



# Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Communities



Irish Council  
for Social Housing



An Ghníomhaireacht  
Tithíochta  
The Housing Agency



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Report commissioned by  
the Irish Council for Social Housing  
and The Housing Agency



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The Housing Agency



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## Abbreviations and Specialist Terminology

<b>AHB</b>	Approved housing body – a non-profit-sector social housing provider
<b>BTR</b>	Built-to-rent – a development built specifically for private renting and usually owned by a single institutional landlord.
<b>CALF</b>	Capital Advance Leasing Facility, a government loan which is used to part fund the provision of social housing by approved housing bodies
<b>CAS</b>	Capital Assistance Scheme, a government funding scheme for the capital costs of provision of social housing by approved housing bodies. It is most commonly used for the provision of housing for those with additional support needs.
<b>DHLGH</b>	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
<b>DRHE</b>	Dublin Region Homeless Executive
<b>DPH</b>	Dwellings per hectare
<b>HFA</b>	Housing Finance Agency
<b>HAP</b>	Housing Assistance Payment – an income-related housing subsidy for private renting households.
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-governmental organisations
<b>OMC</b>	Owner Management Company
<b>PAA</b>	Payment and Availability Agreement – a lease payment received by approved housing bodies from government in return for letting their dwellings to social housing tenants.
<b>PPP</b>	Public Private Partnership
<b>RAS</b>	Rental Accommodation Scheme, which funds the leasing of dwellings by local authorities for letting to households who qualify for social housing supports.
<b>REIT</b>	Real Estate Investment Trust
<b>RTB</b>	Residential Tenancies Board
<b>SPPRs</b>	Specific planning policy requirements



# Introduction

## Introduction

Social mixing policies first emerged in the 1980s inspired by concerns that large spatial concentrations of low-income households were generating additional socio-economic problems which sociologists have termed 'neighbourhood effects' (Manley, van Ham and Doherty, 2011). The neighbourhood effects most commonly identified by researchers include: higher levels of unemployment, difficulty in accessing commercial services such as banks and supermarkets, stigmatised neighbourhood reputations, extra pressure on social services such as schools, weak social networks and lack of positive role models for young people (Musterd and Andersson, 2005). In response, governments across Western Europe, North America and Australia have attempted to combat these neighbourhood effects by encouraging households with different incomes to live adjacent to one another thereby avoiding large spatial concentrations of poverty (Tunstall, 2003; Arthurson, 2008; August, 2008).

Social mixing has been achieved in practice using a wide variety of different mechanisms, including: neighbourhood regeneration, building of housing for sale, tax incentives, housing allowances and land use planning requirements (Arthurson, 2012). Due to the large size of the social housing sector in Western Europe and the increasing concentration of low-income households in this tenure in recent decades, most social mixing policies in these countries have focused on this tenure and have primarily involved 'tenure mixing' i.e. intermingling homeowners and private renters (who tend to have higher incomes) with social renters (who tend to have lower incomes) (Livingston, Kearns and Bailey, 2013).

Concerns about socio-spatial segregation in Ireland also emerged among policy makers and local government managers in the 1980s and policy actions in response commenced a decade later (Norris, 2016). In common with the rest of Western Europe, Irish policy makers' responses have focused strongly on the social housing sector and in particular on providing social housing in mixed tenure developments. One of the first significant efforts at tenure mixing was initiated in the 1990s when the Dublin Docklands Development Agency stipulated that all private housing developments in the neighbourhoods it was responsible for regenerating, should include a minimum of 20% social housing (Moore, 2008). The 1991 housing ministry policy statement – *A Plan for Social Housing* – suggested that new social housing should be provided in smaller groups than was the case traditionally and also in 'in-fill' developments interspersed within existing developments in order to promote social mixing (Department of the Environment, 1991). The 2000 Planning Act (as amended on several occasions) applied social mixing more broadly. Part V of this Act enabled local government to take up to 20% of private developments for social housing for rent or for 'affordable housing' for sale at cost price to low income home buyers in order to combat undue socio-spatial segregation (Brooke, 2006). More recently, the importance of social mixing of new social housing developments has been repeatedly reiterated in housing ministry policy statements including – *Building Sustainable Communities* (2005), *Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities* (2007) and *Rebuilding Ireland* (2014) (Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2005; Department of the Environment Community and Local Government, 2007; Government of Ireland, 2016).

As a result of these different policy initiatives a large proportion of new social housing provided by both local authorities and non-profit sector approved housing bodies (AHBs) since 2000 is likely to have been delivered in mixed tenure developments (Lawton, 2015). However, because a larger proportion of the AHB housing output has taken place in recent decades, it is likely that more of this sector's housing stock is located in mixed tenure estates than is the case in the local authority sector. Part V of the 2000 Planning Act is a major source of this mixed tenure social housing, but the purchase of individual second-hand dwellings and of sections of new housing developments also play an important role in supply. Mixed tenure social housing developments are constructed by local authorities and AHBs in partnership with private developers via joint ventures or, less commonly, via public private partnerships (PPPs).

## Evidence on Tenure Mixing Policy and Gaps in the Evidence Base

Combatting the impact of both neighbourhood effects and the effectiveness of social mixing have been the subject of a very substantial amount of research internationally, particularly in the United States, Australia, the UK and the Netherlands (Arthurson, 2012). This research has generated substantial volumes of information on effectiveness of the high-level design of this policy and of its implementation at neighbourhood level by individual social landlords which has helped to inform policy reform and operational guidelines. For instance, there is a large volume of research which indicates that use of different designs for social and private housing in mixed tenure neighbourhoods, the clustering of social housing in a separate location from the private housing and the provision of separate entrances for private and social tenants reduces interaction between tenure groups and potentially results in 'internal stigmatisation' of the social housing residents (August, 2008; McCormick, Joseph and Chaskin, 2012; Arthurson, 2013; Chaskin and Joseph, 2013). However, it is important to acknowledge that there is also evidence to the contrary. This indicates that interaction between residents of social and private housing remains low when these dwellings are located adjacent and that strong housing management and urban design can also be highly significant in overcoming problems associated with the clustering of social housing in mixed tenure neighbourhoods (Atkinson and Kintrea, 2000; Roberts, 2007).

