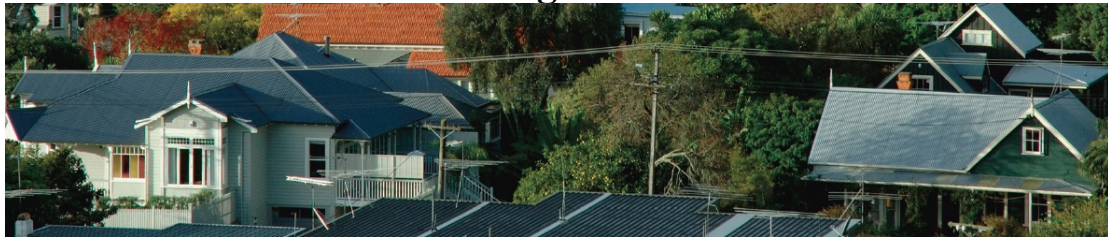


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Understanding Neighbourhood Renewal through People-based Outcomes: Setting up a Longitudinal Panel Study at Bonnyrigg, NSW

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Under Housing NSW's Living Communities Project, the southwestern Sydney suburb of Bonnyrigg, NSW, is being transformed from a socio-economically deprived neighbourhood dominated by public housing into a mixed tenure community. Learning from other neighbourhood renewal projects in Australia and overseas, Housing NSW is committed to better understand how the residents of renewal areas are affected before, during and after the renewal process. This is particularly significant for three reasons. First, the Bonnyrigg Living Communities Project will be the first of its kind in Australia to be delivered through a Public Private Partnership model, involving a consortium of five public, private and non-profit partners. Second, it is also significant given the long timeframe (30 years) of (re)construction and tenure transfer to and management by the non-profit partner, St George Community Housing Association, reflecting diversification of public housing provision and the rise of the community housing sector in Australia. Third, there will be a sizeable increase in housing density, where expected population will increase from the current 800 households to more than 2,000, with much of the detached houses that now dominate the suburb replaced by triplexes and four-unit apartment blocks. With these major changes anticipated, three monitoring mechanisms were devised to review the progress and outcomes of Bonnyrigg's renewal program. This paper showcases one of these mechanisms, a longitudinal outcome-based research on changes (whether actual or perceived) to the quality of life and life chances of current and future residents. This longitudinal research, which commences in mid-2011, will be comprehensive by taking a resident panel approach, involving one-fifth of the suburb's households, and spanning a minimum of five years. An oft excluded though highly perceptive group of residents – children and teenagers – are also included as part of the research in order to gain insights into the longer-term impacts of the neighbourhood's renewal.

Keywords: Longitudinal; tenure transition; community engagement; mixed community; panel; life changes

Introduction

The notion of urban renewal, though already in practice since the mid-nineteenth century, is increasingly being applied in major cities around the world to facilitate neighbourhood regeneration. Early models, such as the restructuring of Paris by prefect Baron Haussmann in the mid-nineteenth century, often involved the complete demolition of ‘slums’. Improvement in sanitation was also a common catalyst for early models of urban renewal. In Sydney, the demolition of small sections of inner-city neighbourhoods after the outbreak of a bubonic plague in the early twentieth century is a notable example (Spearritt, 1974). These early practices of urban renewal were usually carried out on executive decisions with little consultation of those who lived in the ‘slums’ considered. More recently, with greater acknowledgement and understanding of social issues, wider market mechanisms and how they relate to urban renewal, advocates for more inclusive approaches began to emerge. The southwestern Sydney suburb of Bonnyrigg in New South Wales (NSW), Australia, is an example of this shift towards a more inclusive approach to urban renewal.

The project will see significant transformations to the neighbourhood, both in terms of its physical form as well as residential composition. Learning from other neighbourhood renewal projects in Australia and overseas, an independent panel study is being conducted to better understand how the residents of renewal areas – including those from or that will be moving into Bonnyrigg – are affected before, during and after the neighbourhood renewal and what roles public agencies, private developers and the non-profit sector can play to facilitate inclusiveness. This paper provides an explanation of key issues and responses that are shaping our research approach in the case of Bonnyrigg, an approach that continues to be refined during the project’s early stages of implementation.

