

received training and also the opportunity to be employed to undertake community surveys, and there were many examples of community events and activities (NRU 2008, p.14). It is unknown what percentages of residents were involved in community governance structures and community activities, although as reported by one interviewee there appears to be considerable local interest in continuing with local governance structures.

In Collingwood and Atherton Gardens [Fitzroy] renewal areas, there is to be a continuing community governance committee as neighbourhood renewal schemes come to an end. Elections were held recently for the resident representatives on the committee [half of the committee is to be made up of local residents]. Over 400 people turned out to vote in a community of just over 2000; this is a very positive sign of engagement. (interviewee Victoria)

A number of practical problems about resident involvement were raised in the interviews. There were some difficulties in attracting and retaining residents. If area-based improvements are to be sustainable in the long term, it is important that there is a core of people who can carry them on. This could pose problems if they relied on heavy investment by individuals. For example, in Australia, the Bridgewater Urban Renewal Project in Tasmania was seen as a very successful project, but an issue was that it relied on the charisma of one individual for much of its impetus.

We can't manufacture leaders in the community, but they make a big difference. (interviewee Tasmania)

The UK schemes, with the best intent and despite considerable effort applied, simply did not engage most people. Only a very small number were directly involved, with between one in 10 and one in five residents involved in any sort of community activities (estimates vary). Further, without some of the safeguards of democratic institutions such as local government, there was a danger of a few people dominating the partnerships:

... community had a tendency to become oligarchy, with a handful of activists in charge. At best, about one in ten estate residents took part, higher than usual for such initiatives. (Toynbee & Walker 2010, p.144)

One difficulty in the UK was what one interviewee described as 'endless tension' about whose houses would be improved. This created some difficulties for local partnership arrangements.

Another difficulty was in engaging particular groups. For example, the NSNR evaluation refers to the difficulties in engaging young people and those from ethnic minorities. A number of reasons were mooted for this, including a focus on district wide interventions (beyond the immediate local area), the technical nature of some projects, a lack of resources, and reservations about getting involved. It is also suggested that in the most deprived areas, with a long history of such initiatives, there may well be cynicism and lack of trust (AMION Consulting 2010, ch.6). There is little reference to involvement of young people, recent migrants or refugees in Australian area-based initiatives. In the interviews, examples were given of successful projects to involve these groups, but many were 'ground up' initiatives which were not part of comprehensive neighbourhood renewal programs.

How much did they innovate?

Local partnerships in all the place-based programs discussed in this chapter (with the exception of Decent Homes) were expected to develop innovative responses to meet local needs. The extent to which this occurred in practice appears to have varied.

A key priority for most local partnerships, irrespective of the program, was to improve community safety by reducing crime and fear of crime. The NDC partnerships spent 10 per cent of funds on projects to respond to community concerns about property damage and crimes against people (Batty et al. 2010b) and NSNR areas spent about 20 per cent of the total Neighbourhood Renewal Fund budget on crime-related measures (AMION Consulting 2010, p.67). Initiatives included funding neighbourhood wardens to patrol the streets and work with the police, a relatively low cost and popular measure, and providing additional funding for more police and police community resource officers to patrol the streets and respond to trouble. Other projects included improved surveillance, for example, CCTV (Pearson et al. 2008). In NRV, projects included increased police patrols, better liaison between the police and local communities and Neighbourhood Watch programs (NRU 2008, p.35).

A key priority for governments, irrespective of program, was to improve outcomes in respect of unemployment and worklessness. NDC and NSNR partnerships spent about 12 per cent of their budget on local initiatives to address worklessness (Batty et al. 2010b, p.14; AMION Consulting 2010, p.9). Projects included neighbourhood-based job brokerage and information services for job seekers, 'one stop shops' and dedicated employment liaison officers. NRV projects also had a strong employment component, including funding for employment and learning coordinators who were to link residents with employment and education/training, the development of social enterprises, and a Public Tenant Employment Program (NRU 2008, p.23). In some cases, the NRV employment initiatives dovetailed with Australian government projects. For example, one of the interviewees worked for a local council (but funded by NRV) doing outreach work on employment and learning targeting jobless families, working alongside a Family Centred Employment project developed and funded by the Australian government.

Interviewees in South Australia and Tasmania cited what they considered were successful innovations. Habitat for Humanity is being used to train young people through the Boystown Program, which has been based at the Westwood urban renewal area in South Australia since 1999. In the Playford Alive urban renewal project, also in South Australia, some contractors have agreements to employ local and Indigenous youth and there have been concerted attempt to get young people placed in trades.

There were also examples of innovations which sought to improve health and levels of education/training. In health, NRV initiatives included health promotion projects, sports projects, school breakfast clubs, community kitchens and gardens, and gambling prevention programs. In education, initiatives of NRV local partnerships included school-community partnerships, children's centres, lifelong learning hubs and support for learning such as children's homework clubs (NRU 2008, p.23, p.39). In South Australia, one aspect of the Westwood Urban Renewal Project (The Parks) involved education, architecture and journalism academics working with primary school teachers and students to redesign an area between the school and the pre-school. The project illustrated the importance of community action, involvement of local young people and education in addressing concentrated social exclusion (Comber et al. 2006).

Similar sorts of innovation were introduced by local partnerships in NDC and NSNR, although they were supported by the wide roll-out of the Sure Start program in disadvantaged areas which focused on early childhood education. While the Communities for Children operates in some disadvantaged areas across Australia, the roll-out was not as widespread.

In all of the programs discussed in this chapter, local partnerships made a major investment in housing and the environment. This was greater in the case of NDC (about a third) than in NSNR (an estimated 9% to 15%) (Batty et al. 2010b, p.14; AMION Consulting 2010, p.9). Interviewees indicated NDC partnerships, in particular, wanted to have something to show for the money invested, and in some cases invested in development trusts with physical assets that can be rented out to provide an income for future area improvements. In NRV, almost \$200 million was spent on upgrading public housing dwellings, and a further \$71 million on public housing construction and redevelopment in NRV sites (NRU 2008, p.5).

While it is clear that there was some innovation, the learning (particularly from the UK) appears to be that many local partnerships gave priority to projects that reflected quite basic local needs, including paying for more police and teachers, CCTV installation, and improvements in primary schools and community centres. They wanted good public infrastructure and good public services, for example, policing.

General learning on governance of comprehensive place-based programs

Large area-based initiatives take time to set up, and expectations about quick results need to be managed. The initiatives' objectives should be related to the timeframe. For example, as indicated in the UK interviews, it often took one to two years for NDC local projects to be developed and for expenditure to commence, and it was not until years four to six that major expenditure occurred. It is important to have a year zero in which local partnerships can be established and planning take place. It is also important to manage expectations; local residents and stakeholders can have unrealistic views in relation to the speed with which projects can be delivered, and the degree to which benefits will be distributed across all of those living in the area.

In this respect, early attention to improving the housing and physical environment can be important because the area looks better and this in itself can provide a catalyst for further change. Some areas in which this can be done are internal fit-outs, fences, landscaping, pathways, security and lighting. Sometimes these can be linked into social enterprise training and employment schemes.

It is clear to see that in NDC areas and Housing Market Renewal areas that there have been huge improvements: the physical changes are very visible.
(interviewee UK)

A key issue with area-based initiatives is what happens when the initiative and its funding comes to an end. In the context of NRV it was felt that time limits are not necessarily a bad thing as:

... no-one wants to be part of a project forever. (interviewee Victoria)

The important point, however, is that while a project may end, the place-based approach should not. In the case of NRV, there has been a 'mainstreaming' process at the end of the projects and in some cases there will be a continuing community governance committee, as with two high rise estates in Melbourne. In the case of the Fitzroy estate, the ongoing governance structure will oversee community buildings funded under the Housing Affordability Fund. Some of the principles of place management have also been applied in other 'hot spots' (NRU 2011).

6.4 Outcomes

Unlike most of the policies and programs to address deep social exclusion discussed in Chapter 6, many of the place-based initiatives discussed in this chapter have been formally evaluated. This provides a wonderful opportunity to identify key learning not just about individual initiatives but also cumulative learning, noting that there are many

technical issues involved in assessing outcomes which we discuss in Chapter 7. The area-based initiatives had both people- and place-based outcomes, and we present learning on both of these below.

6.4.1 People-based outcomes

Overall, place-based strategies had at best variable results in improving outcomes for individuals and households resident in those areas. This was despite considerable expenditure, sustained effort and some innovation.

Participation in paid work (employment, unemployment and worklessness)

There was an increasing policy focus on improving rates of participation in paid work throughout the 2000s. Federal/national governments in Australia and the UK had implemented first-wave welfare reforms to reduce rates of unemployment, followed by second-wave reforms aimed at reducing 'worklessness' (defined as people who are not in the labour force and in receipt of welfare benefits). Over time, and in both countries, this evolved into a debate about welfare dependency. The question we address here is whether there is any evidence that place-based initiatives reduced unemployment and worklessness.

The evaluation of NDC indicated little overall improvement on employment indicators compared to other areas, although there had been some improvements in NDC sites prior to the global financial crisis and recession. The evaluation of NSNR/NRF found improvements in the different measures of unemployment and worklessness and a reducing of the gap in relation to comparison areas until 2006–07, when the gap started to increase again (AMION Consulting 2010, p.26).

In Victoria, the evaluation of NRV found a 4 per cent reduction in unemployment in project sites in 2008 compared to three years earlier (more than double the rate for Victoria as a whole), although it was still higher than the state average at 13 per cent. There was, however, no change in terms of worklessness, or narrowing of the gap with the rest of the state in the NRV sites and some deterioration in residents' perceptions that they received better employment services (NRU 2008, pp.2–3).

The key learning appears to be that area-based initiatives had a greater impact on rates of employment/unemployment than they did on worklessness. It is not clear why this is the case, particularly since there was economic growth and job creation during much of the period in both countries, although this was not evenly distributed nationally. One possibility is that those who get jobs move out to other areas (AMION Consulting 2010, p.61). Other possible explanations are that local partnerships differed in the priority they gave to addressing unemployment and worklessness, and that some partnerships chose to work with the most disadvantaged who were least likely to get a job. It may well be that a longer time period is required to show positive results in this area.

All the programs included concentrations of social housing in which residents had high rates of worklessness. Research in both countries has recognised that while this is a correlation, the direction of causality is complex and hard to unpack (Hills 2007; Dockery et al. 2008). Qualitative research in both countries suggests that worklessness is associated with multiple dimensions of disadvantage which in combination, and cumulatively over time, make it very difficult for these residents to enter and remain in paid work (Fletcher et al. 2008; Hulse & Saugeres 2008). It may well simply take more time to develop the confidence and skills to engage in paid work, as well as addressing a variety of obstacles to working.

Education and training

It proved difficult to make improvements to education outcomes through place-based interventions. There was a weak negative association between higher levels of expenditure on this area and change in NDC sites (Batty et al. 2010b, p.27). This was disappointing and it is not clear why this was the case. In terms of the NSNR/NRF, there were more positive results but the 'bottom-up' results from local research projects are not strong and may well reflect broader measures such as the government's Sure Start scheme (see Chapter 5) which was operating at the same time in deprived neighbourhoods (AMION Consulting 2010). The evaluation of NRV showed broadly positive results for education indicators, including reduced absenteeism and completion of Year 12, but suggests that key measures of literacy and numeracy for school age students remained unchanged (NRU 2008, p.2).

Health

There is increasing evidence on the social determinants of health such that people living in disadvantaged areas have worse outcomes than those in more affluent areas (Marmot & Wilkinson 2006). Across the two case studies, findings were very mixed in terms of health. This is an area where it is difficult to show a causal relationship between interventions and outcomes. The evaluation of NSNR reported, for example, that two of three headline health indicators worsened (AMION Consulting 2010, p.28). The NRV evaluation indicated that residents' assessment of their own health remained much the same. One area for optimism is that those participating in renewal activities had a significant improvement in self-reported health (NRU 2008, p.6).

