



# fact sheet

## Community Renewal in Macquarie Fields



*“Community Renewal is about reclaiming communities for people ...communities where no one is left out.”*

Community renewal is about partnerships between communities and service providers, it's about recognising the benefits of diverse communities, closing the gap between the socially included and the socially excluded, responding to peoples needs for stable, well balanced communities, and building community confidence.

The process of community renewal is ultimately about community re-engagement of disadvantaged communities with each other, with services and employment, and with the broader community.

**“It's our best opportunity to restore pride and a 'sense of place' to dislocated communities.”**

### Macquarie Fields Background

Macquarie Fields is one of five broad acre housing estates built between 1972 and 1978 in the Campbelltown local Government Area on the south west fringe of Sydney. It is a “Radburn” estate which means there are large areas of common open space connected by walkways. Houses look onto open areas with rear yards facing the street. Macquarie Fields has a total of 1542 dwellings of which 572 are townhouses.

### Key Issues for Macquarie Fields

Prior to the commencement of the Community Renewal Strategy in 1994 Macquarie Fields had:

- Extremely high unemployment particularly inter-generational unemployment
- Lack of work incentives and opportunities
- High levels of children at risk
- Very low income levels
- High levels of welfare dependency
- Large numbers of sole parent families
- A very high turnover rate of housing stock.

### Problems with the estate model

About 30% of New South Wales public housing is located in estates where there are more than 100 properties. These estates were developed from the 1950s to the mid 1980s and many experience similar problems including:

- housing which is poorly designed and maintained
- poor access to necessary services such as health services, transport and family support
- concentrations of disadvantaged families who are stigmatised by the rest of the community
- problems with crime and personal security.

### Key strategies of Community Renewal

- make client service staff more accessible and visible so they can respond to problems quickly
  - work with the Police to identify trouble-spots and ways to reduce criminal activity
- improve housing so it better meets contemporary standards so residents want to stay
- improve social mix through identified sales and use housing associations to diversify management
  - work with groups of residents so they can develop new skills and help prioritise work
- link residents with training and employment opportunities
  - encourage other service providers to work in partnership with residents and the Department.



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## Major Achievement

Macquarie Fields looks more attractive and this changed image has resulted in increased community pride. This makes a substantial contribution towards changing the image of Campbelltown as well.

## What We Aim to Achieve

The key aims and objectives of the Community Renewal Strategy for Macquarie Fields are:

- Increased employment opportunities
- Reduce the overall costs to Governments of social support
- Improve the asset value
- Greater security, safety and privacy
- Reduce the level of public housing by the sale of dwellings to increase the tenure mix
- Improved tenant control over private areas, better living spaces and better use of open space
- Improved estate appearance and physical amenity
- Integrated provision of community services
- The removal of estate stigma
- Encourage private sector involvement
- Develop a model Tenant Participation process.

## What We Did:

- A majority of the cottage dwellings have been improved, and will be completed by the end of 1999
- Four new roads have been built providing access to battle-axe blocks facing onto public open space areas, and shared driveways have been removed
- Fire separation reports for townhouse precincts have been completed which will assist in the subdivision of the townhouses
- An extensive community representative network has been established to streamline the community consultation process
- Work has commenced on upgrading the townhouses
- There has been a significant improvement in the physical amenity of each dwelling
- Open space areas and internal pathways which encourage anti-social behaviour have been removed.

Tenant comment about the  
Community Renewal Program

**"Our young children can play in safety and our homes are no longer vandalised. Before we had a dangerous lane, now we have a lovely backyard."**



NSW Department of Housing

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