Addressing concentrations of disadvantage: introducing social mix to Bonnyrigg

Large public housing estates, resulting from Australian planning strategies contemporaneous to the 1960s, have been blamed for the spatial concentration of disadvantages and associated social problems like crime, vandalism and stigmatism. A recasting of urban poverty and welfare distribution politics into concepts of social inclusion and exclusion has acted to transfer concerns regarding systematic inequities towards the relational experience of individuals, households, groups and places to those inequities. When concentrated in the context of place, social exclusion takes on explicit spatial characteristics, with people shut out from the labour market and disconnected from opportunity (Katz, 2004; Lee, 2010). This has stimulated considerable academic interest as to whether geography, proximity and association compound or mitigate disadvantage (Darcy and Gwyther, 2009) and whether ‘area effects’ tied to neighbourhood or locality can be identified (Atkinson & Kintrea, 2002; Ellen & Turner, 1997).

In areas of extreme disadvantage, places are described as developing their own ‘pathologies’. Vinson (2009), for instance, has used the metaphor of a ‘web of disadvantage’ to highlight the risk of becoming ‘trapped’ in disadvantaged communities. As Atkinson and Kintrea (2002; p.147) note, “[t]he area effects approach suggests that deprived people who live in deprived areas may have their life chances reduced compared to their counterparts in more socially mixed neighbourhoods”. The premise of ‘life chances’, especially, stems from the Weberian concept of *lebenschancen*; in simple terms, they are “the sum total of opportunities offered to the individual by [their] society, or by a more specific position occupied in society” (Dahrendorf, 1979; p.28-9) and are quite distinct from quality of life as they represent a suite

of opportunities one is afforded by the community(s) in which they live. Studies have considered compositional factors and whether ‘thresholds’ can be identified beyond which point neighbourhood effects act to compound negative externalities and impact on wellbeing, opportunities and house prices (Buck, 2001; Galster, 2002; McColloch, 2001). Researchers have looked at impacts on educational and health outcomes, social capital and cohesion, and whether it is better to be poor in a poor area or poor in a more prosperous district (see Galster, 2009; 2010 for comprehensive reviews across this literature).

In response to such concerns, policy and planning interests have long advocated the virtues of creating and maintaining ‘mixed’ communities, by income, by tenure and (in the context of the US in particular) by ethnicity. In the UK, a strong trajectory can be traced from the post war New Towns program, where neighbourhood planning principles aimed to provide a mix of homes within self-contained neighbourhoods, to the 2003 Sustainable Communities Plan (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2003) which outlined principles for said ‘sustainable communities’ to include “a well-integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes”. In Australia, policies on social mix have experienced numerous different permutations since the end of World War II (Arthurson, 2008), including their enrolment in the most recent National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) tied to the identified need to ‘de-concentrate’ large public housing estates and thereby address attached stigma (COAG, 2009; p.7).

Academic debate has questioned this perceived policy orthodoxy of social/tenure mix being the solution to addressing concentrations of disadvantage, particularly on public housing estates (Arthurson, 2008). Challenges to the social mix ‘fix’ (Randolph, 2000) have rightly highlighted the limited evidence in place to validate the assumptions underpinning the discourses of ‘mixed’, ‘vibrant’, ‘connected’ communities. There is often, for example, conflation between tenure mix and social integration. Indeed, Groves, Middleton, Murie and Broughton (2003; p.45) conclude that “where [the] housing [stock] is attractive, irrespective of tenure, households will want to stay longer in the area or will commit themselves more to the neighbourhood”, and greater social integration may result. Conversely, simply providing a mix of tenure may, in reality, create “an artificial dualism that divides neighbourhoods into those with problems and those without” (Groves *et al.* 2003; p.42), thereby achieving the exact opposite to the desired social integration (see also Jupp, 1999). This view is echoed by Holmes (2006; p.3) who suggests that “[n]eighbourhoods with very wide [socioeconomic] disparities may face additional challenges to make them work”. Some researchers have, for instance, found that households in different tenures often have diverging travel patterns, with homeowners more likely to travel and work outside of their immediate neighbourhood, while social tenants more readily work and socialise within their neighbourhood (Allen, Camina, Casey, Coward & Wood, 2005; Ziersch & Arthurson, 2007).