Some research on social mixing in Ireland has been conducted (eg. Brooke, 2006; Norris, 2006; Redmond and Russell, 2008; Lawton, 2015; Carnegie *et al.*, 2018; Carnegie, Norris and Byrne, 2018; Hayden and Jordan, 2018), but its volume is relatively small. Furthermore, much of the Irish research is focused on macro level policy design and impact in terms of the volume of social housing which has been delivered in tenure mixed developments, particularly under the auspices of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Therefore, the existing evidence base on social mixing in Ireland sheds less light on how this policy should be implemented, specifically about the appropriateness of clustering or dispersing social housing in the Irish context and the logistics of its implementation in practice.

Many of the lessons from the international research on tenure mixing are of limited relevance to Ireland, however. This is for two reasons primarily: Firstly, because of Ireland's comparatively low population density, lack of very large cities and large spatial concentrations of black and minority ethnic populations. This means that research on socio-spatial segregation and neighbourhood effects conducted on much of the larger and more diverse populations of cities abroad is of limited relevance to Ireland. Secondly arrangements for funding social housing in Ireland are unusual compared to most other Western European

countries and this has implications for translating the recommendations of the international research on social mixing of this tenure into practice in Ireland. In most neighbouring countries social housing rents are related broadly to delivery costs, therefore they can cover the additional costs of, for instance, managing agent's fees generated when social housing is dispersed through apartment blocks. Whereas, in Ireland social housing rents reflect tenants' incomes not the costs of housing provision which can mean that social landlords are unable to meet any additional costs generated by dispersing social housing through high-density, tenure mixed developments (Norris, 2006).

Furthermore, the lack of information on the implementation of tenure mixing in the Irish social housing sector is a critical gap in knowledge because the evidence which is available indicates that implementation of this policy can be challenging and is likely to become more so in the future because of developments in housing policy. A key implementational challenge which housing association managers face is that they may not be given a choice regarding the location of social housing in mixed tenure estates. This is particularly evident in new estates subject to Part V of the 2000 Planning Act (Hayden and Jordan, 2018). This lack of control over the clustering or dispersal of social housing can be a particular challenge for AHBs which provide social housing for people with additional needs. Where care assistants or medical staff have to support tenants for instance it may make sense to cluster the social housing. Whereas social landlords generally seek to disperse accommodation for formerly homeless people (Allen *et al.*, 2020). In view of the government's plans to provide more of this accommodation under its Housing First programme, the latter is likely to prove a more widespread challenge in the future (Government of Ireland, 2018a).

## Research Questions

This research aims to bridge these information gaps on the extent to which AHB housing in Ireland is provided in mixed tenure developments, the reasons why decisions are made to cluster or disperse the social housing in these developments, how well these different models of provision operate from the perspectives of AHBs and tenants and provide information for policy makers and AHBs which will contribute to high quality social housing provision in mixed tenure settings.

To achieve these aims, as explained in Table 1 below, the research will examine three key research questions and also generate additional information on tenure mixing practice. It is envisaged that, by answering these questions this research will:

- › Assist social housing providers with guidance on the issues which arise from both clustered and dispersed social housing provision and develop guidance on clustered and dispersed housing development models.
- › Provide information which will input to housing policy on a wider policy level.
- › Bridge the current information and learning gap on the outcomes for tenants and this work will contribute to better understanding and practice in clustering and dispersed models.
- › Identify the implications of the research for Part V agreements and also for mixed tenure developments involving joint ventures between AHBs and private developers which are experiencing similar policy issues and questions.

**Table 0.1 Key Research Questions and Additional Information Sought**

Key research questions
› To what extent are either dispersed or clustered housing models adopted in mixed tenure estates in which Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs) are active?
› What are the reasons for AHBs in seeking to adopt either approach?
› Are there best practice models which can provide guidance for AHBs in delivering social housing in mixed tenures estates?
Additional questions/information sought
› What constitutes 'clustered' and 'dispersed' housing?
› What are AHBs' experiences of housing management in both clustered and dispersed settings?
› What are the costs for AHBs of delivering housing management and maintenance in both settings?
› Do other underlying factors beyond the control of the AHB influence whether they adopt a clustered or dispersed approach to delivering social housing?
› What are the experiences and preferences of residents living in both clustered and dispersed housing?
› How are social housing units procured under the terms of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act?
› What are best practice approaches for social housing with associated care and support services in mixed tenure estates?

## Research Methodology

This research was operationalised using a mix of qualitative and quantitative research methods which were implemented in six steps. These are:

**Step 1:** Review of policies, memoranda / operational guidelines, and administrative data on the provision of social housing in mixed tenure estates and on output of these dwellings.

**Step 2:** Review of the research literature on tenure mixing and particularly a review of the clustering and dispersal of social housing in these developments. This exercise encompassed both the Irish and the international research.