The Decent Homes strategy in the UK was expected to assist in addressing health inequalities. In one example (Sheffield), careful analysis was undertaken of the projected benefits: improved warmth and comfort (affecting the likelihood of heart disease, winter deaths of older people, and respiratory illness including childhood asthma), improved safety (affecting accidents in the home) and improved security (affecting mental health and wellbeing) (Gilbertson et al. 2006). The National Audit Office in reviewing the program reports that stakeholders identified a number of wider benefits including the quality of service received by social housing tenants, tenant engagement, increased employment opportunities and community spirit (although interestingly there was no mention of health benefits). It concluded that:

Lack of data on these wider benefits means that it is not possible to identify the Programme's true impact throughout its life (NAO 2010, p.36).

This does not mean that the projected health benefits did not occur. Rather, the learning in respect of health is that the causal factors are complex and that single interventions may not have a direct effect. However, improving housing and local environment and addressing concerns about crime can assist in making people feel better about living in a place, which may well have long-term health benefits.

Discussion about people-based outcomes

Key learning about area-based initiatives in improving outcomes for disadvantaged people is summarised in the evaluation of NDC:

What this means is that any ABI [area-based initiative] is likely to have only a marginal impact on individual level trajectories. What happens to any one individual will fundamentally depend on their personal characteristics and not whether or not they live in a regeneration area. This is a critically important finding. (Beatty et al. 2009a, p.30)

This finding should be treated with some caution, however, as discussed in some of the evaluations and raised by interviewees in both case studies. Firstly, it may well be that improvements to health, education and workforce participation of very disadvantaged residents simply takes longer than the relatively short periods covered by all the evaluations. Secondly, and this is an important point, the composition of individuals/households in an area may change due to people moving in and out. There is evidence that some, although by no means all, of the people who got jobs moved to more advantaged areas and that people who moved into the neighbourhood typically were more disadvantaged, including (although not only) higher needs households who were allocated social housing. Thirdly, place-based approaches need to work in conjunction with interventions that target individuals, such that people are encouraged/supported to find jobs (e.g. through training) while attention is given to regional economic development and the types of jobs available to people living in disadvantaged places.

In all these respects, increased targeting of social housing to the most disadvantaged people when filling vacancies makes it more difficult to improve people-based outcomes through area-based initiatives. The evaluation of NRV showed that in the six years to 2008, there was an increase of almost 8 per cent in allocations to people in high priority segments to 80 per cent of new allocations, compared to a slight decrease in the rest of the state to 67 per cent. The NRV evaluation reports that it is:

... all the more remarkable that positive results were achieved including an 8 per cent decrease in public housing turnover and a 22 per cent increase in acceptance rates for social housing. (NRU 2008, p.6)

Exogenous factors may also contribute to lower turnover in social housing and increased acceptances, such as rising rents in the private rental sector which limit the opportunity to exit, and changes in social housing management policies on the type and number of offers (Hulse et al. 2007).

The evaluations of the comprehensive place-based initiatives suggest that the most important outcome of area-based strategies in terms of outcomes for people is how they feel about their neighbourhood. This in itself can positively affect outcomes such as mental health, which are inherently difficult to measure.

6.4.2 Place-based outcomes

Area-based initiatives improve place outcomes. It would be surprising if this were not the case, given the attention and resources devoted to improving outcomes. The two main areas where improvements were reported were crime and safety and the local environment, with more mixed results in respect of housing.

Crime and safety

The evaluations of NDC and NSNR/NRF show improvements in indicators of crimes, particularly crimes against property, as well as some narrowing of the gap with comparator areas and national benchmarks. However, the effect of these interventions in reducing violence against people was more limited, with some deterioration in respect of criminal damage and violent crime (AMION Consulting 2010, pp.66–9). The NRV evaluation had similar findings, with improvements in overall crime and crimes against property and in residents' overall perceptions that their community was a safe place to live, but a deterioration in crimes against people and no change in whether people felt safe walking in their street (NRU 2008, p.2). It is unclear why crimes against people, particularly violent crimes, increased in these areas. One possibility raised by the NRV evaluation is that police and community

attitudes are changing in respect of domestic and family violence and there is more reporting than previously (NRU 2008, p.5).

The evaluations highlight that addressing crime and improving safety is top of the list of residents' priorities. The learning is that it is easier to have a direct effect on overall crime, and crimes against property, than on violent crimes against people. Further, drawing attention to crime can be a two-edged sword in terms of people's perceptions, and fear of crime may not relate directly to its incidence.

Housing and the physical environment

In general, the evaluations of NDC and NSNR suggest that there was more evidence of increased satisfaction with the physical environment (cleaner streets, quality of parks and open spaces, and decreased environmental vandalism such as graffiti and rubbish) which has a strong impact on residents' satisfaction with living in an area. There was particular satisfaction with neighbourhood wardens patrolling the streets (AMION Consulting 2010). The evaluation of NRV also found a more positive view of the physical environment (NRU 2008, pp.18–19).

The impact of area-based strategies on housing outcomes is more mixed. The evaluations of NDC and NSNR indicate weaker effects on housing outcomes than for the physical environment. For example, there was little change in residents' satisfaction with the quality and standard of repair of their dwellings under NDC (AMION Consulting 2010, p.71). The NRV evaluation reported more positive outcomes, including residents' satisfaction with their house/flat (the highest rating for any of the indicators) and improved energy efficiency (NRU 2008, p.2).

The evaluation of HMR points to demolition and land assembly and some new construction but the early results were mainly to be found in improving the quality of housing in the Pathfinder areas, including both social housing brought up to Decent Homes Standard and also privately owned and/or rented housing (Leather et al. 2009).

The Decent Homes program was recognised by interviewees in the UK as, in many respects, the most successful housing-related social exclusion strategy of all. At the end of 2010, it appeared that 92 per cent of social housing met this standard, giving residents higher levels of comfort and amenity (HCA 2011). The scale of activity was enormous: installation of 700 000 new kitchens, 525 000 new bathrooms, over a million new central heating systems and rewiring of 740 000 homes (House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee 2010, p.3). This is described as:

... a great achievement—and one that Labour oddly failed to talk about.
(Toynbee & Walker 2010, pp.141–2)

The suggestion is that the program was too 'Old Labour' and redistributionist to appeal to the electorate of middle England.

Community outcomes

Place-based approaches generated positive community outcomes, at least during the duration of projects. Residents felt better about living in their areas. How much of this is due to the interventions themselves and how much to the attention, activity and resources associated with the programs is hard to disentangle. However, this did not necessarily mean that residents wanted to stay. For example, in the six years covered by the NDC evaluation, there was no change in the percentage of people who said

that they wanted to leave the area (40%). This was viewed as a disappointing outcome.

If you look at the community as a whole there was no change [questions like: Do you know your neighbours?] ... The NDC community outcome was never clear about what it meant: Was it about engagement or something else? (interviewee UK)

In the case of NRV, as well as seeing the neighbourhood as a good place to live, there were also significant improvements in pride in the neighbourhood and resident interaction and participation in the community, as well as resident involvement in decision-making. However, residents did not feel a greater sense of belonging, although there was a significant variation across the projects (NRU 2008, pp.14–17). Unlike NDC, they were not asked whether they would like to leave the area.

Discussion about place-based outcomes

Overall, the learning is that place-based approaches are effective in addressing some of the immediate place-based issues that are of concern to residents, including safety/crime, the local environment and housing quality. There are many benefits associated with knowing that something is being done to improve the area.

Physical improvements provide a tangible sense of achievement and it is possible to get good outcomes through improving housing. The Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) at the London School of Economics tracked 12 areas of multiple deprivation intensively over a decade, with a particular emphasis on prospects for children. They found that:

The greatest gains were in environmental quality, general cleanliness and tidiness, in the care and upgrading of existing homes and open spaces, and in resident involvement. (Power 2009, p.127)

Finally, although there are many positive outcomes from place-based programs, did they fundamentally change the nature of disadvantage? While opinions varied, there was support for the view that improving places is necessary but not sufficient to address the deep social exclusion experienced by some individuals:

There is something profound about the effects of living in a place on every indicator of disadvantage. You cannot resolve the disadvantage by fixing places alone, but it is part of the package. (interviewee Victoria)

The changes were quite dramatic—street furniture, community centres etc.—but this isn't really enough to change people's lives ... they are still deprived areas. (interviewee UK)

In other words, although place-based approaches can arrest decline and make improvements, it is more difficult to address spatial inequalities which have their origins in housing and labour markets, as we discuss next.

6.5 Challenges

Learning about place-based initiatives to address concentrated social exclusion in both countries throws up a number of challenges.

6.5.1 Multiple scales of disadvantage

A key learning from the place-based initiatives in the UK is how we think about disadvantaged neighbourhoods. This work suggests that they are not fixed 'containers' in which disadvantaged people live out their lives and which engender

explanations of social exclusion based on a 'culture of poverty'.²⁵ People's lives are not restricted to the neighbourhoods they live in, even if they do not have much money and rely on public transport. They move on a regular basis beyond these neighbourhoods to contact family and meet friends, go to school, work, visit the doctor, go shopping and visit entertainment venues. Experience of concentrated social exclusion is thus more complicated than appears in much current social policy debate.²⁶ Policies and programs which are based on the view that people are socially excluded, trapped in a place, and do not venture beyond it, are likely to be ineffective. According to two commentators on the NDC in the UK:

Labour was seduced by the idea of 'captive communities' that could be fixed, but in reality they are fluid, mobile and unmeasurable. (Toynbee & Walker 2010, p.148)

The challenge is to understand the ways in which people move between different spatial scales, and which scale is the most appropriate for different types of interventions. As we have seen, interventions in respect of community safety and improvements to the environment can be effective at a small scale. Interventions in respect of health and education, for example, may require consideration of larger areas. Interventions in respect of employment and training must consider the match between skills available at the individual and neighbourhood level and skills required as a consequence of local and regional economic development.

6.5.2 *Different types of disadvantaged areas*

Conceptual and empirical work undertaken for NSNR suggests that not all disadvantaged areas are the same and that different types of areas may require different types of interventions (Robson et al. 2008, p.2695).²⁷ In practical terms, this means understanding the nature of residential mobility and the characteristics of households who move into, and out of, disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Four types of disadvantaged neighbourhoods were identified in England: *transit* areas (where there are a lot of starter households, including students), *escalator* areas (with households slowly moving up in terms of the housing and labour markets), *improver* areas (a form of gentrification) and *isolate* areas in which households move from and into areas that are equally or more deprived (Robson et al. 2008, pp.2697–8).

The first three of these play 'normal' roles in the housing market. The 'isolate' areas are of most concern since these are the ones that trap disadvantaged people. In such areas, many people will be left behind and there is a need for continued interventions, especially in regard to people-based interventions (AMION Consulting 2010, pp.114–115).

The NDC areas with the least change and the most problems were the 14 which were mostly white, in smaller towns, tended to have a very strong private rental sector, and built on the edge of towns. They showed the least change and were very cut-off communities. (interviewee UK)

Better understanding of the role of disadvantaged areas in housing and labour markets is arguably *the* most important learning from the area-based initiatives. In Australia, this would build on existing knowledge about the socio-economic

²⁵ As pointed out by one of the anonymous peer reviewers, using the concept of social exclusion rather than social disadvantage in itself encourages a 'container' view of disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

²⁶ We are indebted to Professor David Robinson of Sheffield Hallam University for his insights into the limitations of a 'container' view of deprived neighbourhoods.

²⁷ Details of this work were also published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (Robson et al. 2009).

characteristics of households living in such areas (Vinson 2007, 2009c) and the ways in which disadvantaged areas link into the surrounding context to test and further refine a typology of disadvantaged neighbourhoods to guide future policy interventions.²⁸ A new AHURI Multi-Year Research Program on Addressing concentrations of social disadvantage will take up this challenge (Pinnegar et al. 2011).

6.5.3 Understanding housing markets

A key learning from place-based initiatives is the role and impact of the private rental sector in disadvantaged areas. For the most part, such areas were seen initially as having concentrations of social housing and associated problems.