Cheshire (2007; p.35) adds a further critique that the use of mixed community strategies in urban renewal as a ‘solution’ often addresses only the symptoms of disadvantage rather than the underlying social and economic causes by “divert[ing] attention from the need for effective income redistribution”. A similar argument is raised in relation to the dilution of stigma (Denhaerinc, Lyfens & Yzerbyt, 1989; Yzerbyt, Leyens & Schadron, 1997) where the social problems are simply diluted amongst the increased population rather than resolved. Gregory (2009; p.15) has gone as far as to question “why mixing has failed so far”. Alongside debate as to whether tenure mix leads to the social integration and connectivity desired, realities of the neoliberal, market-led policy landscape within which tenure mix strategies have been advocated, adds further complexity. Within the language of partnerships and mixed financing, the resident-focused social outcomes of renewal risk becoming conflated or subsumed by economic feasibility, housing market and delivery model considerations – potential concerns regarding state-led gentrification and displacement.

As a basis for shaping our research approach in order to understand the *outcomes* of social/tenure mix for residents, we echo Galster’s (2009, p. 29) observations (in the contexts of *planning* social mix) that it should “be approached with a substantial dose of circumspection, sensitivity to contextual nuance, and modest expectations”. The richness captured across these debates rests less in providing clarity and resolution as to whether

neighbourhood effects occur, where ‘thresholds’ might take hold, or whether policies promoting social mix ‘work’, but rather in signifying diversity and difference across the evidence base which in turn highlights the heterogeneity of context across different localities. Our longitudinal study of resident-based outcomes as Bonnyrigg undergoes significant change over time, both in terms of its physical form and community composition, sits firmly within such debates. It presents an opportunity to track over the lifetime of the renewal process – and indeed beyond the actual redevelopment process – how residents and a community have fared and to consider the potential benefits and disadvantages tied to the renewal approach taken at Bonnyrigg in relation to both academic and policy interests.

In many regards, Bonnyrigg and its residents offer a strong platform and partnership upon which an inclusive, in-depth longitudinal study can be fostered. Located towards the urban fringe in Sydney’s southwest, Bonnyrigg embodies the challenges presented by a number of the larger, mono-tenure housing estates built in the late 1960s and 1970s. Prior to renewal, 90% of residents were public housing tenants with a significant proportion of single-parent families, migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds, unemployed, those with little or no (Australian-recognised) professional qualifications, or have a combination of these socio-economic disadvantages (ABS, 2007). Despite the estate being little more than 30 years old, poor construction has meant that its housing stock is nearing the end of its natural lifespan, where maintenance was increasingly becoming a persistent issue for both the tenants and Housing NSW, the state’s housing agency. The estates neighbourhood planning and urban design principles, with its Radburn layout of cul-de-sacs and ill-defined divisions between public and private spaces, have also been implicated in exacerbating many of the issues presenting challenges for residents.

In late 2004, it was announced that the estate was to be comprehensively redeveloped and was to be the first fully-fledged social housing Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Australia. A detailed tender process was won by Bonnyrigg Partnerships (now rebranded Newleaf Communities), which comprises five partners: Westpac is the financier; Becton Property Group, the developer; St George Community Housing, the non-profit housing manager; Spotless Services Australia, the maintenance manager; and the Bonnyrigg Management Company, who manage service integration and community renewal. Newleaf Communities has responsibility for the design, demolition, construction, asset and tenancy management during and after redevelopment, bringing the total project timeframe to 30 years. Redevelopment activity is to be staged over the first 13-15 years of the PPP contract, with demolition and reconstruction taking place over 18 stages. The resulting regeneration will see significant densification of the site, growing from around 800 to over 2000 dwellings, and a tenure shift that will see public housing provision reduced to just 30% of the total redeveloped stock.