**Step 3:** Survey of AHBs was conducted. This focused primarily on the AHBs which are classed as Tier 3 by the Voluntary Approved Housing Body Regulator of this sector (this category includes organisations which own or manage >300 units or sizeable development plans, including the use of loan finance for development) and which own dwellings in mixed tenure estates. One AHB which is classed as Tier 2 by the regulator due to the fact that it owns and manages fewer than 300 dwellings was also included because this organisation has a very active new housing development programme. The survey questionnaire was devised in collaboration with the project steering group and administered online. It was circulated to all 19 AHBs categorised in Tier 3, but three of these organisations were subsequently deemed unsuitable for inclusion in the survey because their housing stock consists entirely of single dwellings, and they do not own groups of houses in estates or on a single street. 13 of the other 17 AHBs surveyed responded which is a response rate of 76 per cent.

**Step 4:** Five case studies of mixed tenure estates which include AHB provided social housing were also conducted as part of this research. The estates for examination were identified in collaboration with the project steering group. Their key characteristics are summarised in Table 0.2 below, but in order to protect the anonymity of interviewees they are referred to by aliases (names of native Irish trees). Each estate includes dwellings owned by one of the following Tier 3 AHBs: Clúid Housing, Fold Housing, Circle Voluntary Housing Association, Respond Housing and Tuath Housing and also include a mix of: supported and general needs social housing, clustered and dispersed social housing and social housing procured by a different measure such as Part V, joint ventures, etc. Each of these case studies was operationalised by means of:



- A review of any available documentation or research on these estates.
- One-to-one interviews with 10 key stakeholders in each estate. Due to the Covid 19 public health guidelines which were in force when the research was being conducted, these 50 interviews were mainly conducted online (using the Zoom platform) or on the phone. Interviewees included:
  - key AHB staff (CEO, Housing Development Team, Housing Managers),
  - local authority representatives (e.g., Director of Housing, Director of Planning).
  - residents (AHB tenants, Owner Occupiers, HAP tenants)
  - private developers who built the estates.
  - local authority councillors.
- In this report these different interviewees are identified with reference to the estate with which they are associated, the nature of this relationship and, if more than one interview in these two categories were interviewed also by a number. Therefore, residents of social housing and private housing in these estates are referred to as: Oak View SR1 and Hazel Close PR1, and key informants involved in these estates such as AHB staff or local authority officials are referred to with reference to the estate to which they were linked, the acronym KI (key informant) and the interview number, e.g.: Hazel Gardens KI2.

**Table 0.2 Characteristics of Case Study Mixed Tenure Social Housing Estates**

Characteristics	Ash Mews	Birch View	Hazel Gardens	Oak Mount	Willow Close
<b>Location</b>	Large town in Leinster	Dublin suburbs	Dublin suburbs	Dublin suburbs	Medium sized town in Munster
<b>Date of construction</b>	2019 onwards	2019/2020	2005	2019/2020	2006 approx.
<b>Date of occupation of social housing</b>	2019	2020	2012	2020	2019
<b>Design and construction type</b>	2/3/4 bed houses, semi-detached of terraced	One apartment block (social) 3/4/5/ bed houses, terraced, semi-detached, detached (social and private)	Apartments – mostly 2 beds	Apartment (social units) 2/3/4 bed houses (private)	Houses 3 and 4 bed semi-detached, approx. 3 smaller bungalows
<b>Number of social rented dwellings</b>	112 (Part V)	14 units 6 apartments, 8 houses (Part V)		24 (1&2 bed) (Part V) apartments	43 units
<b>Number of private dwellings</b>	34 constructed and occupied	126 houses	34 units in one block	198	178 units
<b>% of private dwellings which are private rented (estimated)</b>	143 (phase 1) under construction 34 sold to date	Unknown primarily family homes	Unknown in the AHB owned block, 100% in three other blocks in the estate	Unknown primarily family homes	10% or less
<b>Clustering or dispersal of the social housing</b>	Clustered	One clustered apartment block and dispersed houses	24 units dispersed through one apartment block (40%)	Clustered apartment block	Dispersed houses

**Step 5: Key Informant Interviews:** Eight in-depth interviews were also conducted with key informants which were not connected to any specific estates but had expertise and knowledge which is relevant to this research. These interviewees included: central government officials involved in housing and planning policy and senior officials of local authorities which were not included in the case study research. In the report these interviews are referred to as OKI (other key informant) number 1 to 8.

**Step 6: Data analysis:** The research interviews were transcribed *verbatim* and analysed using assisted qualitative data analysis software (specifically: MAXQDA). Three rounds of data analysis were then conducted sequentially as follows:

- Firstly, the data was examined to identify key arguments, concepts, and experiences and to identify the main findings showing differences and similarities across the cohort of interviewees.
- The results of this first stage will then be re-examined to identify tentative relationships between interviewees' views and experiences and relevant contextual issues.
- The results of the second stage will then be re-examined to identify relationships between these different findings (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

**Step 7: Report write up:** finally, all of the data collated during steps one to six was analysed collectively and the most common themes and cross-cutting themes evident in the different data sources identified and the project report was drafted.

## Research Steering Group

The research implementation was overseen by a research steering group which consisted of the four researchers and a representative of each of the project funders – Roslyn Molloy from the Housing Agency and Karen Murphy from the Irish Council for Social Housing. The research steering group met monthly during the project implementation period.

## Research Ethics Review

Before embarking on the primary research aspect of the project, UCD Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSREC) was informed of the researchers' intention to commence this research and of our plans for addressing the research ethics issues arising. The latter involved the completion of a detailed set of forms which specify protocol for the collection, storing, analysis and dissemination of the project data. These are summarised in Table 0.3 below. Following submission of this information HSREC granted the project exemption from full ethical review and issued a certificate that we have meet the requisite University research ethics standards.

