



# fact sheet

## Community Renewal in Minto



### Minto Background

The Hill Project is part of an Intensive Tenancy Management program. The project tests the contribution of improved tenancy management to the outcomes on estates. It is an initial step to developing formal community renewal strategies for Minto.

### Key Aims for Minto

The Hill Project Team, which comprises a mixture of residents and Department of Housing staff, set out to:

- beautify and maintain common areas of the Minto estate
- clean up graffiti
- residents worked together for a common goal
- give residents new skills and empower them to come up with new ideas and initiatives for their neighbourhood
- build a community the residents can be proud of.

*“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.”**

### 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

The residents of Minto are already delighted with the changes they have been able to make in their community and the partnerships they have formed through the Hill Project Team.

## What is the Hill Project?

The Hill Project is trialling the impact of Intensive Tenancy Management. Three housing management staff with some clerical assistance manage a group of 346 townhouses in an area which was formerly identified as one of the 'worst' areas in the estate – tenants did not care for their dwellings, there were many vacant dwellings and rent arrears were high.

## Where We Are Today

Since the project was introduced in November 1998, the team has transformed common areas into gardens where neighbours now meet and children play.

Each month residents put aside a small amount of money to help with ongoing maintenance of the garden. They have also sought donations from local businesses to supply materials so that they can build park benches for their garden.

Residents have also initiated street clean-ups, other gardening projects and the removal of graffiti from common areas around the estate.

The community is supported by a full-time handyman who deals with small repairs on the estate. A working co-operative in lawns and cleaning is being established.

A furniture recycling co-operative in conjunction with the Franciscan Friars and the Housing Communities Assistance Program is also being developed.

The Department has introduced a local allocations strategy for the Minto Estate, to build on family and friendship links in the community.

The Hill Project Team is also developing partnerships with other agencies to bring much needed support services to the estate.

Tenant comment about the Community Renewal Program

**"We actually know the neighbours now. The whole street is beautiful and everyone is looking after their home."**



NSW Department of Housing

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To find out more about Community Renewal in Minto contact the Regional Director - South Western Sydney Region  
phone (02)9821 6218    facsimile (02)9821 6205    email woodwar@housing.nsw.gov.au