In the developmental stages of our research approach, a number of key considerations have shaped our intended approach. First, an interest in tracking the long-term outcomes as well as shorter-term reactions to the renewal process at the household level has pointed towards the use of a ‘panel’. Second, we have explored both the potential benefits and challenges involved in seeking to incorporate the experiences and life trajectories of different family members rather than simply the head of household. Third, there is a particular interest in capturing insight from Bonnyrigg’s children and teenagers whose housing, education and employment outcomes are being shaped as their neighbourhood and community undergoes substantive change. The following sections of this paper explore issues arising in determining how these features are incorporated in our research design.

Taking the long way: use of panel studies

In order to make mixed communities ‘work’, there is increasing support for community involvement in their planning and evaluation. In their good practice guide to creating and, more importantly, sustaining mixed communities, Bailey, Haworth, Manzi, Paranagamage and Roberts (2006; p.70) elaborated that “[c]ommunity involvement and capacity building will help to determine effective and responsive management arrangements”. Further, they

added that “effective partnership arrangements will provide strong evidence of added value” in the likes of integration and improved life chances to the resultant community. In a recent discussion paper, Flanagan (2010; p.38) highlighted that, with US evidence, increased community participation in the decision-making processes of estate renewal has the dual benefits of increasing tenant satisfaction and the overall quality of life in the neighbourhood. These considerations, however, have been distinctly absent in many of the early public estate renewal projects in Australia and overseas.

The Bonnyrigg Living Communities Project involves a comprehensive range of community engagement strategies, a number of which also act as monitoring mechanisms, including an annual resident survey tied to the services provided by the constituent partners within Newleaf Communities. This longitudinal study will act as the centrepiece for tracking and determining people-based outcomes over the lifetime of the redevelopment.

Longitudinal research is by its very nature a time-consuming undertaking. In essence, the same research is conducted at regular intervals over a set time period. The most comprehensive type of longitudinal research – the panel study – would conduct the same research with the same participants over the entire duration of the research, essentially tracking any changes the participants may have experienced throughout the research timeframe.

There are several notable large-scale panel studies currently being conducted in Europe and in the US. The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS), for example, began in 1991 as a major government-funded survey where all residents of the selected households are included in the research (Lambert, 2006). A random sample of 5,500 was selected across the UK, representing around 14,000 members. Members are further divided into ‘permanent’ and ‘temporary’, with ‘temporary’ members representing the participants who, throughout the course of the study, have left the original households (for example, adult children leaving to set up their own households). All ‘permanent’ members are interviewed on an annual basis, while the ‘temporary’ members are interviewed as part of the household so long as they are identified as members of the original household. Despite its comprehensiveness, data from the BHPS has rarely been used outside of its administrating agency. This is partly attributed to the complexity of its data presentation. There were also concerns over the long lag time from data collection to data availability (usually two years, twice as long as the collection period), by which time some data may have lost their contemporary value.

A number of panel studies tracking resident outcomes tied to neighbourhood renewal activity have been undertaken in the US. These not only consider life outcomes of those that remain ‘on site’, but through programs such as Gautreaux and Moving to Opportunity (MTO), the prospects of those moving from disadvantaged to ‘better’ neighbourhoods have also been tracked (Briggs, 1997; Popkin, Harris & Cunningham, 2002; Rosenbaum, 2002). The Housing Opportunities for People Everywhere (HOPE VI) program, which involves the comprehensive renewal of large public housing projects through the introduction of private sector housing, also holds a number of lessons that has informed our proposed approach in Bonnyrigg.

The Washington D.C.-based Urban Institute has been responsible for conducting the most comprehensive resident tracking studies for HOPE VI since 2001. Like the BHPS, original participants were selected through random sampling, with 887 heads of households interviewed across five separate sites (Popkin, 2010). Two waves of follow-up interviews were conducted two and four years after the initial 2001 baseline study. In-depth interviews with local HOPE VI administrative staff and adult-child dyads were also conducted to supplement the surveys with qualitative data. The study found that the ‘success’ of the redevelopment program, especially in terms of tenant outcomes, were largely dependent on each individual estate, with some of the more vulnerable residents faring worse with failure to gain tenancies in private or subsidised housing a common occurrence. This finding resonated with that of Buron, Popkin, Levy, Harris and Khadduri (2002) who surveyed residents of eight different HOPE VI programs across the US. Participant attrition was minimal, with mortality being the main source of loss.