**Table 0.3 Research Ethics Considerations and Plans for Addressing Them**

Consideration	Plans to address this consideration
<b>Consent:</b>	Prior to interview the consent process was discussed with all interviewees to ensure that informed consent was obtained and recorded. It was clearly explained that participation is voluntary and that a participant can withdraw from the research at any time. Interviewees were provided with a transcript of their interview if requested which they could edit prior to analysis by the researchers.
<b>Confidentiality:</b>	At transcription stage, all interviewees' names were replaced by pseudonyms to protect the privacy of participants and de- identify all involved. Recordings were deleted following transcription.
<b>Data storage and access:</b>	The strictest protocols will be implemented to ensure that only members of the Research Team had access to the data from this research project.
<b>Disclosure:</b>	Despite the principle of confidentiality, an ethic and duty of care means that if any disclosures of abuse or neglect are made, the researcher will respond appropriately and is also obliged to advise the appropriate authorities.

## Outline of Chapters

The remainder of this report is organised into six chapters. These focus on the following:

**Chapter 1** reviews the national and international research on mixed tenure social housing estates. It examines the evidence regarding benefits and challenges using this arrangement to deliver social housing and focuses in particular on dispersal and clustering of social rented dwellings in mixed tenure developments.

**Chapter 2** details the policy and practice background to the research. This includes policy on tenure mixing of social housing in Ireland, mechanisms for implementing tenure mixing in practice and other relevant policies such as land use planning and the regulation of the management of apartments and other high density residential developments.

**Chapter 3** draws on the survey of approved housing bodies conducted for this research to estimate the extent to which AHB social housing is located in mixed tenure developments and the clustering and dispersal of this housing. Information from in-depth interviews with key informants from the AHBs and central and local government is employed to explore their views on the need for tenure mixing in Ireland and the value of clustering or dispersing the social housing units in mixed tenure developments.

**Chapter 4** examines how social housing in mixed tenure estates are procured, funded, and designed. It examines the use of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, the purchase and construction of dwellings as mechanisms for delivering social housing in mixed tenure neighbourhoods. It also examines the practical factors which influence decisions regarding the location of the social rented dwellings in these estates such as housing management and housing market considerations.

**Chapter 5** draws on the interviews with residents of the five case study estates to explore their experience of living in mixed tenure neighbourhoods. The challenges which AHBs face in managing and maintaining mixed tenure estates are also explored as the strategies which can be used to build integrated communities of private and social housing residents in these estates.

**Chapter 6** sets out the conclusions to the report and discusses their implications for policy and practice.



# Chapter One

## Review of the Literature

### Introduction

The preceding chapter explained that tenure mixing strategies have been introduced in many countries across the developed world since the 1980s. This chapter reviews the most prominent themes in the very extensive research literature on these measures which has accumulated since then. It focuses primarily on the countries where this policy has been subject to the most extensive research. These are: the United States, Australia, the UK, and the Netherlands. The somewhat less extensive, but obviously relevant, research literature on the use of tenure mixing in Ireland is also examined here.

A key theme common to most of this literature is that there is a need to clarify what is meant by mixing tenure, what it seeks to achieve, so this is the first issue examined in this chapter. The second key theme examined here is the impact of tenure mixing – If there is evidence that it facilitates social interaction between tenures, or if mixing tenure does more harm than good to the communities it purports to help. The second half of the chapter then explores in detail what impact different physical layouts of tenures and the external design of dwellings have on mixing between residents living in different tenures and the social and economic well-being of social housing tenants and what insights can be drawn from this evidence for housing policy in Ireland.

### Meaning and Purpose of Tenure Mixing

There is an extensive literature on tenure mixing and also on social mixing, mixed income and deconcentrating poverty from the USA, Canada, Australia and much of Western Europe including UK, Ireland, Netherlands, France,

Germany, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Belgium and Luxembourg (Musterd and Andersson, 2005; Norris, 2006; Galster, 2007; Bailey and Manzi, 2008; Joseph and Chaskin, 2010). The exact meaning of these terms is often not clear, however. These terms are often used interchangeably and can act as proxy for each other, for example tenure mixing is often used as a euphemism for achieving income mixing and vice versa (Tunstall and Fenton, 2006). Broadly speaking, the terminology used in the USA refers to income mixing and deconcentrating poverty whereas in Western Europe social mixing or tenure mixing dominate (Galster, 2013). What is being referred to is difficult to define: what composition of ethnicity, race, religion, immigration status, income or housing tenure is being talked about; what concentration or amount and of which groups; and over what geographical scale and micro-scale.

Despite this, what these approaches have in common is that they seek to combat socio-spatial segregation by mixing households with different income levels in the same location. In Western Europe the social housing sector is much larger than in the USA and social renting tenants tend to have lower incomes than homeowners. Therefore, in Western Europe, social mixing of different groups in a particular location is generally achieved by tenure mixing i.e., mixing private and social housing.

Tunstall and Fenton (2006) summarise the policy reasons for mixed communities as follows: a means to achieve social policy goals, such as improving services and life chances; a means to increase the supply of housing, for example by subsidising affordable housing; or as an end in itself, that is, mixed communities being desirable because of increased social diversity and vibrancy.

The expected benefits of social mixing and mixed tenure which are identified in the literature are wide-ranging. Kearns and Mason (2007) summarise the expected benefits into four categories:

- economic and service impacts, such as improvements in public services, private services, the local economy, employment opportunities.
- social-behavioural effects, such as reduced anti-social behaviour, better physical maintenance, raised aspirations, improved educational outcomes.
- community-level effects, such as increased social interaction, stability and sense of community and belonging; and
- overcoming social exclusion, such as reduced stigma, better connectivity, and social networks.

