



fact sheet

Community Renewal in Windale



Windale Background

Windale is a long-established suburb of Lake Macquarie, located just 10kms south of Newcastle.

Approximately 77% of Windale's 1,600 dwellings are owned by the Department of Housing, with the remainder in private ownership.

Dwellings in Windale include 1940's- 50's fibro cottages, Radburn-style housing from the 1970's and townhouses from the 1980's.

Community Issues Identified

The community and staff participated in public consultation to identify key issues and areas of concern for people living in Windale.

Through this consultation process, the following issues were identified:

- high turnover and vacancy rates
- dwellings require extensive refurbishment and renovation
- Radburn-style housing isolates people from their community
- it is an unblended community with distinctions drawn between residents of public housing and owners of private dwellings
- high levels of unemployment.

“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 Achievements

Goodwill and positive feedback were generated from the Windale community Garden Project. This feedback renewed enthusiasm amongst residents to protect and improve their own homes and neighbourhood.



Where We Are Today

The following building projects have been undertaken as part of the Community Renewal strategy to revitalise Windale:

- in the Northern Townhouse precinct, 88 dwellings have been upgraded
- in the Radburn Hill precinct, 81 dwellings have been upgraded
- in the Southern Townhouse precinct, 51 units have been upgraded
- in the Radburn Freeway precinct, 108 units have had surveys undertaken while 37 units have also been surveyed in the Radburn Scrubby Creek precinct.

Other Community Renewal strategies which have been implemented in Windale include:

- tenant employment and work for the dole schemes including a joint RTA, Council and

Department of Housing work for the dole scheme which was introduced to give tenants new skills and employment prospects

- intensive housing management programs
- street and garden maintenance programs which rely on tenant participation
- the sale of some housing stock to tenants.

For the Future

The Department of Housing is also looking at the feasibility of creating a new, tree-lined boulevard entry to the estate, which will also help improve the overall environment and appeal of Windale.

Tenant comment about the Community Renewal Program

"You feel more human when you're not ashamed of where you live. My neighbour and I chat over the fence, we never talked before – we even swap cuttings from the garden now."



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