In Australia, the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey conducted by the Melbourne Institute is the most comprehensive example of a panel study. While not specifically designed to study the long-term impacts of neighbourhood regeneration, the HILDA survey collects a significant amount of information regarding the economics, well-being, labour market dynamics and family dynamics of Australian households, with supplementary surveys covering household wealth as well as retirement and fertility intentions. With such a wide coverage, the complexity in conducting the HILDA survey rivals that of the BHPS. It uses four distinct survey forms for each wave of participants, one of which is a self-completed questionnaire. Participant selection is targeted, with Census Collection Districts used as the base geographic unit, covering households in both metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas across all states and territories. In all, nearly 7,000 households were interviewed for wave 1, most of whom were tracked for subsequent waves (Watson & Wooden; 2002; 2004).

While panel studies can provide both qualitative and quantitative evidence of absolute change of, for example, a community's experience as it goes through estate redevelopment, their use is relatively rare due largely to their costly nature (both in terms of time and finance. See Lambert, 2006 for example). Smaller-scaled panel studies are most often used in health and medical research (see, for example, Davis, Broome & Cox, 2002; McFarlane, 2007) and less so in humanities (see, for example, Cohen, Mowbray, Bybee, Yeich, Ribisl & Freddolino, 1993; Sullivan, Rumpitz, Campbell, Eby & Davidson, 1996).

A whole-of-household approach

Taking after the BHPS and the HILDA survey, the Bonnyrigg panel study proposed in this paper will take on a whole-of-household approach, where each interview represents one household. Many sociological approaches, for example, placed significant emphasis on the household's impact on the life experiences of individual household members (Lambert, 2006). This is often conceptualised as dependency. The Dundee Families Project from Scotland (Dillane, Hill, Bannister & Scott, 2001), for example, uses the family as a unit of rehabilitation in the context of treating anti-social behaviours and in preventing homelessness. Others have taken a more systematic approach in studying familial dependency. For the BHPS, Lambert (2001; p.18) attempted to measure these intra-familial dependencies through complex modelling processes. These modelling processes, however, often assume a hierarchical system that exists within the families and households, with variations from family to family often ignored for reasons of pragmatism, and as a result valuable qualitative data is often lost.

In family- or household-based interviews, there were also concerns of dominance and people group influences. Dominance is when one member takes on the role of the spokesperson on behalf of the household (Erikson, 1984), and is likely to reflect the diversity of cultural norms and diversity (Pyke & Johnson, 2003). This may be addressed simply by directing questions to specific household members and topics which other household members would have limited knowledge of (such as asking children about their school life). In a worst-case scenario, separate interviews may be required to limit the opportunity and impact of dominance.

People group influences describe the heightened level of concurrence amongst group members, for instance as a result of reactions to the response of other members of the group (Jordan, Redley & James, 1994). Others may be inhibited from revealing more personal details or opinions with other people joining in on the interview, even if those people are of next of kin. Interviews with multi-generation households, a common living arrangement in many Asian, Middle Eastern and southern European cultures, can also be challenging, especially when members of different generations have different levels of English proficiency. Given the similarities between the conducting of household-based interviews and of focus groups, where multiple participants are present in the one interview, best practice strategies for focus groups can be easily adopted to address these issues (Bennett, 2002; Cameron, 2005; Conradson, 2005). These include early establishment of rapport, ensuring

confidentiality of the interviews' potential outputs, and seeking assistance from interpreters for participants with lower levels of English proficiency.

The consideration of these issues will allow the Bonnyrigg panel study to be a rigorous reflection of the changes to housing situation and life chances of the suburb's residents. There is a desire to balance the opportunity for a range of household members to express their opinions with the practicalities with organising and undertaking research at this in-depth level. The interviewer(s) will also be able to note down family dynamics and interactions observed during the interviews and report on any changes between interviews. This approach diverges from the pragmatic modelling technique as used in Lambert (2001) by adding an additional, qualitative dimension to the studying of intra-familial dependency. Adopting from Lambert (2001), the data collected can also be analysed through the 'clustering' technique. Individual members, such as children or the head of household, or similar household formations, can be separately identified (with individual identities anonymised) and analysed as person groups.