There are many studies which support tenure mixing. A Joseph Rowntree Foundation review of seven research studies encompassing twenty case studies in the UK found that mixed communities had been successful and did not have the problems associated with low-income areas (Holmes, 2006). Bailey and Manzi (2008) also find in their review of successful features of long-



established mixed communities that social interaction between tenures does occur but there needs to be careful management and monitoring of public spaces. They noted criticisms made against tenure mixing but argued that the problems could be mitigated through careful design. McKee *et al.*, (2013) found that tenure mixing in three communities in Glasgow in Scotland had contributed to improvements in housing, environmental conditions, area reputations and sustainable communities but that these outcomes were not experienced equally by the three communities and other factors were important including housing management, dwelling design and construction standards and street layouts. Galster (2013) in a comprehensive review of studies conducted in the United States argued that there is empirical support that there is negative role modelling in disadvantaged communities, especially among youths, which might be helped by the presence of more advantaged groups but that this was highly contingent on context such as income differences, spatial scale, and the concentration of disadvantage. In Ireland, Norris (2005: ix) found in a study of five mixed tenure developments that they 'have some significant social, economic and community development advantages over single tenure social housing estates' but that mixing tenure is not a panacea for disadvantaged communities in Ireland, largely because some of the contextual factors in the international research are less relevant.

## Criticisms of Tenure Mixing

Whilst there are positive studies of tenure mixing, albeit with strong caveats, there are also criticisms of tenure mixing in the literature. For instance, some authors question the rationale on which tenure mixing is based. This rationale rests either explicitly or implicitly on the vast 'neighbourhood effects' literature, born from the research of Herbert Gans in the 1960s and William Julius Wilson's 1987 book *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy* (van Ham *et al.*, 2012). The concept of 'neighbourhood effects' suggests that when large groups of poor people are clustered together this limits their opportunities to escape poverty and deprivation. This implies, in turn, that policies to combat poverty should try to promote socio-economic diversity in neighbourhoods.

However, some authors such as Tunstall, (2003) argue that there is limited evidence that mixing housing tenures creates 'positive neighbourhood effects' and, as such, policies are largely based on conviction rather than empirical evidence. Galster, (2007: 35) agrees and argues that there must be examination of what sort of neighbourhood effects are operating to ascertain what the optimal mix of households will be and until this analysis is undertaken then social mixing policies will be 'based more on faith than fact'. Van Ham *et al.* (2012: 3) echo this call for more research, suggesting that:

**It]here is little doubt that these effects exist, but we do not know enough about the causal mechanisms which produce them, their relative importance compared to individual characteristics such as education, and under which circumstances and where these effects are important.**

Other authors, such as Cheshire (2012), have queried the assumptions regarding causation which underpin theories of neighbourhood effects. He argues that the empirical evidence that living in a poor neighbourhood is an additional cause of poverty over and above the effect of the individual's characteristics, is limited and unconvincing. Rather he suggests that poor people living in non-deprived areas are likely to experience the same outcomes in terms of employment and life expectancy as those living in deprived areas. For him, concentrations of poverty and disadvantage are instead spatial manifestations of income inequality; that it is the processes that cause individuals to have different incomes that constrain where they live (Cheshire, 2006). If this is true then mixing tenure is treating the symptom of inequality and not the cause of it. Lees (2008: 2463) supports this argument and concludes that social mix strategies 'are cosmetic policies rather than ones prepared to deal with the whole host of complex social, economic and cultural reasons as to why there are concentrations of poor, economically inactive people in our central cities'.

Slater (2013) also questions causation and argues that we need to invert the neighbourhood effects thesis and instead of emphasising 'where you live affects your life chances' should emphasise 'your life chances affect where you live'. If people are bound by resource constraints in choosing where they live, the important question, Slater argues, is how do these resource constraints come about? Cheshire (2006, 2012) argues that we must have a better understanding of how cities work and how income differences come about which lead to spatial concentrations of poverty. He is not arguing that neighbourhood effects do not exist but that there must be greater understanding of what neighbourhood effects exist and how large they are to balance with the benefits experienced by 'specialised communities' which have been pervasive in cities over time. Cities are complex and policies aimed at addressing socio-spatial segregation need to be clear about the processes that lead to that segregation rather than being conceived of in isolation (Cheshire, 2006).

Other authors go further in their criticism of tenure mixing and argue that this policy actually has the potential to generate negative consequences. Livingston, Kearns and Bannister (2014) suggest that mixed tenures could reduce social cohesion, increase disorder, provide incentives for property crime and increase sense of differences. Kearns and Mason (2007) argue that mixed tenure might enhance feelings of deprivation relative to better-off neighbours,

and some owner households' children's behaviour might be negatively affected. Tersteeg and Pinkster, (2016) use the sociological concept of 'othering' to show that low levels of social interaction lead to 'othering' and reinforcing existing negative stereotypes between tenures.

One of the key questions in the literature concerns whether tenure mixing leads to social interaction across different tenures. Joseph and Chaskin (2010) in their study of two mixed-income developments in Chicago, US, found that whilst there were improved physical surroundings, social networks across tenures had not materialised and the relocated public housing tenants were experiencing stigma and increased monitoring of their lives. Arthurson's (2010) study of three suburbs in Adelaide, Australia, suggests that the residualised nature of social housing, owing to allocations going to those with high and complex needs, 'makes social interaction across housing tenures appear more of a dream than a reality'. In the Netherlands, Tersteeg and Pinkster's (2016) study of a newly built fine-grained mixed tenure development in Amsterdam posited that the design of the building exacerbated tensions between owner-occupiers and social renters on the one hand and large families with non-Western European ethnicity on the other. They found little social interaction between tenure groups despite relatively similar socio-economic backgrounds. Atkinson and Kintrea (2000: 93) reported from their study of three estates in central Scotland, that although the areas had changed for the better 'owners and renters in regeneration areas largely inhabit different social worlds'. Musterd and Andersson (2005) in Sweden argued that rigorous testing is required to test the assumptions that housing mix leads to social mix and that social mix enhances opportunities for disadvantaged households. They found that the relationship between housing mix and social mix is not very strong despite it being a policy objective in Sweden since the 1970s.