There was a very simplistic diagnostic narrative around 'ghettoes of despair'. This was a prescriptive narrative: if only we could release people and set them on a path of self-determination. This fails to acknowledge the lack of security of private rented accommodation and problems of condition, which are far worse than in social housing. Nearly half were deemed to be in disrepair. All this is likely to impact on families in terms of increasing social exclusion. (interviewee UK)

Over time, there was growing appreciation of some of the issues associated with private rental housing. This received most attention in the HMR Pathfinders, not surprisingly since this is an explicit housing intervention. A commissioned paper for the national evaluation recommends 'developing a much more sophisticated understanding of the private rental sector in their areas' (Sprigings 2007, p.6). In some neighbourhoods within the Pathfinder areas, more than 30 per cent of all homes were privately rented compared to 12.9 per cent for England (Shelter 2009, p.4). Many of these households were on welfare payments and low incomes. The characteristics of the private rental sector in areas of decline included absentee landlords and poorly maintained stock (Shelter 2009, p.1). In some areas there was selective licensing of private landlords to address some of these problems. Overall, the learning is that there is a need to understand better the role of the private rental sector in these areas (DCLG 2009a, p.33). This would seem to resonate in Australia where the sector is much larger and has a bigger role in housing lower-income households than in the UK (Hulse & Pawson 2010).

6.5.4 Understanding the economic context

An important learning from the place-based initiatives is the need to understand the broader economic context for disadvantaged neighbourhoods. For example, some are deprived pockets within areas which have good access to jobs, transport, services and facilities. Typically such areas comprise mainly social housing, and the policy challenge is to develop interventions that enable residents to link into this broader context. In Australia, this would apply, for example, to high rise public housing estates located in well-resourced inner urban areas. Others are in areas that have a weak economic base such as the HMR Pathfinders which were selected for this reason. In Australia, this would include disadvantaged areas in old industrial suburbs where manufacturing has declined or closed down, some outer urban and peri-urban areas at the fringes of large cities and towns, and some regional areas. In this case, area-based interventions are necessary but need to be accompanied by economic investment to achieve good outcomes.

²⁸ One example is an Affordable Housing Practice Guide and Toolkit developed for local governments and others which assists in the identification of interventions appropriate to different market contexts and which highlights the potential role of planning systems (Gurran 2008).

There are lots of hot spots for unemployment, and some way of trying to attract investment to these areas is required. (interviewee Tasmania)

Any strategy for neighbourhood-based renewal needs to be complemented by developing mechanisms that more effectively link economic and housing policies with the aim of neighbourhood regeneration. (AMION Consulting 2010, p.116)

6.5.5 Political challenges

A key lesson of the UK experience is that there needs to be continual reinvestment in deprived areas. You cannot 'fix it and go away'. Social inclusion/exclusion is a process, not an outcome.

There are also political challenges about the beneficiaries of place-based initiatives. Some specifically aim to improve areas through greater diversity of housing tenure (usually code for diluting the amount of social housing) and of households (usually code for bringing in home owners with jobs). If this is successful, the effect will be improved outcomes for people living in the area, for example health status, but there may have been no change in respect of outcomes for existing residents, and some may be worse off if they have to relocate involuntarily. This has been an issue for the HMR Pathfinders and has generated political controversy (Leather et al. 2009, p.14), including a view that the program was instrumental in breaking up working-class communities (Allen 2008).

In the Australian context, there was strong support for the view that place-based initiatives should encourage people to stay rather than to go.

We have to maintain a community approach if the investment is to be long-lasting. I am of the view that we should encourage people to stay and not to move on. Otherwise it is difficult to establish a good community. (interviewee Tasmania)

It also appears that interventions that address housing market failure, in particular, those that seek to enhance access of disadvantaged people to more advantaged areas (promoting social inclusion rather than ameliorating social exclusion), inevitably attract controversy.

6.6 Summary

Learning from the place-based initiatives in the two countries indicates that concentrated social exclusion is a process, not just another way of describing spatial disadvantage. Not all disadvantaged areas are the same: it is important to understand the functional roles that they play in the housing and labour markets. It is inaccurate to see disadvantaged areas as containers within which people experiencing multiple disadvantages live their lives. Rather, they are platforms from which people engage at a number of different spatial scales in their daily lives.

Place-based policies and programs require a sophisticated understanding of residential mobility and the factors that underlie this: local and regional economic context, housing and planning policies and the social context, including the stigma that attaches to living in some areas. There are two main strategic approaches to addressing the housing-related consequences of concentrated social exclusion: comprehensive area-based approaches (aiming at improved outcomes for people and places and addressing spatial inequalities) and housing improvement and housing market programs (primarily about improving housing/place as a catalyst for improving outcomes for people). Selection of an appropriate approach requires a detailed understanding of the processes that underlie spatial inequalities.

Comprehensive area-based approaches are expensive and require sustained long-term commitment to produce results, but the scale of investment is still relatively small in the context of mainstream service provision to such areas. Expenditure on housing improvements and other physical improvements is costly but does signify serious intent and helps residents to feel better about living in an area that may have important, although largely unquantifiable, benefits. Additional funding enables some innovation to address local priorities, but appears to have variable effects in leveraging in additional resources from mainstream services and other sources. There is a danger that mainstream agencies will not put in additional resources, or even withdraw resources, if they see additional resources being devoted to particular areas.

Comprehensive area-based approaches do generate considerable local activity and innovation. Resident priorities often focus, at least initially, around providing additional resources for basic services, such as community policing and other improvements to security and the local environment. Involvement of residents is beneficial at a number of levels, but most do not engage with these processes and some move out if their personal circumstances improve.

'Whole of government' approaches are widely supported but are difficult to achieve in practice due to vertical lines of accountability for functional areas. Some mainstream agencies have national/state agendas and it is difficult for them to focus on small areas (education, health, workforce development and even housing). Local partnerships are an important part of place-based approaches. They extend beyond 'whole of government' approaches to include some local residents, third sector representatives and business.

Large programs take time to scale up and—in order to prevent cynicism and burn-out—it is important to be realistic about what can and cannot be achieved within particular timeframes. Clear strategies are required to 'end' place-based programs and to ensure that the benefits generated over a long period do not simply dissipate when the program ends.

Place-based strategies have, at best, variable results in improving outcomes for people in terms of education, health and worklessness; however, a combination of residential mobility and relatively short time periods may explain some of the differences. Area-based initiatives improve places, particularly in respect of crime and safety, the local environment and the quality and condition of housing. Improving an area's safety and appearance appears to be associated with greater pride in local community and may have benefits for mental health, although these are difficult to quantify.

Place-based disadvantage refers to where people live, which is determined largely through housing processes. Housing markets sift and sort where people are able to live (the choices that they have). Place-based policies and programs can attenuate or ameliorate the effects of market factors for people experiencing disadvantage. The role of the private rental sector in contributing to place-based disadvantage is not well understood and requires further investigation. In addition to affordability, this should include its role in residential mobility, housing quality, stability/instability of housing and effects on local communities. Regeneration/renewal of areas requires attention to the economic base of particular areas. They are unlikely to be sustainable in the longer term without local and regional economic development, although national economic conditions do make the task easier or harder, as highlighted in the UK case.

7 EVALUATION

Adoption of the social inclusion/exclusion concept in Australia and the UK generated a raft of initiatives, large and small, and experimentation with new forms of governance, as discussed in Chapters 4–6. In this chapter, we examine some of the learning from experiences in evaluating the housing-related interventions within a social inclusion/exclusion framework, addressing the third and final research question: ‘*What are the lessons for Australia of international good practice in evaluation of housing and other relevant policies aimed at achieving social inclusion?*’ The chapter is based on interviews with key informants in the case studies, a review of evaluations of housing-related interventions in the two cases, and academic and policy literature on evaluation.

7.1 Social policy evaluation

Evaluation has been an integral part of the social inclusion/exclusion agenda in Australia and the UK.²⁹ It is important to know whether new strategies, policies and programs are better at addressing social exclusion (or improving social inclusion) than the ones that preceded them. These initiatives are sometimes expensive and there is often a single window of opportunity to learn about which policies and programs make a difference, and why. Other drivers of the burgeoning interest in evaluation include changes in public sector management such as performance management, value auditing and evidence-based policy-making more generally (Jones & Seelig 2004). In the UK, evaluation and evidence-based policy were strongly associated with the Blair government’s ‘modernising government’ agenda (Pawson & Jacobs 2010).

7.1.1 Evaluation types

There are many types of evaluations, but a broad distinction is often made between evaluation of *processes* (sometimes called formative or performance evaluations) and those which focus on *outcomes* (sometimes called summative or impact evaluations). Process evaluations consider the conceptualisation of the issue/problem, the adequacy of the objectives, whether policy or program design is ‘fit for purpose’, the effectiveness of implementation and the adequacy of resourcing (Queensland Department of Education and Training 2009; New Zealand Ministry of Health 2009). Such evaluations could be considered as a normal part of doing business; they aim to improve policy implementation and inevitably involve government policy-makers and other stakeholders in a very direct way.

There has been an increasing emphasis on outcome evaluations (Kushner 2002) in part stimulated by social inclusion/exclusion strategies but also within the context of changes in public sector management more generally. This type of evaluation assesses not whether a program has been well implemented but whether planned outcomes were achieved; whether there were any unintended consequences, and whether the program made a difference (Hind 2010, pp.28–9). Outcome evaluations involve difficult questions of causality which have ‘raised the bar for what evaluations should produce’ (Schwiegert 2006, p.416). Outcome evaluation thus entails not only assessment of what changed but also an analysis of how and why change occurred.

²⁹ As highlighted in chapter 4, the Australian Liberal/National government (1996–2007) did not use the term ‘social inclusion’ but had strategies based on similar principles. It commissioned a number of important evaluations, including the national evaluation of the Stronger Families and Communities Strategy (Muir et al. 2010) and evaluation of the COAG trials to improve living conditions in remote Indigenous communities (Morgan Disney and Associates et al. 2006).

Questions are increasingly asked about what the policy or program has achieved relative to the resources and effort invested in it (was it worth it?). There has been growing interest in the economic evaluation of social policy, defined as 'the systematic attempt to identify measure and compare the costs and outcomes of alternative interventions' (Sefton et al. 2002, p.3). In the context of social inclusion/exclusion, this includes not only cost effectiveness (what was achieved for the investment) but also a broader assessment of the overall costs and benefits, including those beyond the immediate scope of the intervention. Such evaluations are designed to assist in making decisions about whether it is worthwhile investing in this type of policy or program. A complicating factor is that costs and benefits often flow across policy portfolios and programs. An example in the Australian context is economic evaluation of policies to address homelessness (e.g. Pinkney & Ewing 1997, 2006; Flatau et al. 2008) which suggests that many of the financial benefits of reduced levels of homelessness accrue to policy areas such as health and criminal justice.

There is a burgeoning literature on evaluation in Australia and the UK (Kushner 2002; Markiewicz 2008; Pawson & Tilley 1997; Sefton et al. 2002) as well as excellent practical guides and toolkits (e.g. Pope & Jolly 2008; Wadsworth 1997). Our purpose here is not to replicate generic material but rather to distil some key learning about evaluation of housing-related interventions related to social inclusion/exclusion from the two case studies.

7.2 Evaluation

As discussed in Chapters 4–6, integral to the social inclusion/exclusion agenda was recognition that there are complex and interlinked causes of deep and concentrated social exclusion that require innovative approaches and new forms of governance. In this context, evaluations sought to assess whether planned outcomes were achieved, but also to generate learning about innovation and governance. Many sought to involve a range of stakeholders, including the proposed beneficiaries of policies/programs.

7.2.1 Evaluation approaches

All the evaluations aimed at assessing whether planned outcomes were achieved but many also drew on local skills and experience to take account of specific contexts. In this respect, many combined top-down and bottom-up approaches. Most of the large evaluations in the UK, and some in Australia, involved some component of local evaluation as a means of gaining local knowledge, and informing and empowering local people and organisations who are involved in projects to improve local areas.