Would somebody think of the children?

By taking a whole-of-household approach, development of the Bonnyrigg panel study has also involved consideration as to how children in participating households could be involved appropriately and effectively in the interviewing process. This inclusion of children is based on a review of previous studies on neighbourhood renewal. In her reflection on the Minto redevelopment, a neighbourhood renewal project that is similar to that of Bonnyrigg's, Stubbs (2005b) made reference to a program run by UnitingCare Burnside Macarthur for children under 12 years of age. The program was used to explore and facilitate the children's responses to distress caused by neighbourhood renewal activity in Minto (another public housing estate in south-western Sydney), including children whose family had already been, or were waiting to be, relocated whilst renewal took place. Stubbs (2005b; p.7) concluded that the impacts of neighbourhood renewals were especially severe on these young children. In a broader study, Berube (2005; p.24) concurred, explaining that "area effects may have greater impacts on the fortunes of young children than on older children or adults". The inclusion of children in the panel study thus allows us to explore these impacts. It also reflects the prominence of families amongst Bonnyrigg's current and incoming resident households.

Interest in exploring the potential to include children from the age of ten in the panel study also follows a review of other qualitative research that involved children and adolescents (Amato & Ochiltree, 1987; Christensen, 2004; Connell & Halpern-Felsher, 1997; Kellett, Forrest, Dent & Ward, 2004). Amato and Ochiltree's (1987; p.671) research, in particular, revealed that even children as young as eight years of age showed high levels of eagerness and cooperation when participating in the interviews; the children's perceived difficulty in understanding the interview questions were also deemed low. Others, like Mayall (2000), have a more theoretical deconstruction of the concepts of 'child' and 'childhood', which he believes has led to the increasing recognition of children's rights and autonomy since the late twentieth century in many western societies. The inclusion of children from the age of ten onwards will also allow this study to account for the change in identities when the young children experience adolescence and progress from primary to secondary education.

To accommodate such a change in qualitative research involving children, the Protection and Care branch of the Victorian Department of Health and Community Services published an interviewing guidelines booklet in 1995 (Foran, 1995). While written specifically for interviewing children and adolescents in cases of child protection, it nonetheless provides a vital checklist of steps one should take in interviewing children and adolescents. These steps include clarifying the purpose of the interviews; risk assessment (such as developmental considerations); cultural background of the children/adolescents; location, duration and pace of interviews; choice of interviewers; and practice requirements for working with interpreters. In NSW, the Commission for Children and Young People compiled a participation toolkit in 2004 to assist researchers and community organisations to more effectively involve children

and adolescents in community events and decision-making processes. Each component of this toolkit is specifically designed for increasing children's and adolescents' participation, whether it be in the form of sport, the arts, or capacity building for long-term decision making (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2004a; 2004b; 2004c). Its subsequent compendium, co-published with the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, also offers real-life examples on how children and adolescents are increasingly becoming involved in decision making processes in Australia and abroad (NSW Commission for Children and Young People, 2009). One particular example, the use of reflective drawings, was already adopted in the *Leaving Minto* project, where young children were encouraged to draw pictures of their former homes as well as their current homes in their newly redeveloped neighbourhood (Stubbs, 2005a). These drawings provided very valuable insights into the disruptive nature of regeneration activity to children's lives, with many drawings including commentaries of severed social networks despite that they now live in housing that is (visually at least) of a higher quality.

Both the NSW and Victorian guidelines serve to inform any of the Bonnyrigg panel study's interviews that involve children, particularly with consideration of the severe impacts neighbourhood renewal can have on their young lives. This reflects Stubbs' (2005b) and Berube's (2005) conclusion, which is largely in accord with a previous research conducted by Peterson and Biggs (1997) who interviewed children as young as two years of age regarding traumatic life experiences. While Peterson and Biggs' definition of trauma was limited to medical attention as a result of traumatic injuries (research participants were recruited at the emergency room of a children's hospital), their method and analyses of the information provided by the children, nonetheless, provides important directions that we have followed for our interviews.