Another criticism is that tenure mixing has become an 'orthodoxy', or in other words accepted as the standard intervention by policy makers, which limits consideration of alternative options for addressing urban disadvantage. As stated by Goetz (2013: 342) '[p]roblem narratives privilege certain policy interventions while simultaneously devaluing others. Narratives thus limit options by obscuring alternative understandings. The social mix narrative treats disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the people living in them as the problem, and terms such as 'ghettos' and 'segregation' lead to the obvious solution of spatial reordering rather than recognising the structural causes of poverty and disadvantage (Lupton and Tunstall, 2008; Kallin and Slater, 2014). Darcy (2010) argues that shifting the focus to the behaviour of those living in concentrated poverty a 'moral underclass' approach to poverty is reinforced, and this pathologising and marginalising social housing residents distracts from alternative policy solutions (Doney, McGuirk and Mee, 2013). Kearns *et al.* (2013: 56) found a belief among practitioners that tenure mixing was 'the only game in town' and did not question what might have been done instead.

It is argued by some authors that focusing on spatial reordering does not acknowledge the positive aspects of existing communities. Goetz (2013) argues that by problematising disadvantaged areas and social housing residents, tenure mixing does not acknowledge the positive and supportive nature of social housing and Lees (2008: 2461) states that 'it destroys one kind of social capital to try and create another'. Integration strategies have been criticised for being at odds with the desire of some people to live in similar groups or what is termed 'affinity clustering', and for requiring the disruption of the disadvantaged rather than the privileged (Markovich, 2015). Markovich (2015) study found that some residents valued affinity clustering and others did not, highlighting positive aspects including care and support networks versus negative aspects such as behaviour, harassment, and allocations to households with complex needs, and concludes that whether integration strategies are harmful or harmless depends on the context. For this reason, a research priority is how tenants prefer to have their housing integrated and whether they would choose to co-locate with other tenures (*ibid.*).

## Clustering and Dispersal of Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates

Whilst there has been much written about mixed communities and tenure mixing more broadly, there has been less research into what spatial configurations are best suited to tenure mixing. Bond *et al.*, (2013) describe the different spatial configurations as 'segregated', where groups are concentrated together; 'segmented', with groups occupying a block or small area; and 'integrated' where groups are mixed on a street level basis, which is sometimes referred to as 'pepper-potting' or 'fine-grained'.

Many authors argue that the dispersal of dwellings in mixed communities is necessary to encourage social interaction between residents of different housing tenures. Jupp (1999) in a study of ten estates throughout England argued that street level mixing is preferable because there is more chance of knowing neighbours of different tenures when there is a higher level of social contact. The good practice guidance produced by Bailey, Haworth and Manzi (2006) based on research and case studies from around the UK, states that the contemporary advice is that dispersal leads to the greatest integration and that public housing is less likely to be stigmatised. Tunstall and Lupton (2010) argue in their review of evidence from the UK that there was limited social interaction in mixed communities partly because of clustered tenures and that dispersal would maximise the opportunities for interaction between people living in different tenures. In a study of mixed tenure communities in the Cork region, Hayden and Jordan (2018) recommend that, as far as is practical, housing should be dispersed and that design should be tenure blind. This was echoed in an

Irish study examining stigma in social housing which found that fine-grained mixing and tenure blind design limited internal stigma in the development (Norris, Byrne and Carnegie, 2019).

Other studies suggest that clustering and dispersal of social housing is not the key determinant of the degree of interaction between different residents of different tenures and that other factors are more significant influences in this regard. In their study of three public housing estates in Glasgow, Kearns *et al.*, (2013) found that it was hard to separate the effects of different spatial configurations of mixed tenure from where and how the mixed tenure was produced. They found that mixed neighbourhoods where social housing was dispersed were often newly built and the subject of master planning, whereas clustered social housing was often located in neighbourhoods which had partial redevelopment and the common tendency for homeowners to send their children to school outside the neighbourhood often limited interaction. In Maryland, US, Kleit (2001a) found in a study of low-income women that length of time spent living in a mixed neighbourhood was an important determinant of the level of interaction with neighbours (see also: Kleit, 2001b).

In a review of three UK good practice case studies, Roberts (2007) argues that successful mixed communities can be produced without dispersal, and that dispersing social housing in every new development would not provide housing in sufficient quantities to meet housing need. Tunstall and Fenton (2006) argue that co-location of private and social housing might not lead to interaction because lifestyles and patterns of physical movement may differ between tenures, and they argue that there are other sites for interaction such as schools, community centres, shops, parking areas and paths, for example. Norris' (2005: xi) research on Ireland found that clustering public housing 'holds no serious disadvantages insofar as it does not significantly impede interaction between residents of different tenures or the social tenant's access to services in the estate or locality' and that clustering held some benefits such as fostering support networks, protecting saleability of dwellings for sale, and enabling social landlords to manage dwellings under their control. Another report on Ireland commissioned by the National Economic and Social Council echoes this finding in its study of stakeholders involved in three Dublin mixed housing estates stating that 'there was no clear preference over whether the mix should be 'pepper-potted' or 'clustered'' among those involved with housing delivery and maintenance with them seeing both the pragmatics of clustering and the ideals of mixing (Lawton, 2015: 27). Van den Nouwelant and Randolph (2016) go further and argue that dispersal of social housing can have adverse impacts on a housing development. They suggest that unit-by-unit and floor-by-floor integration can both increase financial risks and costs for housing providers, and that block-by-block integration can achieve benefits of access to jobs and quality public amenities and services, although they do acknowledge the

risk to tenure blindness with tenures in different buildings because of financial pressures during the construction process.

