

Mixed Communities in England and the US HOPE VI Experience

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HOPE VI

Announced:	1992 (Urban Housing Revitalisation Demonstration Program)
Number of areas:	Over 400
Aim:	Reduce concentrated poverty and create sustainable communities, reduce public housing stock and density, improve housing and environment, increase employment, reduce crime
Government Funding:	Initially \$50m per site
Outcomes	Over 100,000 homes demolished, Replaced by 66,000 high quality housing units. Reductions in poverty and crime but mixed outcomes for displaced residents.

The Mixed Communities Initiative

Announced:	2005
Number of areas:	11
Aim:	"to develop comprehensive approaches to neighbourhood renewal through major changes to the housing stock and tenure/income mix, improvements to the environment and action to reduce worklessness and crime"
Government Funding:	None directly. Projects may be given priority access to specific funding streams.

Programme Differences

- ❑ Central government funding!
- ❑ Hope VI stronger emphasis on demolition and more explicit aim to reduce the number of public housing units.
- ❑ Hope VI aims to decrease density, MCI to increase.
- ❑ Hope VI explicit mixed income targets.
- ❑ Hope VI explicitly aims to displace existing residents.

The broader mixed communities picture

- Encourage of mix in new developments through planning guidance and s106 'planning gain'
- Housing refurbishment through cross subsidy
- Housing market renewal: reducing unpopular social rented or cheap owner-occupied or rented stock. Replacing with new homes for private sale.

Disadvantaged communities likely to be regenerated by mix.

Policy as Discourse

Discourses are about what can be said and thought.. Certain possibilities for thought are constructed. Words are ordered and combined in particular ways, and other combinations are displaced or excluded

(Ball 1994 p.22)

New Discourses of Neighbourhood Policy

Problems:

- individual not structural:
worklessness, homelessness, low skills, low aspirations
- spatial not structural
concentration/concentrated, cluster, mix, balanced

Change, the future, and the power of policy:

Transformation, remodelling, strategy, radical, turn around, sustainability, faster and further

The market mechanism:

choice, housing market, demand, attractive, popular

What the new discourses suggest

- The poor are at least partly responsible for their own problems
- “the poor in a loomp is bad” (Lund)
- Poor neighbourhoods don’t work
- Public money is being unwisely spent propping up unsustainable neighbourhoods.
- Market mechanisms result in de-segregation
- Sustainable change requires transformation

Alternatives?

- Problems as structural:
 - Job losses, low pay, insecure work, racial discrimination, gender inequality
- Policy and the future:
 - Improvement, empowerment, democratic policy making
- State role:
 - Protection against the market, redistribution, access, equity

The Policy Cycle

- Context of influence (where interest groups struggle over construction of policy discourses).
- • Context of policy text production (where texts represent policies, although they may be inconsistencies and contradictions).
- • Context of practice (where policy is subject to interpretation and recreation)
(From Bowe et al 1992)
- • Context of outcomes (the impact of policies on existing social inequalities),
- • Context of political strategy (identifying political activities which might tackle such inequalities)
(From Ball 1994, p.26)

Influences on mixed community policy

- US/UK relationships/policy transfer
- Treasury influence
- Pressure on DCLG: Thirty years of policy 'failure'
- Private sector interests/Third Way public service finance
- Urban interests and new urban governance structures
- Concerns about 'community cohesion'
- Academic research: neighbourhood effects and the US influence

UK/US Policy Network

- Gordon Brown "an insatiable appetite for US ideas"
- Hope VI "picked up by Gordon Brown as a flagship regeneration project"
- Bruce Katz "a regeneration guru for the British government"
- Katz to JRF " *neighbourhoods of choice and connection*". [neighbourhood transformation] *"requires a dynamic, market-driven notion of neighbourhood change, rather than any 'community control' vision dedicated to maintaining the status quo"*

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HOPE VI

- An unusual program – little history of federal investment in neighbourhood renewal
- From “Urban Housing Revitalisation Demonstration Program” to “Homeownership and Opportunities for People Everywhere”
- Uncertain funding. Nearly abolished in 1995. Recent cuts. Future uncertain.
- From rehabilitation to demolition and income mix

A Future Research Agenda

- Continued empirical research on mixed community implementation and outcomes but also:
- More attention to the making and the meaning of policy:
 - at a national level
 - at a local level

And specifically:

- Tracking and comparing the political and discursive development of policy in the UK and US and its transfer.
- Relating place policy to changing understandings of the causes of individual poverty.
- Critical reflection on research methodology and the ways in which researchers are implicated in creating and sustaining policy discourses.

The context of practice

'a state control model distorts the policy process. ... The language of 'implementation' strongly implies that there is within policy, an unequivocal governmental position that will filter down through quasi-state bodies and into the schools.... [We argue] that is not *simply* a matter of implementers following a fixed policy text and 'putting the Act into practice' (Bowe et al, 1992, p.10)

Middlesbrough

- Top down plan for demolition of inner neighbourhood
 - "to attract people back to the town centre"
 - "to use the land to regenerate our town and communities"
- Timescale driven by central government funding programme (NB Hope VI)
- Negative discursive positioning of existing communities
- Large scale organised public resistance
 - "a multi-million windfall for speculators and the council at the expense of local residents".
 - "a land grab"

Redcar and Cleveland

- Mixed community approach new phase in continued regeneration efforts. Long-standing on-site housing renewal project.
- Plans for demolition of entire neighbourhood negotiated with residents who opt for most radical option