Panel-making: keeping in touch with residents on and off the estate

The Bonnyrigg panel study is designed to be an inclusive entity, reflecting the diversity of Bonnyrigg's local population of both the present and the future. This is largely achieved through our whole-of-household approach and involvement with a range of stakeholders. In total, the aim is to have 180 households making up the panel. We will be interviewing approximately 60 households per year, and therefore returning to panel members every three of so years. While timescales will not always align precisely, the aim is to provide some flexibility so that interviews capture key changes experienced by households – for example as they await relocation, whilst living temporarily on another part of the estate, once they have moved into their new home, once fully settled at that address, and so forth. At the time of writing, residents from the first three stages have been relocated and existing housing in these areas demolished. The construction of new housing in the stage 1 area was completed in September 2010 (NSW Government, 2010). Crucially, the panel will include those that decided not to remain on the estate, and who have already been relocated to a property outside Bonnyrigg or who are still on the estate and are awaiting transfer. Tracking the life chances and opportunities of these residents over time will offer an interesting counterpoint to the main resident cohorts that have remained in Bonnyrigg.

Participants to the panel are recruited through a process of self-selecting. The aim, however, will be to ensure that the diversity of Bonnyrigg residents and different parts of the estate (and thus different stages in the renewal roll out) are represented. Where necessary in order to ensure the total panel better reflects community profiles, particular groups will be targeted through additional means. All current Bonnyrigg residents are provided information about the intent and premise of the panel study through the distribution of an information brochure, as well as through the research team's attendance of community events organised by Newleaf Communities. As Bonnyrigg is a culturally diverse neighbourhood, the community development team from Newleaf Communities has also assisted in recruiting participants from non-English speaking backgrounds through their monthly tenant telephone service and community coffee sessions.

Some level of participant attrition is expected through a number of means, from loss of contact, death, to general disinterest in continuing with the study. The HOPE VI resident tracking study had reportedly just a 60% retention rate. Given the similarity of that study to the Bonnyrigg panel study discussed in this paper, we can assume a comparable proportion of participants leaving the panel before its completion. As participants exit the study, additional, 'booster' households are recruited to replenish the panel, taking after the BHPS model. The composition of households interviewed in each interview cycle would thus gradually change. Households interviewed during the first three years will mostly comprise public housing tenants, including those that have moved permanently off the estate. As the suburb experiences physical and tenure transformations, the sample will be refreshed to maintain a strong focus on the experiences of social housing residents, but as more private homeowners and private renters move to the neighbourhood, they will make up an increasingly significant proportion of the panel during the latter years of the study.

If the study continues for 12-15 years as hoped, a total of approximately 750 interviews will be conducted, providing excellent insight into the renewal's impacts on the residents' everyday lives and their (actual and perceived) life chances. The rolling and whole-of-family approaches undertaken will also provide the largely qualitative research with some statistical robustness, allowing the findings to be representative of a wide range of Bonnyrigg's current and future population.

Conclusion

The Bonnyrigg Living Communities Project is one of the more recent examples of a large-scale public estate renewal in Australia. The key driver for Bonnyrigg's renewal has been the objective to improve the circumstances and outcomes for its current residents, whether they move away or remain in Bonnyrigg as part of the process. The proposed approach explored in this paper – that of a panel study – raises a number of issues relating to the conducting of a longitudinal research. While it is a complicated and relatively resource-intensive endeavour, its focus on potential outcomes for the different participants of the research will be rigorous and representative of its changing population. The methodology described in this paper reflects both international best practice and research innovation through our taking of a whole-of-household approach, and one which tracks the outcomes for those that both remain in the neighbourhood and those that move away.

While contextually the Bonnyrigg panel studies take mostly after the HOPE VI panel study in the US, methodologically it resonates the whole-of-household and qualitative approach as used in the BHPS in the UK. This approach, while it presents greater complexity in terms of recruitment and participant retention, allows the research team to explore different analytical methods such as the 'clustering' technique. The inclusion of children participants from the age of ten further expands on these international best practices and reflects insights revealed in other previous research on the severe impacts neighbourhood renewal may have on the younger generations growing up in the context of change. The panel study detailed in this paper, while still to commence, will in its completion provide an evidence base and a clearer insight into communities experiencing neighbourhood renewal.

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