The learning from the two cases is that it is possible to include both top-down and bottom-up approaches within an evaluation process, for example, both NSNR and HMR Pathfinders in the UK had local research programs. In the case of NSNR, this involved case studies of 18 deprived neighbourhoods in receipt of the NRF, and three deprived neighbourhoods without, using a combination of statistical analysis and primary qualitative research (DCLG 2010a).³⁰ Other evaluations such as NDC and NRV did not have specific local evaluations but sought resident views through household surveys and also elicited views of other stakeholders. In the case of NRV, a part of the evaluation design was community surveys in which local residents could act as interviewers, building up and using their skills and giving them a stake in the process (NRU 2008).

³⁰ The local research project incorporated over 700 interviews with regional and local stakeholders and 36 resident focus groups (ECOTEC Research and Consulting 2010).

Evaluation of housing-related interventions in the context of social inclusion/exclusion thus moved beyond what has been described as 'longstanding paradigm wars between the scientific realists and social constructionists' (Markiewicz 2008, p.35). The former emphasise independent and objective assessment of outcomes, experimental and quasi-experimental design, and sees the evaluator as an objective assessor independent from key stakeholders. The latter emphasise the political nature of evaluation of outcomes, include participatory research methods which aim to enhance learning and support innovation, and the evaluator has to recognise and deal with the different value positions, perspectives and interests of the various stakeholders.

Combining different approaches and methods is difficult as in any type of mixed methods research. The challenge is to combine elements of both models in what has been described as:

A politically grounded, policy-relevant and participatory approach to evaluation whilst also pursuing a credible evaluation approach to the collection, analysis and reporting of evaluative data. (Markiewicz 2008, p.36)

7.2.2 *Scales of evaluation*

Evaluation of many of the policies and programs under the rubric of social inclusion/exclusion included a number of different scales. We saw that this was the case, for example, with the evaluations of NSNR and the HMR Pathfinders in the UK, and other examples include Children for Communities in Australia and Sure Start in the UK. In other cases, evaluations are likely to be single scale, as in the evaluation of pilot projects such as Centrelink place-based trials in Australia.

Examples of different approaches from the case studies include:

- Meta-evaluations which attempt to synthesise a number of different evaluations, for example, the national evaluation of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal.
- Evaluation of comprehensive place-based initiatives that cut across traditional program areas, for example, the evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal in Victoria, and the New Deal for Communities and HMR Pathfinders in the UK.
- Evaluation of strategic initiatives to improve the effectiveness of services through a focus on disadvantaged areas, for example, the evaluation of Communities for Children in Australia and Sure Start in the UK.
- Evaluation of specific programs, for example, of the implementation of the Decent Homes Standard in the UK.
- Evaluation of trials and demonstration projects to assess new approaches before committing to a larger scale roll-out, for example, Centrelink place-based trials and Local Connections to Work in Australia.
- Project evaluations, for example, the Journey to Social Inclusion homelessness project in Victoria and planned and current evaluations of Common Ground models in the three Australian jurisdictions.
- Local evaluations, for example, as part of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and local HMR Pathfinder evaluations in the UK.

Evaluations ranged from those which were high level and strategic to those which were local and specific. A key learning from the research is the need to understand these different scales and how they fit together. For example, local evaluations and project evaluations are often important if the emphasis is on learning from innovation

in services. At the other end of the scale, a meta-evaluation may be important to provide an overall and strategic view of the effect of housing-related interventions in contributing to social inclusion/exclusion.

7.3 Evaluation design

A key learning from the two case studies is the need to establish a rigorous evaluation design prior to, or in the very early days of, a housing-related policy or program to address social inclusion/exclusion. As in any type of research, the evaluation framework, the methodology, and the data collection and analysis methods need to be explicated and available to stakeholders and others to generate confidence and trust in the findings.

There are good examples of robust evaluation frameworks relevant to the social inclusion/exclusion agenda in both countries. These include the complex, multi-methods evaluation of national strategies, including the Safer Families and Communities Strategy and the New Income Management Model in the Northern Territory (SPRC and AIFS 2005, 2010) in Australia, and Sure Start (NESS 2001) and the New Deal for Communities (CRESR 2006) in the UK.

In this section we are interested in outcome evaluations of housing-related interventions which, as discussed in the literature and in practical guides and toolkits, require:

- Clear objectives which are translated into clear and measurable targets (planned outcomes).
- Baseline data, clear criteria for measuring change over time (indicators) and appropriate and available data.
- Assessment of whether, and how, the intervention produced changed outcomes.

While the principles of outcome evaluations sound simple in theory, there are many challenges in practice, and much to learn from experience in Australia and the UK, as we discuss in the rest of this section.

7.3.1 Objectives and targets

Social policies have often been assessed by measurement of their inputs (e.g. how much money is spent, how many people employed), their throughputs (e.g. how many people use a service) and their outputs (e.g. finalised support periods). In the field of homelessness, for example, these were conventional measures of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program. As we saw in Chapter 5, a social exclusion perspective on homelessness highlighted the need to assess outcomes and this is well accepted by those interviewed.

The real challenge is to find suitable indicators that measure outcomes, not measuring an output. (interviewee Tasmania)

A key learning from the case studies is that housing-related policies and programs have multiple and sometimes competing objectives. For example, place-based improvement programs may seek to introduce more diverse households through strategies such as dilution of social housing and encouragement of home ownership. While this may have the effect of improving outcomes as measured by indicators such as health status, employment rates and income levels, such an approach may conflict with other objectives which seek to improve outcomes for current residents.

Targets are important in that they translate broad objectives into planned outcomes against which progress can be assessed. They provide a framework for the allocation of resources and a means of establishing accountability. In Australia and the UK, a

number of different types of targets can be observed, each of which is useful in particular contexts, but each has its own challenges in terms of evaluation design.

Floor targets (UK)

The original idea of floor targets, as used in the early years of the Labour government in the UK, was that they provide minimum acceptable standards for mainstream public services (NRU n.d.). Government departments were expected to direct their efforts at both groups of people (e.g. age pensioners, pre-school children) and geographic areas that failed to meet these standards. The advantage of floor targets is that not only did they deal with mainstream services but they were explicitly linked with performance targets through the mechanism of Public Service Agreements.

While there was considerable enthusiasm for floor targets, they posed challenges in areas such as education and health where services often did not have a specific neighbourhood element. Progress against some of the targets was not easy to measure, particularly at the level of neighbourhood, as baseline and subsequent data were often not available at a sub-local authority level (AMION Consulting 2010; Ipsos MORI 2006). The approach to floor targets changed over time and they were subsequently tied more specifically with the key outcome areas of NSNR, and clearer responsibilities were given to central government 'functional' departments.³¹

Improvement targets (Australia and UK)

These types of targets are about making improvements to current conditions and can apply to either population groups or areas. They may be directed at:

- Halting or reversing a decline, for example, halting an increase in crime or reversing increasing unemployment among young people in a local area.
- Positive improvement in conditions, for example, reducing the number of homeless people at any one time, or improvements to the quality of housing.

Many of the programs designed to address deep social exclusion which we discussed in Chapter 5 use improvement targets, such as reducing the number of homeless people by some margin, eliminating rough sleeping and reducing the number of families with children in temporary accommodation. They track change over time, often involving quantitative assessment using administrative data, although there are also good examples of qualitative research to assess change in attitudes of residents towards aspects of living in their neighbourhood, for example NRV, NDC.

Narrowing/closing the gap targets (Australia and UK)

Narrowing/closing the gap targets indicate a goal of reducing inequalities between either population groups or geographic areas. A notable example in Australia is the Closing the Gap strategy which aims to increase the health, wellbeing and life expectancy of Indigenous Australians to the standard of non-Indigenous Australians (COAG 2009).³² As we saw in Chapter 6, narrowing/closing the gap targets were also an integral part of the place-based programs such as NDC, NSNR and NRV. Evaluation against these types of targets necessarily involves not only comparisons over time but also comparisons between the population groups or areas that are the target of the intervention and national or regional benchmarks.

³¹ By 2008 these arrangements had been replaced by area-based grants which included Working Neighbourhood Fund monies (formerly Neighbourhood Renewal Fund) (AMION Consulting 2010, p.91).

³² COAG (2009) National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap), <http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2009-07-02/docs/NIRA_closing_the_gap.pdf>, last accessed 10 May 2011.

Many of the targets for housing-related interventions in respect of social inclusion/exclusion are long-term. For example, the targets of the White Paper on Homelessness, halving homelessness and supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it, refer to 2020. In these situations it is important to set interim targets, not only to establish the 'direction of travel' but also to provide some early feedback and a sense of achievement, particularly where the targets cover a long period. For example, interim targets for 2013 have been set in respect of the White Paper on Homelessness (FaHCSIA 2011b). The Closing the Gap strategy has targets with different timelines, ranging from five years for ensuring access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities, to 'within a generation' for closing the considerable gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (Australian Government 2011).³³

7.3.2 *Baseline and indicators*

The importance of timely baseline data in evaluations cannot be overestimated. There needs to be a clear understanding of the 'before' picture in order to measure change in people or place outcomes over time. This does not always happen for a variety of reasons:

- Developing the baseline is often more time-consuming than predicted. For example, the first nine HMR Pathfinders were announced in 2002 (Long 2010, p.2), substantive investment started in 2004 and the baseline report was published in 2007 (Leather et al. 2007). The baseline report on Closing the Gap was produced in 2010 (COAG Reform Council 2010) whereas the strategy and targets were agreed in 2008 (Australian Government 2011).³⁴ The effect of 'pushing out' a baseline report is to delay the first point at which change can be measured and results provided, and may also effectively reduce the period of the evaluation, which makes it harder to pick up longer-term changes.
- Attempting to develop the baseline often highlights problems with available data. Sometimes the data are collected for administrative purposes and are not fit for purpose. At other times, data are available but not at the requisite scale, for example, neither administrative nor national survey data are often available at small spatial scales. This is a particular problem for place-based initiatives.
- Sometimes there may be controversy about the means of establishing the baseline. In Australia, there has been a robust debate about measures of homelessness, with the Australian Bureau of Statistics recently releasing a discussion paper which suggests that there were 63 472 homeless people on census night 2006 (Pink 2011) rather than the 105 000 in previous research (Chamberlain & Mackenzie 2008) and quoted in the White Paper. The implication of this discussion paper in changing the baseline, if accepted, in terms of assessment of outcomes achieved by new approaches to homelessness is uncertain (Farouque 2011).

A lesson from all the evaluations discussed here is to select a relatively small number of high levels or headline indicators. In many respects, the Decent Homes Standard strategy was the simplest in this regard: originally there was one main target (to bring all social housing up to this standard by 2010), a clear benchmark of achievement (the

³³ The Australian government has established a clearing house for research and evaluations relevant to the achievement of the Closing the Gap targets (through the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Institute of Family Studies), <http://www.aihw.gov.au/closingthegap/>, last accessed 10 May 2011.

³⁴ The COAG Reform Council is responsible for providing an annual report on progress against the targets with the first Report on Closing the Gap in June 2010 including baseline data (Australian Government 2011).

standard itself) and one indicator (the net reduction in non-Decent Homes in the social housing sector year on year since 2001. Over time there was some added complexity. In 2003, a further commitment was added to increase the proportion of vulnerable households in the private sector living in dwellings that met the Decent Homes Standard. In 2006, local authorities were allowed to negotiate deadlines for completion beyond 2010 in some circumstances (DCLG 2009b, p.6). There were also difficulties in practice in verifying the data, manifest in discrepancies between a national survey and local statistical returns, which required a major reconciliation project (DCLG 2009b).