A research study by Judith Stubbs & Associates (2019) which incorporated case studies from Australia, Scotland and England concluded that there is no 'right way' to configure tenures. This research revealed different preferences in this regard among residents, developers, and social housing managers. They found that social housing managers tended to prefer the clustering of social housing for ease of management reasons. This configuration enabled them to better control costs, manage tenancies and deal with anti-social behaviour. Social housing tenants often favoured dispersal whereas housing developers and purchasers tended to favour clustering because they had different expectations regarding specifications which can necessitate differences in service charges within tenancies when they arose. There was considerable support on the other hand for a tenure blind approach as best practice in building sustainable communities.

## **The Design and Management of Mixed Tenure Estates**

In addition to the location of social housing within mixed tenure estates, the relevant research also suggests that the design of these developments is a significant factor in their success. In particular, ensuring that private and social housing are not externally distinguishable by their external design – or in other words employing 'tenure blind' design – is identified by many researchers as important to the success of mixed tenure estates.

For instance, van den Nouwelant and Randolph's (2016: 2) research on Australia, concludes that tenure blind design is the 'most valuable guiding design principle' to minimise stigma and maximise saleability. Research on the views of local authority officials and housing association managers in Scotland showed that they saw a tenure blind design as crucial to the success of any mixed tenure development (Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland, 2012). Similarly Judith Stubbs & Associates' (2019) aforementioned research on mixed tenure housing estates in Australia found that negative feelings or a strong sense of difference or division tended to run highest when the architectural distinction between the different tenures was clearly visible. On schemes where 'tenure blindness' had been positively encouraged and there was a mix of attractive properties of different sizes and types, residents tended to be less aware of difference and reported good neighbourly relationships. While research on mixed tenure estates in England, commissioned by NHBC Foundation, (2015: 4) found that:

on schemes where tenure blindness had been positively encouraged and there was a versatile mix of attractive properties of different sizes and types, residents tended to be less aware of the differences in tenure and reported good neighbourly relationships. By contrast, negative feelings and/or a strong sense of difference and division tended to run highest when the architectural distinction between the different tenures was clearly visible – with people in apartments feeling more isolated and less likely to chat to neighbours than those in houses.

For these reasons the report argues that tenure blind design was often favoured by both housing developers and social landlords involved in mixed tenure estates but delivering this in practice was often complicated by different specifications required for private and social housing. Social landlords often wanted to remove things such as additional bathrooms and conservatories in order to keep costs down, but developers viewed these features as vital to ensure dwellings were saleable to private developers.

The same study also emphasises that the management of mixed tenure developments is complex and under-researched (NHBC Foundation, 2015). Significant gaps in industry skills exist in the management of the technical complexities of new developments. In addition, ensuring that service charges required to fund the maintenance of common areas in high density developments are apportioned fairly and managing different expectations around the level of services provided is a significant challenge. Both the social landlords and the developers interviewed for this study argued that clarity around service charges is critical to avoiding misunderstandings and disputes. In addition, homeowners' expectations around management, particularly around managing anti-social behaviour, which was often caused by, or perceived to be caused by social housing tenants, is also identified as a key challenge in this study.

## **The Importance of Place Making**

Another important theme in the research on tenure mixing is the importance of place-making for social interaction and successful mixed communities. Jupp's (1999) study found that schools were by far the most important site for contact between tenures ahead of local shops and pubs but stressed the significance of the length of time that people live in estates and the importance of information resources so that people are aware of their common interests. In a review of seven studies with twenty case studies for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Holmes, (2006: 11) found that there was no evidence that the spatial configuration of tenures itself affected the sense of community provided that the estates were well designed concluding that "[p]lace-making' rather than just 'house building' needs to be the vision'.

In a study of three mature mixed tenure communities in England where tenures were generally clustered Casey *et al* (2007) found that a carefully planned layout with quality neighbourhood facilities was important for encouraging social interaction. Small, walkable distances with a shopping centre at the heart of each development, bound by open space and green areas was key to encouraging interaction. Different tenures also shared roads and parking areas to facilitate interaction. Roberts' (2007) study of three cases studies, whilst not being fine-grained and only one tenure-blind, argued the importance of the public realm for facilitating social interaction and tolerance of difference. The study argues that 'a more flexible approach to design and layout can be taken' as long as visible signs of potential stigma are avoided; there is a high quality public realm; the edges of clusters have shared common spaces, such as informal play areas and courtyards; and that there are no high-rise apartments as those living in high-rise would not closely share the public realm (Roberts, 2007: 201).

Bailey and Manzi (2008: 9) state that 'Mix is a necessary but not a sufficient precondition for sustainable communities' and that 'careful attention needs to be paid to the design and layout of homes and their surroundings, the provision of the full range of facilities, as well as accessibility and integration into the wider locality'. They argue that schools, community centres and other facilities might be more productive for social interaction than the street. Camina and Wood's (2009) study of three mature mixed tenure estates in the UK stresses the importance of the physical and social environment as well as tenure mixing. A more recent study in the UK found that respondents valued practices which enabled 'real social mix rather than people simply living alongside one another', including identifying common interests, shared spaces and promoting interaction through schools, libraries and community settings (Mullins and Sacranie, 2016: 5). In a study of stigma in social housing in Ireland it was found that community buildings which incorporate gyms and creches were more successful in encouraging interaction than traditional community centres in mixed communities because they catered for more diverse groups (Carnegie, Byrne and Norris, 2017).