The greater the number of planned outcomes, the greater the number of indicators usually required, as in the place-based initiatives discussed in Chapter 6. For example, there were six outcome areas and 17 headline indicators in NSNR, six outcome areas and 36 indicators in NDC, and six outcome areas and 38 indicators in NRV. This is important from the perspective of social inclusion/exclusion which recognises the complex multidimensionality of social disadvantage. However, it does add complexity and may make it difficult to provide a clear and consistent picture of change over time which poses problems in assessing the 'big picture', as we discuss in Section 7.5. It also appears from the case studies that developing indicators to measure changes in housing and place are inherently more difficult than developing indicators relevant to homelessness. For example, NSNR used house prices as the headline indicator for assessing changes to housing and environment, both in terms of improvement and narrowing the gap with the rest of the country. The evaluation recognised that:

The only overall indicator is that of house prices which is an ambiguous measure of improvement. Otherwise the evidence is limited to local data and case study material. (AMION Consulting 2010, p.69)

In designing an evaluation, key decisions have to be made about the type of data that are important in capturing change. They include administrative data, census and survey data by national statistics agencies and other authoritative sources, and primary data collection through surveys, focus groups and interviews to ascertain individual/household and stakeholder views and attitudes. The evaluations used a mix of 'objective indicators' drawing on secondary data and 'subjective indicators' which captured the attitudes and perspectives of residents and other stakeholders. The evaluations of NDC and NRV relied heavily on subjective indicators which measured changes to resident perspectives through household surveys. This indicated the importance given to whether residents themselves thought the area had improved or not. The evaluations of NSNR and HMR Pathfinders drew on secondary data and local research.

An important learning from the UK is that data from national statistical agencies and administrative data are simply not available on key areas that may be very significant, such as mental health, which appeared to be important in explaining how far some people were from being able to engage in paid work. There is also often a lack of reliable data at the appropriate spatial scale, particularly for place-based initiatives.

Even with such a high-profile enterprise as Closing the Gap, there is difficulty in obtaining reliable data to assess progress against some of these targets (e.g. employment outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians), necessitating a commitment to providing significant resources to improve the data (Australian Government 2011, p.17). A key learning is to select a small number of critical indicators, otherwise the task of collecting data against each indicator can outweigh the benefits.

Finally, while there was general support for measuring outcomes through indicators, some interviewees were concerned that the indicators do not pick up on the effects on people and places of overlaying multiple problems. It was suggested that indicators, while valuable, may not tell the whole story.

They [indicators] don't convey the whole picture, and in social areas you can't always quantify outcomes. If you just report on the statistics, then it misses out on other areas. (interviewee SA)

7.3.3 Comparison and causality

All evaluation is longitudinal, and the indicators discussed in the previous section enable tracking change within the population group/area over time. All evaluation also has to tackle the question of causality, including where there is an emphasis on participatory evaluation to support innovation and generate learning. Trying to unpack causality entails comparison between changed outcomes for the group/area which is the target of the intervention and comparable groups/areas and other benchmarks.

Traditionally, the way of establishing a causal relationship is through an experimental method, that is, matched and random assignment of people/areas to treatment and control groups to assess the effects of the intervention (or treatment). This is common in US social policy experiments but less so in Australia and the UK where it is considered that there are ethical objections to random allocation of services. Where attempted, it has usually been at a project level. For example, YP4³⁵ and Journey to Social Inclusion projects in Victoria have used randomised allocation to treatment and control groups with provision to provide extra services to the treatment group without having any adverse effect on the control group (Johnson & Tseng 2010). There are also 'natural experiments' which enable attributions of causality, but these are rare in practice.

Some evaluations of housing-related interventions used a quasi-experimental method involving the comparison of the groups/areas which were the target of interventions with comparison groups/areas over time, examples of which are given in Box 2.

Box 2: Examples of quasi-experimental design in place-based initiatives

Neighbourhood Renewal Victoria (Australia)

The design for NRV involved community surveys conducted in two waves with at least two years between (the timing depended on when the project was established). The surveys involved 300 face-to-face interviews in 19 areas, a total of 5700 residents in each wave. Unlike NDC, they were not a household panel survey, and a different sample was selected each time. NRV also included an abbreviated telephone survey of 150 residents per project in control groups selected randomly from census collection districts proximate to NRV areas, a total of 2850 per wave.

New Deal for Communities (UK)

The design for NDC involved a household panel survey with random selection of households for the baseline and inclusion of the same households in subsequent three waves: a baseline survey in 2002 and three more waves 2004; 2006 and 2008 in the 39 NDC areas. The household surveys involved about 19 500 interviews in waves 1 and 2 (500 per NDC area) and about 15 500 interviews in waves 3 and 4 (400 per NDC area). The evaluation design also involved four waves of a household survey in comparator areas, with the number of responses

³⁵ YP4 was a three year trial in which some homeless young people were randomly allocated to a group which offered a single point of contact to address employment, housing, educational and personal support goals in a joined-up way over two years, with a control group who received the normal services available at that time (Coventry 2005).

varying between 2014 in 2002 and 4048 in 2004. Comparator areas were in the same localities as NDC areas but were not adjoining, to avoid 'contamination effects'.

Sources: NRU (2009); Beatty et al. (2010a, 2010b).

The use of the comparison groups varied. In the case of NRV, a 'relative deprivation index' was constructed to measure the relative difference between the views of neighbourhood renewal site residents and the control group, and a 'neighbourhood effect index' to compare the responses of the neighbourhood renewal site residents and the bottom 30 per cent of residents in the control group (NRU 2009, pp.11–12). However, a different group was selected in each wave in both the NRV and control group areas, so it is unknown how much of the difference in responses was due to selection of a different sample each time.

In NDC, comparator areas were seen as providing a benchmark, but were not regarded as 'scientific controls' as they may have received other regeneration funding. Further, although the same households were selected in each wave, the sample had to be topped up such that, by wave 4, only a minority of those surveyed had participated in all four waves, due to residential mobility and other factors (Beatty et al. 2010a).

Both NRV and NDC also had objectives to 'narrow the gap' which involved comparison with state or national benchmarks. For example, the evaluation framework for NRV involved comparison between neighbourhood renewal sites and state-wide averages (using administrative data). In addition to problems with data, there are a number of other difficulties in assessing whether there has been a narrowing in the gap. The most obvious of these is that 'goal posts can move' such that, for example, the target to eliminate differences in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is affected not only by improvements in life expectancy of Indigenous Australians but also by any increases in the life expectancy of non-Indigenous Australians (Australian Government 2011, p.12).

A further approach is to attempt to measure 'additionality', the benefits that occur over and above those that would have occurred anyway (AMION Consulting 2010, p.78). Establishing additionality usually entails mixed methods and some triangulation of different methods. The NSNR arguably went furthest in attempting to measure additionality through econometric modelling to identify and quantify the factors associated with changes in NSNR areas in terms of the effects of interventions on worklessness. The evaluation identified a number of factors that were statistically significant in their relationship with improvement and decline in relative rates of worklessness. These included a substantial rental sector, both social and private, which was highly significant in terms of outcomes. However, this is an association and does not in itself indicate the direction of causality.

The causality in this relationship is complex. People who are already workless often have limited housing choice and high levels of social housing will tend to restrict mobility. (AMION Consulting 2010, p.47)

Finally, in considering causation, there is the problem of multiple interventions that target the same area and/or people and there may be quite different combinations of interventions at the local level (Lawless et al. 2010). This makes it very difficult to establish a causal link between an intervention and an effect. For example, in Australia there are housing-related interventions and pilot/demonstration projects, some of which are in the same disadvantaged areas and target the same people. This problem also arose in the UK, particularly in relation to place-based initiatives. In the 12 areas tracked intensively by researchers at the London School of Economics, all

had had many initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s (some 74 in the 12 areas) and after 1998 they had experienced renewed activity. Ten had funds from Neighbourhood Renewal, Sure Start was implemented in all but one (Welsh) area, and all had Decent Homes program money. By 2002, there were three or four initiatives in each area and by 2006, 11 of the 12 had some form of local management (Power 2009). It is almost impossible to establish causality where there are multiple interventions in what were effectively 'social laboratories'.

A further problem is that endogenous factors can affect results. In the case of the area-based programs in the UK, it is clear that when economic conditions worsened in the run-up to the global financial crisis there was additional difficulty in addressing worklessness and unemployment in disadvantaged areas.

You want discussion about measurement to be realistic so that you are not just describing the economic cycle. That was an issue in the UK with their reporting. For example, child poverty measures showed a decline when there was a boom in the economy but then went up again. We want to be realistic about assessing the real impact of measures that have been introduced. This is our challenge in the next couple of years. (interviewee national)

The learning is that it is very difficult to establish cause and effect with any accuracy. In practice, the evaluations used a mixture of approaches and methods to try and assemble the best available evidence on the effects of an intervention. This included combining top-down and bottom-up approaches, using quasi-control/comparator groups and national/state benchmarks, applying mixed method design (including quantitative and qualitative methods) and using a combination of statistical, administrative and household survey or interview data. These approaches provided valuable insights into the direction of change, but it is difficult to measure the outcomes of individual interventions precisely (Beatty et al. 2009b).

7.3.4 Outcome evaluation and performance management

One issue that lies at the heart of governance changes within the rubric of social inclusion/exclusion is how assessment of outcome indicators meshes with key performance indicators. Performance management, including key performance indicators, are usually set for different levels of government and different policy portfolio areas, whereas indicators relevant to social inclusion/exclusion inevitably cut across both. This helps to explain why, although there is widespread support for 'whole of government' approaches to social inclusion/exclusion, this is difficult to achieve in practice, as we saw in Chapters 5 and 6.

In the UK, the mechanism in the early 2000s was to assess the performance of mainstream services against floor targets and to ensure accountability for achieving targets through Public Service Agreements (as discussed in Chapter 5) (AMION Consulting 2010, p.28). In Australia, it is not clear how performance management in respect of funding (various National Partnership Agreements) will mesh with measurement of outcomes.

The NAHA process, having federal and state officials around the table discussing these measures, is an example of getting social inclusion policies working in practice. (interviewee Victoria)

I would like to know the outcomes of the Commonwealth investment in social housing over the last few years. They had to get housing on the ground very quickly. (interviewee SA)

The literature on policy evaluation recognises some of these difficulties, suggesting that it is difficult to use the same methodology to hold people to account as to

encourage innovation and risk taking (Kushner 2002, p.17). This appears to reflect a contradiction within government itself which has implications for housing-related interventions to address social exclusion.

Interviewees in Australia were well aware of these difficulties and considered that it was important to be fairly pragmatic.

Health and wellbeing determinants are valuable but it is hard to link cause and effect. We should not spend too much money on performance indicators—keep them simple. We know already that resources, transport and education make a difference. (interviewee Tasmania)

I do think that you have to look at projects that are working around Australia and say 'What can we learn?' and 'How can we replicate those with a local flavour and get commitment to it?'. (interviewee national)

7.4 Resources

7.4.1 People and skills

A key learning from the case studies is that it is important for evaluations to have credibility and for there to be widespread trust in the process. The experience from the UK suggests that outcome evaluations are best done by commissioning people with the requisite skills who are independent from the organisation implementing the strategy, policy or program. This view was also articulated by some of the interviewees in Australia.

It is important to have an independent evaluation. What happens is that you have a program and the evaluation is done by someone you know and, of course, they will be positive. (interviewee national)

This problem is well recognised in the literature in which there is a risk that the evaluator feels pressured to enhance positive findings and play down negative ones in accordance with their reading of the political or organisational context (Markiewicz 2008, pp.36–7). This may involve second-guessing the funding organisation or, in evaluations involving more participative approaches, 'being coopted into the assumptions and the values of the strategies they are supposed to be evaluating' (Kushner 2002, p.21).

It may also be that clients of services also feel some pressure to be positive about an intervention when their views are sought.

Common Ground will be reviewed. A problem is that tenants might be motivated to tell a good story as they want to help the agency. And put a positive glow over their experiences, or the reverse could happen. Self-reports can be risky. It will have to be quantitative data as well, e.g. on hospital admissions. (interviewee SA)

It is clear from the many types of evaluation highlighted earlier in this chapter, and confirmed in the interviews, that evaluation requires a number of different skills sets. The approach taken to evaluation of housing-related initiatives to address social exclusion in Australia and the UK has been to develop skills in evaluation through consortia of academics and private consultants to pull together the requisite skills. In the Australian context, the most comprehensive evaluation of an area-based initiative is the evaluation of the Victorian neighbourhood renewal projects which has involved the state government's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (Department of Human Services) in conjunction with five Victorian universities and a large welfare agency (NRU 2008). This is predominantly an outcome evaluation and does not appear to include a publicly available financial evaluation.

Specialist skills in financial evaluation or in economic evaluation more broadly are often contributed by private consultancies. This may reflect the fact that there was not a strong tradition of economic evaluation of social policies in Australia and the UK (except in health care in the UK) unlike, for example, the US where evaluation is a recognised professional activity. A number of reasons have been suggested for this, including the complexity of social welfare interventions which makes it difficult to systematically assess costs and outcomes, resistance to methods of economic analysis by other researchers, and the long time period often associated with rigorous economic evaluation (Sefton et al. 2002, p.21).

A further challenge is to build up skills within government in evaluation and to consider the appropriate role for governments in this area. There is a clear role for people working within governments in contributing at all stages of the evaluation. This ranges from conceptualisation through sources of data to understanding and interpreting the results.

7.4.2 Time

A key learning from this project is that evaluation takes time. Firstly, it takes time to achieve improvement in outcomes for people experiencing deep social exclusion where the causal factors are complex and interrelated, and for areas which have been disadvantaged for a considerable period. Secondly, the process of evaluation may take time where a combination of data on objective indicators (usually data from national statistical agencies and administrative data) and subjective indicators (attitudinal data from surveys, interviews and focus groups) are required to assess outcomes. Outcomes cannot be assessed according to one set of cross-sectional data but require longitudinal analysis. Otherwise, it may be impossible to say whether interventions produce sustainable outcomes. Thirdly, and more practically, it may take a while to establish data collection for administrative data and to conduct and analyse primary research such as resident attitudes.

The following examples highlight the time periods involved in two of the longer-term evaluations:

- The NDC was launched in 2000. The evaluation took into account eight years of a 10-year program, in two phases (2001–05 and 2006–09). An interim evaluation report was published in 2005 (CRESR 2005) and the final report in 2010 (Batty et al. 2010b).³⁶
- NRV was launched in 2002. The evaluation to date has taken into account four/five years of an eight-year renewal program. An interim evaluation report was published in 2005 (Neighbourhood Renewal Branch 2005) and a further evaluation report in 2008 (NRU 2008). It is expected that there will be at least one more evaluation report.

Robust evaluation of outcomes, even on an interim basis, requires baseline data and then a further round of data collection and analysis after enough time has elapsed for it to be realistic to expect some change in outcome due to the intervention. On the most optimistic scenario, it would be at least three years, and probably more, before findings from an interim evaluation could be released. It can take up to 10 years before a 'final' evaluation is possible.

The problem as articulated by some of the interviewees, particularly in the UK, is that politicians get frustrated with lack of results and can lose interest. There are often

³⁶ There was also a range of other reports published at various times (see http://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/ndc_reports.htm).

frequent changes of ministers of the relevant portfolios, and of public servants, such that they may not have 'bought into' the need for evaluation and may lack interest.

People got bored with evaluation. You can't have change data until time elapses, so people got frustrated with the lack of results. Ten years is a long time in politics, and many ministers are involved over that time. (interviewee UK)

7.5 Strategic evaluation: the 'big picture'

A key question raised in the case studies is how the outcomes of housing-related policies and programs contribute to the 'big picture'. Is social inclusion/exclusion decreasing or increasing, and what contribution do housing-related interventions play in this? Answering these questions required strategic evaluation beyond the level of individual policies and programs.

7.5.1 Australia

The importance and role of strategic evaluation in providing a big picture was discussed in the early years of the Social Inclusion Initiative in South Australia (South Australian Social Inclusion Unit 2004) and more recently in Tasmania (Adams 2009) and at a national level (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2010). There has also been work on a national approach to estimates of poverty and social inclusion by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research (Scutella et al. 2009a, 2009b). These all consider, and draw on, strategic approaches to assessing the big picture in the UK which we discuss later in this section.

At the broadest level, *Measuring Australia's Progress* (ABS 2010) tracks change on key indicators, including housing. This enables a broad-brush view over time, 'whether life is getting better or worse'. This approach does tell us that, despite considerable increases in household economic wellbeing, the key headline indicator of housing affordability (percentage of gross income on housing costs for households renting private and social housing) has remained the same for more than a decade. However, there are no benchmarks or targets, and it is difficult to unpack why there is improvement or deterioration on the indicators.

The state jurisdictions also have their own versions of 'whether life is getting better or worse'. For example, Tasmania Together has headline indicators of whether life is getting better but, unlike *Measuring Australia's Progress*, it does include targets and has baseline data. The cost of housing is part of a headline indicator on the cost of living which affects a reasonable lifestyle and standard of living and there is also an indicator on community safety which relates to place (Adams 2009, Appendix 3).

There is ongoing work in Australia in developing indicators of social inclusion. A Compendium of Social Inclusion Indicators prepared for the Australian Social Inclusion Board uses European Union indicators of social exclusion where possible to enable comparison with EU countries. Housing affordability is included as a supplementary indicator of poverty and low income. Application of this indicator confirmed prior research that the group experiencing greatest housing affordability problems were low-income private renters. There is also an indicator on the prevalence of homelessness which indicates that the rate is relatively stable (Australian Social Inclusion Board 2009, p.17, p.65). As noted by Adams (2009, Appendix 3.14),³⁷ the EU indicators cover the material and labour market deprivation aspects of social inclusion/exclusion better than the social, political or cultural

³⁷ Drawing on Silver and Miller (2002).

dimensions. There is (as yet) no reference to the social, cultural and political aspects of home, housing and place that might affect social inclusion/exclusion.

Interviewees in Australia indicated recognition of the importance of strategic evaluation.

Evaluation is necessary to convince the wider community that it is worth doing these things. Evaluation is important in convincing policy-makers and the community at large that we are serious about it. (interviewee national)

There are a number of challenges for strategic evaluation in Australia which were identified in the documentary review and the interviews.

Firstly, although the developmental work suggests that low-income private renters experience the greatest housing stress (measured in financial terms), it is surprising that there are no indicators which attempt to track the outcomes for these renters, for example, in terms of quality of accommodation and security of tenancy arrangements. Many of those interviewed in Australia talked about the insecurity and instability associated with private renting and its causal role in precipitating homelessness and in reflecting and reinforcing socio-economic disadvantage, which also came out very strongly in the evaluations of housing-related interventions in the UK.

Secondly, it is not possible to say from this approach whether identification of public housing tenants as a group, which appears at risk in terms of more than one of the indicators, describes the outcomes of government policies (greater targeting to those with the most complex needs) or suggests some sort of causal linkage between living in public housing and social exclusion, an issue which generated significant debate in the UK (Hills 2007).

Thirdly, it was recognised in the Australian interviews that there is work to be done around evaluation of place-based outcomes.

They [headline indicators] do cover housing but currently don't cover place very well. (interviewee national)

Fourthly, strategic evaluation faces the dilemma of assessing long-term change when there is a political dynamic which requires short-term results. In this respect, Australian government departments will report through their annual reports, but a consolidated report is anticipated by the end of 2011 on short-term changes.

In addition to the headline and supplementary change indicators, they [the government] are committed to reporting against strategic change indicators which are more short-term ones that reflect current government policy action and should flow through to the long-term meeting headline and supplementary indicators. (interviewee national)

7.5.2 UK (England)

Many of these issues also arose and had to be addressed in the UK where there has been more than a decade of strategic evaluation of changes in social exclusion by governments and independent organisations. The Labour government produced 'Opportunities for All', presented annually to Parliament between 1999 and 2006 (DSS 1999; DWP 2006), with an accompanying set of indicators. It reported against the four main policy priorities: tackling childhood deprivation, promoting employment, alleviating the plight of pensioners, and pursuing area-based solutions to social exclusion.

Housing and place were considered mainly in respect of evaluations of the place-based initiatives that we discussed in Chapter 6. There are no targets, but

identification of direction of change against a base line. The accompanying compendium of indicators was organised primarily by life cycle but included indicators for dwellings below Decent Homes Standard and the number of rough sleepers (DWP 2007). In 2007, the indicators were published but not the annual report, with the government suggesting that a 'new focus' was required (Stewart et al 2009, p.12).

Interviews in the UK suggest that it was difficult to keep up momentum as the government had probably wanted to see faster results than was possible, and that by mid-decade governments had turned to other priorities: Further, if the evaluations show only modest change, politicians and bureaucrats may be sensitive to criticisms that 'this happened on your watch'.

The government had probably wanted quicker results. There was a big turnover of politicians running social exclusion and they kept forgetting about earlier programs. Evaluations were commissioned at great expense and then forgotten about. It was news to them that there had been some positive results. (interviewee UK)

The new Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government produced a State of the Nation Report which indicated framing of policies around the concept of welfare dependency rather than social exclusion. It discussed the high level of worklessness associated with social housing, but also discussed progress in improving housing quality, reducing rough sleeping and improving local environments (HM Government 2010). It is not clear whether this document will be updated.

The UK experience highlights the importance of having an independent, high level and strategic assessment of whether social inclusion is increasing and/or social exclusion decreasing.³⁸

- The National Inequality Panel investigated the linkages between inequalities in economic outcomes and people's circumstances (Hills et al. 2010). It was an independent panel commissioned by the Labour government and published by the incoming coalition government. It found that housing tenure was important in reflecting and exacerbating inequalities, and in particular 'growing up in social housing' was more closely associated with poorer economic outcomes in adulthood than in previous decades (Hills et al 2010, p.26).
- There was also annual monitoring of poverty and social exclusion from 1999 to the present, and related commentary, by the independent New Policy Institute (Parekh et al. 2010). This had a series of indicators; housing was included under 'communities and services' with indicators for polarisation (social renters) and homelessness. This work was published with support from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Research by the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) at the London School of Economics tracked 12 small areas of multiple deprivation over 10 years (1998–2008) (Power 2009). This differed from the government evaluations in that it was intended to capture ground level impacts of changes in policy conditions and social composition, with a focus on what it is like to bring up children in these areas. A number of different types of deprived areas were selected, such as urban and regional areas and centre and peripheral areas.

There is some important learning from the independent strategic evaluations. Firstly, findings are often mixed and not as clear as was hoped for. Mixed results create

³⁸ There were also independent reports in other areas which are beyond the scope of this project such as the Report of the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chance (Field 2010).

problems for governments and other stakeholders which were identified in the interviews.

The thing that people find difficult about the Labour period was that findings were mixed, but things went forward more than back ... The UK is now a more equal society in general but is still very unequal in European terms. So some would argue that the money spent was wasted, but I would argue that things would have been far worse without this. But there was a loss of momentum and a thinking that the job was done, which caused real problems. (interviewee UK)

A second key learning is that if social exclusion is a process rather than an outcome, and the causation is complex and multifaceted, no one policy or program is going to provide the solution.

Policies across a wide range of areas are needed if the disadvantages associated with low income are to be dealt with properly. The fact, however, that the connections are quite loose makes it unlikely that there are 'magic bullets' to be found—solving one part of the problem is unlikely to be the key to solving many aspects of it. (Parekh et al. 2010, p.8)

Thirdly, it is difficult to disentangle which policies and programs are having an effect and in what combination using a top-down approach, the problem of multiple interventions all aimed at the same group of people or the same places. The bottom-up assessment by CASE based on qualitative research methods reported that residents thought improvements to their circumstances and their area was due in particular to tax credits, Sure Start (for pre-school children) and Decent Homes. It concluded that:

More small-scale, less dramatic, more long-term interventions, such as neighbourhood management, neighbourhood wardens, Decent Homes and Sure Start, showed more certain gains than total physical replacement. (Power 2009, p.129)

Fourthly, attribution of causality is a critical component of outcome evolutions, as discussed earlier in this chapter, but there are real difficulties in establishing not only the effectiveness of individual interventions but also which combination of initiatives is being effective. One perspective on this was that it was:

... a period of intensive and multiple innovations in Britain—all bearing down on vulnerable, excluded or underperforming groups, non-coordinated, all claiming attributed effects from the same database. (Kushner 2002, p.18)

7.6 Summary

Evaluation has been an important part of the social inclusion/exclusion agenda in both Australia and the UK, although its rise has also been stimulated by other developments in governance such as performance management, value auditing and evidence-based policy-making. These developments mean that, while process evaluations remain important, the social inclusion/exclusion agenda has placed considerable emphasis on evaluation of outcomes. There has also been some increase in economic evaluation of social policies, including policies on homelessness.

Assessing the outcomes of housing-related policies and programs to improve social inclusion and address social exclusion is complex, particularly in the context of network governance involving multiple stakeholders, each of which has an interest in evaluation. For this reason, many evaluations have used participatory methods to

involve stakeholders, and often the people who are the target of the intervention, and are often multi-scale. More participatory methods are designed to enable learning by all stakeholders, inevitably raising important issues of values and interests that must be taken into account.

Good evaluation is not an 'add-on'—it requires planning and the development of clear and robust evaluation frameworks that specify targets, establish a baseline and develop clear indicators to measure change over time. All evaluation is longitudinal. Evaluation design must also address issues of causality which involves comparison. In particular:

- How do the outcomes for the population group/area compare with those for similar groups/areas and in relation to national/state benchmarks?
- How do the outcomes compare with what would have happened if the policy or program had not been introduced (the counterfactual)?
- How do we know that it was the intervention that led to the changes which have been identified and not some other factor?

It is desirable to engage independent evaluators with requisite skills in all aspects of evaluation to ensure that the evaluation is credible and there is trust in the findings. They should be in a position to share learning with stakeholders to generate improvements and further innovation. Evaluation takes time and money. There is typically a period of at least two or three years, often longer, before a baseline is established and some interim findings are available. It is important to generate findings progressively and disseminate them widely, since political policy cycles are often quite short.

It is notable that evaluation of housing-related policies and programs applies to new initiatives, not to mainstream policies and programs where there is little evaluation. It is important to have independent strategic evaluation of the big picture in relation to the ways in which home, housing and place affect social inclusion/exclusion. There was some independent strategic evaluation in the UK that had a particular emphasis on place-based disadvantage. In Australia, there is some developmental work on strategic evaluation, although further work is required on disadvantaged places, and the social and cultural aspects of housing in contributing to social inclusion/exclusion.

8 CONCLUSIONS

As set out at the start of this report, our key aims are to provide a critical exploration of how housing processes impact on areas of social disadvantage, and to consider how policy might best deliver outcomes that enhance social inclusion. This concluding chapter brings together what we consider are the most substantive issues in respect of housing policy, namely, the concept of social inclusion/exclusion, tackling inequality, housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion, effective modes of intervention and challenges of evaluation.

8.1 The concept of social inclusion/exclusion

The concept of social inclusion/exclusion provides a useful lens for policy-makers to conceptualise the relational aspects of deprivation and to make explicit the links between the wider economy and individual volition. For example, it is recognised that mental health problems and drug addictions can increase the risk of becoming homeless, and that material deprivation is likely to impact on ability to maintain educational and employment opportunities.

The concept can be contrasted with the notion of poverty that tends to foreground the material aspects of deprivation and the role of fiscal policy. There is considerable debate as to whether social exclusion is a more appropriate concept to understand the complex causal factors that impact upon deprivation, for example, questions such as to what extent are pathologies like drug addiction a cause of poverty or to what degree are pathologies an outcome of poverty. It is evident from the academic literature that attempts to prove a clear causality to link processes and outcomes in relation to social inclusion have proved unsuccessful. At best, a focus on social inclusion enables researchers to consider deprivation in a wider political and relational context and to make explicit connections between an individual's actions and their material circumstances.

8.2 Tackling inequality

The most compelling arguments for deploying the concept of social inclusion/exclusion are derived from practice. Research that has been generated using social inclusion/exclusion pays particular heed to what can be achieved through policy interventions that take place at the level of individuals/households and local neighbourhoods. The concept is also helpful for distinguishing the range of experiences associated with material disadvantage and the processes that can accentuate inequality.

Problems such as homelessness, material poverty and social disconnection are best understood as interconnected and not easily amenable to short-term interventions. This noted, there are policies that can alleviate some of the problems associated with exclusion. In the area of homelessness, ongoing support for individuals with multifaceted problems can provide a pathway to secure housing. Regeneration programs can lead to long-term benefits for specific localities that have been bypassed by private sector investment. The evidence suggests that the most effective responses are those that pursue a holistic approach that incorporates different agencies working in partnership. Intensive forms of support have proved especially effective in assisting individuals and households with problematic housing circumstances.

There are good reasons for adopting a threefold typology to distinguish between embedded or deep forms of social exclusion, concentrated forms of social exclusion that manifests in specific spatial locations, and broad social exclusion that cuts across

social groups. These typologies enable us to provide a more focused discussion on the suite of policies that can be deployed by practitioners.

8.3 Housing processes and social inclusion/exclusion

Housing processes, defined as the interaction of housing market factors, government policies and the preferences and actions of individuals/households over time, determine whether people live in appropriate and affordable housing and are able to have a home and belong to place. Some people are excluded from housing, as was recognised in the two case studies in respect of the deep social exclusion manifest in homelessness. It is neither accurate nor useful, however, to think in terms of a dichotomy between those who are housed (included) and those who are not housed (excluded). People can be included or excluded to varying degrees through housing processes more generally.

The research highlighted the importance of understanding housing processes in shaping social inclusion/exclusion. Housing markets by definition comprise the transactions associated with residential moves. Areas with desirable attributes (good housing and environment, low crime levels, available jobs, good transport, and services and facilities) attract a premium in terms of price. Those that are seen as lacking in these respects are priced down accordingly. Thus, people can be included through living in decent, affordable housing in areas with good services and facilities, jobs and transport if they have the means to afford this. Conversely, they can be excluded through having their options limited to poor quality and insecure accommodation in unsafe neighbourhoods, with poor transport links, few job prospects and inadequate services and facilities. In other words, the characteristics of 'place' matter independently of the characteristics of people themselves.

Both case studies highlight that the private rental market plays a particular role in contributing to homelessness and areas of concentrated social disadvantage. In tight market conditions, landlords can screen out 'high risk' people and charge rents that stretch people's finances, leaving them vulnerable to homelessness and deep social exclusion. The same processes price lower income households out of good quality properties in well located areas and into poorer quality housing in areas with lower levels of amenity and higher levels of disadvantage. This process was highlighted in the UK, but is particularly the case in Australia where the private rental sector plays a much more significant role in housing lower income and vulnerable households. Social housing is part of housing sub-markets and can play a positive or negative role in social inclusion, depending on its quality and location, as well as access rules.

It is important to avoid an ecological fallacy when considering areas of concentrated disadvantage. Aggregate statistics about residents' socio-economic characteristics can mask considerable variation in their circumstances and opportunities and, at worst, label people because they live in particular areas. For this reason, it is important to consider the attributes of place independently of the people who live in them, for example, the quality of schools, the type and frequency of public transport, the type of employment available and the quality of the environment. The case studies indicate, in particular, the importance of local and regional economic development to social inclusion/exclusion.

8.4 Effective modes of intervention

What are the most effective forms of intervention? We can discern from the evidence we collated that the most effective programs are those that have a dual focus: on people, but also on the wider systemic processes that maintain inequality. Yet to maintain a dual focus requires sufficient resources streams and political commitment.

It is important to recognise that there are limits to what can be achieved in a policy cycle that is inherently short-term. Area-based interventions alone are incapable of addressing the wider systemic problems that arise from fiscal policies that sustain economic inequality. Any effective 'narrowing of the gap' requires sustained investment in locations that are disadvantaged, for example, economic development to generate jobs as well as strategies to equip people for, and connect with, work.

Effective interventions require recognition of differences between population groups and geographic areas. In both Australia and the UK, there has been increasing recognition that policy interventions to prevent and address homelessness require approaches that are customised, for example, to families with children or older people. Similarly, not all disadvantaged areas are the same; evidence from the UK suggests that they can play quite different roles in the housing and labour markets, requiring different types and intensity of intervention.

One of the most important issues that arose in our research was the confusion surrounding concentrated forms of social exclusion in specific neighbourhoods. There is a need to move away from a model of understanding that assumes that those living in deprived neighbourhoods can somehow be 'fixed' through policy interventions. In practice, a suite of policy interventions can have an impact, but not in ways that are easily measurable in the long term.

Evaluation of the HMR Pathfinders in the UK suggested that policies which aim to diversify housing tenure might bring benefits for those living in the neighbourhood, but not necessarily for those who are required to relocate. Many of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods are subject to significant churning in which households seek to relocate to less deprived areas and others, often with a high level of social need, move in. The most problematic neighbourhoods are often isolated from employment hubs and feature a high proportion of rental housing, particularly social housing. Whatever policies are enacted to enhance social inclusion, their positive impact is undermined by social housing allocation policies that impose eligibility requirements that usually mean only the most marginal households are likely to secure accommodation.

8.5 Negotiating complexity: the challenges of evaluation

In interviews undertaken for the project, respondents provided details of the different forms of evaluation that are used in the realm of housing practice, for example, a synoptic overview or synthesis of interventions, place-based programs that include more than one program focus, pilot studies and project-based studies. In respect of evaluation policies and programs to address social exclusion, a number of issues came to the fore, such as the need to make a distinction between 'processes' and 'outcomes'. Increasingly policy-makers are more interested in evaluations that consider the outcomes of intervention rather than those concerned with the process or stages of implementation. There is recognition that multi-method approaches are necessary to capture both top-down and bottom-up activities. For those undertaking evaluations, consideration should be given to the objectives of the intervention, baseline data, and how interventions lead to changed outcomes.

The challenge in seeking to evaluate is made more difficult because many programs often have multiple and sometimes competing objectives, for example, encouraging social mobility but also establishing a sense of community and place. The establishment of targets is generally seen as helpful, especially ones that aim to narrow the gap between different areas and population groups.

Best practice in evaluation requires a clear baseline to establish 'before' and 'after' measures. Also important is the need to consider whether changes in outcomes are attributable to the intervention or whether they might have occurred for other reasons. Here it is helpful to demarcate immediate changes from those that are longer-term in duration. Perhaps the most important finding is the need for evaluations not to be overly complex or too onerous for staff who are already busy in their day-to-day work. It is not expedient either to pay too much time trying to prove how specific causal factors can lead to outcomes. It is generally now understood that external processes that appear to have only a tangential relationship to the intervention may be among the most significant influences (e.g. economic activity).

8.6 A future for social inclusion policy interventions

Finally, it is appropriate that we ponder why government strategies to promote social inclusion focus more on the components of service delivery rather than on income-related poverty. In our view, there is some reluctance to deploy fiscal policies as a lever to address social inequality and place-based disadvantage. In part, this stems from a desire to minimise expenditure and because, in the past, governments have been subject to considerable criticism in the media when seeking to advance progressive forms of taxation. Social inclusion policies appeal to policy-makers as an alternative policy paradigm because it entails less risk for government organisations. The emphasis on reform within the administration of government and the mode of service delivery is less likely to generate opposition than more structural modes of intervention.

The effects of social inequality are often hidden and difficult to fathom, yet poor neighbourhoods within cities are symptomatic of deep social fissures. Policies that are focused on home and place, such as neighbourhood renewal programs, are often resource expensive and this is why policy-makers focus increasingly on individuals living within disadvantaged neighbourhoods, for example, putting in place incentives for the long-term unemployed to seek work opportunities. In short, there has been a move away from policies that seek to attend to the physical dimensions of home and place, and an embracing of individually-focused and targeted forms of intervention. Governments that embark on welfare reform are attracted to innovations that will generate cost savings rather than those policies that require substantive resources.

In spite of the obstacles, social Inclusion strategies can ameliorate the consequences that arise from the uneven distribution of resources. There are compelling arguments to support investment to address the structural components that source disadvantage. Although Australia has experienced 'the longest period of continuous economic growth on record and associated rise in household incomes' (Productivity Commission 2010, p.1), there remain observable and manifest inequalities between groups of people and between people living in particular areas.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Information statement and consent form

Swinburne letterhead

Information Statement

Project Title

Housing, Public Policy and Social Inclusion

Principal Investigators

Associate Professor Kath Hulse, Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University of Technology

Associate Professor Keith Jacobs, University of Tasmania

Dr Kathy Arthurson, Flinders University of SA

Dr Angela Spinney, Swinburne University of Technology

Invitation to Participate

The research project aims to improve understanding of the ways in which housing policies and related public policies and programmes can be effective in enhancing social inclusion and mitigating social exclusion, drawing on learning from the UK experiences and four Australian case studies.

You are invited to participate in this project as someone who has expertise in this area. We would like to conduct an interview with you at your workplace or other convenient place about issues surrounding housing, public policy and social inclusion in your jurisdiction. If this is impractical, we can arrange a phone interview.

The project

The project will examine how housing policies can contribute to public policies aimed at strengthening social inclusion, in coordination with other policy areas and between different levels of government. It will build on and expand early policy development and research on social inclusion, which has focused on two areas: homelessness and Indigenous housing. The findings will set out the opportunities and challenges of pursuing a social inclusion agenda through housing policy interventions, provide guidance on ways in which housing and related policies can contribute to the social inclusion agenda, and provide advice on the best ways to evaluate policies aimed at achieving social inclusion based on international best practice.

The project is funded by the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI), a non-political national research institute.

What is involved?

If you participate in the project, an experienced researcher will interview you in your workplace or in another location, as mutually agreed. If this is not practical, we may in some cases conduct the interview by phone. We anticipate that an interview will take up to one hour. The questions will follow a template which we can send to you prior to the interview if you would like this. We will ask you to answer as an individual who has expertise in this area rather than as a representative of the organisation that you work for. The researcher will take notes of the interview and, with your consent, make an

electronic recording as back up for later checking of accuracy and comprehensiveness of the notes. The electronic recordings will not be transcribed.

Your rights and interests

Participation in the project is entirely voluntary: you can choose not to be interviewed, not to answer a question, or to withdraw from the interview at any time you wish. You will be asked to sign a consent form prior to the interview.

In signing the attached consent form, you are indicating that you have permission from your organisation to discuss these issues from your personal perspective without prejudice to any official position on this matter which may be held by your organisation.

Privacy and Confidentiality

The electronic recordings (where applicable), interview notes and signed consent forms will be kept securely at the premises of the researchers and not made available to any other party. The Final Report of the project or other academic publications will not attribute opinions that you have expressed to you personally, either by name or position, and you will not be able to be identified in this respect. We would, however, like to acknowledge your contribution as one of a list of contributors but you may choose not to be acknowledged in this way if you wish.

Research publications

The research will result in a Final Report which will be published electronically on the web site of the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) www.ahuri.edu.au.

There will also be other publications arising from the research in the form of peer-reviewed articles in academic journals.

Further information about the project

For further information about the project, please contact the researcher below who is coordinating the fieldwork for the Australian component of the project:

Insert name of researcher carrying out the case study here

Example:

Associate Professor Kath Hulse

Swinburne University of Technology

khulse@swin.edu.au

(03) 9214 5321

Concerns or complaints

This project has been approved by or on behalf of Swinburne's Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) in line with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this project, you can contact:

Research Ethics Officer, Swinburne Research (H68),

Swinburne University of Technology, PO Box 218, HAWTHORN VIC 3122.

Tel (03) 9214 5218 or +61 3 9214 5218 or resethics@swin.edu.au

Consent Form (SUHREC 2009/284 amended)

Swinburne letterhead

Consent Form

Swinburne University of Technology

Project Title

Housing, Public Policy and Social Inclusion

Principal Investigators

Associate Professor Kath Hulse, Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University of Technology

Associate Professor Keith Jacobs, University of Tasmania

Dr Kathy Arthurson, Flinders University of SA

Dr Angela Spinney, Swinburne University of Technology

1. I consent to participate in the project named above. I have been provided with a copy of the project information statement and this consent form and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

2. Please circle your response to the following:

- I agree to be interviewed by the researcher face to face **Yes No**
- I agree to be interviewed by the researcher by phone **Yes No**
- I agree to allow the interview to be recorded by electronic device **Yes No**
- I agree to make myself available for further information if required **Yes No**

3. I acknowledge that:

- My participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation.
- The project is for the purpose of research and not for profit.
- Any identifiable information about me which is gathered in the course of and as the result of my participating in this project will be (i) collected and retained for the purpose of this project and (ii) accessed and analysed by the researcher(s) for the purpose of conducting this project.
- Publications arising from this research will not attribute opinions to me personally, either by name or position.

4. I agree to have my contribution acknowledged in a list of contributors in the

Final Report of the project **Yes No**

By signing this document I agree to participate in this project.

Name of Participant:

.....

Signature & Date:

Appendix 2: Interview themes

AHURI Housing, Public Policy and Social Inclusion

1. Concept of social inclusion
 - 1.1. Broadly, what would you see as the role of housing and place in promoting social inclusion and mitigating social exclusion relative to other factors such as improving health, access to employment and training, and provision of support services?
 - 1.2. What do you see as some of the challenges to social inclusion generated by recent trends in housing markets and housing affordability?
 - 1.3. How useful do you see the concept of social inclusion for devising effective policies to tackle social deprivation/inequalities (what does it add)?
2. Role and effectiveness of policies on housing and place in promoting social inclusion
 - 2.1. What do you see as the role of homelessness strategies (national and/or state level) in promoting social inclusion? How effective have these been?
 - 2.2. What do you see as the role of housing policies at national and/or state level in promoting social inclusion, e.g. on social housing, new types of affordable housing? How effective have these been?
 - 2.3. What do you see as the role of place-based strategies at a national and/or state level in promoting social inclusion, e.g. neighbourhood renewal, community building, urban regeneration? How effective have these been?
 - 2.4. What issues do you anticipate in devising place-based strategies to address social exclusion?
 - 2.5. What do you see as the balance between approaches to social inclusion based on targeted services to people, e.g. through homelessness services, and policies that attempt to address place-based disadvantage? Can they co-exist and how can this best be achieved?
3. Indicators of social inclusion relevant to homelessness, housing and place
 - 3.1. To what extent, and how, do the headline indicators of social inclusion in your jurisdiction refer to outcomes in respect of home, housing and place?
 - 3.2. Are there specific indicators for policies on homelessness, housing and place in assessing social inclusion within your jurisdiction? What do these indicators show (broad picture)?
 - 3.3. How relevant do you think that these indicators are? Are there any plans to improve upon these?
 - 3.4. What are the risks, if any, associated with relying on indicators to measure policy improvements services?
4. Linkages between housing and other public policies in promoting social inclusion, for example health, education, community services
 - 4.1. Can you give some examples of what you consider to be effective linkages between housing and other types of public policies in promoting social inclusion? Can you expand upon the objectives, coordination and means of assessing effectiveness?
 - 4.2. Can you give some examples of what you consider to be ineffective (or non-existent) linkages which exacerbate social exclusion rather than promoting social inclusion? Why do you think this situation exists and what do you think could be done to achieve better outcomes?

4.3. What practical challenges can arise when agencies seek to establish links with other areas of government?

5. Governance[A key aspect of social inclusion policies is recognition of the need for better coordination across different policy areas (joined-up government)].What changes to governance have been implemented in (your jurisdiction) as part of social inclusion strategies?

5.2. How effective have these changes been and what do you think has been learnt about joined-up government as a result?

6. EvaluationsHow has the effectiveness of social inclusion strategies been evaluated in your jurisdiction?

6.2. To what extent and how do current evaluations examine issues of home and place?

6.3. What can be learnt from the evaluations?

6.4. What more needs to be done?

7. Innovations

What do you think are the most important innovations that have occurred in your jurisdiction which would provide an improved sense of home and place for those experiencing social and economic disadvantage? What can be learnt from these and are they context specific or more generally applicable?

8. Other issues

Are there important areas of policy making about social inclusion that are relevant but that we have overlooked in our discussion?

Appendix 3: Key informants interviewed for the project

Australia

National

Eleni Bereded-Samuel, Member, Australian Social Inclusion Board and Community Engagement Advisor and Co-ordinator, Office for Industry and Social Engagement, Victoria University, Melbourne

Dr Ron Edwards, Member, Australian Social Inclusion Board; Chair of the Australian Government's Third Sector Advisory Group, and founding board member of the Graham (Polly) Farmer Foundation (WA)

John Landt, Applied Research, Locational and Data Analysis, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra

Julie Matthews, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra

South Australia

Kerry Beck, Manager, Strategic Programs Team, Homeless Strategy Division, Department for Families and Communities

Sue Crafter, Executive Director, Common Ground Adelaide Ltd

Dr Robyn Groves, Manager, Integrated Design Commission, Social Inclusion Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Lorna Hallahan, Member, South Australian Social Inclusion Board, Department of Social Work and Social Planning, School of Social and Policy Studies, Flinders University South Australia

David O'Loughlin, Projects Director, Property Services, Urban Strategy & Asset Investment, Department for Families & Communities

Libby Raupach, Chief Executive, Common Ground Adelaide Ltd

Jennie Wilkinson, Manager Operations, Affordable Housing & Asset Strategy, Housing SA, Department for Families and Communities

Victoria

Michael Horn, Senior Manager, Research & Policy in the Through School to Work and the In and Out of Work transitions, Brotherhood of St Laurence

George Hatvani, Service Development and Research Manager, Homeground Services

Dr Harald Klein, Director Neighbourhood Renewal, Housing and Community Building Division, Department of Human Services

Anita Lijovic, Employment and Learning Coordinator, Passport to Work, Hume City Council

Deb Tzorabis, Director of Client Services and Programs, Housing and Community Building Division, Department of Human Services

Tasmania

Professor David Adams, Tasmanian Social Inclusion Commissioner

Dr. Jed Donoghue, Red Shield Housing Association, Hobart/Tasmania

Simon Duffy, Community Inclusion Coordinator, Hobart City Council

Martin Gibson, Social Research Manager, Tasmanian Council of Social Service
Melissa Gray, Director, Social Inclusion Unit, Department of Premier and Cabinet
Jeanette Lewis, Policy Officer, Housing Tasmania
Penny Saile, Manager Community Inclusion, Hobart City Council
Liz Thomas, Director, Common Ground Tasmania

UK

Francesca Albanese, Policy Officer, Shelter England
Professor Isobel Anderson Chair in Housing Studies & Director, Housing Policy and Practice Unit, Department of Applied Social Science, University of Stirling
Anna Clarke, Research Associate, Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research, Department of Land Economy, University of Cambridge
Jake Elliot, Policy Officer, National Housing Federation UK
Professor John Hills, Professor of Social Policy and Director of the ESRC Research Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE), London School of Economics
Dr Peter Kenway, Director, New Policy Institute
Professor Paul Lawless, Professor of Urban Policy and Assistant Dean for Research and Business Development, Faculty of Development and Society, Sheffield Hallam University
Dr Tony Manzi, School of Architecture and the Built Environment, University of Westminster
Professor David Robinson, Professor of Housing and Public Policy, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, Sheffield Hallam University

Notes

1. Interviews with key informants were based on their personal knowledge and experience; they were not interviewed as representatives of the organisations which employ them or with which they are affiliated.
2. The position/organisation of key informants is as at the time of the interview.
3. The two key informants from the Hobart City Council were interviewed together.
4. All interviews were face-to-face except for the interview with Dr Ron Edwards which was by phone and the interview with Professor Isobel Anderson which was by email.

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