## **Reinforcing Difference and Avoiding Conflict**

A further important consideration in the literature is that mixing tenure can lead to reinforcing difference among residents and that this can be exacerbated by spatial configuration, allocations decisions and design. Arthurson, Levin and Ziersch's (2015) study of one of the largest public-private partnership developments in Australia, the Carlton Estate redevelopment, found that rather than reduce social segregation, the three separate blocks with separate car parks and entrances and a garden space for private residents only, resulted in segregation between the tenure clusters. In this case, financial constraints and



pressure from developers overtook the original aims of the project to create a mixed income development (*ibid.*).

However, more integrated spatial configurations can also lead to tensions. Spatial proximity is a double-edged sword because 'in some cases increased opportunity for interaction has led to increased tensions over use of space and behavioural expectations rather than positive exchanges' (Chaskin and Joseph, 2011: 232). Beekman, Lyons and Scott (2001) found in ten case studies in Scotland that resistance increased as spatial proximity increased and so they did not recommend pepper-potting at street level. They found that different values and lifestyles seemed to cause tension whereas more mixing was apparent when socio-economic backgrounds were more similar.

The influence of income differences has been raised in a number of studies. Camina and Wood's (2009: 478) study of three mature mixed tenure communities in the UK found that whilst owners and renters lived parallel lives they do so with a 'strong community of interest', but they noted that 'residents felt that those in other tenures were much like themselves' perhaps because they were closer in socio-economic groupings. Smith (2002) cited by Arthurson (2010) states that interaction appears to be better with a modest range of incomes rather than large differences in income. In a quantitative analysis of Montgomery County, US, looking at scattered sites and clustered housing, Schwartz *et al* (2015), contrary to their expectations, found a greater sense of belonging among public housing residents in scattered sites housing but noted that there were lower income differences in the development with much lower rates of poverty than the case studies with clustered housing.

Allocation decisions can make an important difference to the level of tensions and conflict. Arthurson (2010) argues that by targeting the most complex tenants, social housing in New South Wales, Australia has become 'residualised' and that social mix at a finer scale heightens difference and can lead to conflict. The mix of households with or without children is also significant because of the different uses of open space in the development and for this reason Carnegie, Byrne and Norris (2017: 53) argue that 'social housing allocation decisions are also crucial to avoiding conflict in mixed tenure neighbourhoods'.

Design and management decisions can play an important part in mitigating a sense of difference among residents and avoiding tensions and conflict. As argued by Carnegie, Byrne and Norris (2017) both designers and housing managers need to pay more attention to preventing conflict. One important design consideration is creating a sense of equality between residents of different tenures, particularly when deciding the location of the social housing in the development and access to amenities and car parking (*ibid.*). The location is an important consideration for Casey *et al.*, (2007) who state that it should not be hidden in a corner of a development or facing away from private housing as this

reinforces difference. This extends to ongoing maintenance of the development as different standards between tenures can accentuate difference (Carnegie, Byrne and Norris, 2017). Catering for diverse households, lifestyles and use of public space is crucial, particularly because of the mix between households with or without children, and tensions over sufficient play areas versus space for peace and tranquillity (Lawton, 2013). Further important considerations to avoid conflict are minimising acoustics and having adequate soundproofing between dwellings (Carnegie, Byrne, and Norris, 2017).

Conflict can arise from how public housing tenants are monitored and regulated in mixed developments. In three mixed income developments in Chicago, McCormick, Joseph and Chaskin (2012) found that despite subsidised units being dispersed throughout the development new forms of stigma resulted from intrusive screening and monitoring. Bretherton and Pleace (2011) raise issues of surveillance and regulation of higher risk groups. They argue that 'the ability of more vulnerable and chaotic households to access positive social capital, within 'socially diverse' neighbourhoods that both fear and seek to regulate them, is questionable...Poorer households should not be unnecessarily constricted by the, supposedly supportive, socially diverse neighbourhoods that are intended to improve their situation' (Bretherton and Pleace, 2011: 3443).

Management structures can also have an important impact on the level of conflict. In a dispersed social housing development in Amsterdam, the social renters had much less of an influence over maintenance and management decisions than owner-occupiers (Tersteeg and Pinkster, 2016). Lawton (2013) argues that often the needs and norms of property owners dominate management companies and solutions for overcoming conflict. McCormick, Joseph and Chaskin (2012) posit that stakeholders have a key role in engendering tolerance and constructive problem solving to avoid conflict and scapegoating of public housing residents, and that there must be transparency about the developments expected diversity and need for tolerance. In addition to balancing the needs of owners and public housing residents in a development, there also needs to be strategies to engage absentee landlords of private renters to avoid poor maintenance and address problem tenancies (Judith Stubbs & Associates, 2019).

## Importance of Context

In addition to considerations of tenure-blindness, placemaking, and design and management decisions to avoid conflict, the context in which tenure mixing policy is implemented and is crucially important and, arguably, is an area that has received insufficient attention by housing policy makers to date.

How the social housing is to be funded and maintained in a development has a bearing on decisions regarding spatial configurations for instance. Norris's (2005) research on Ireland suggests that high management charge costs might

make dispersal of units financially unfeasible and require social housing to be clustered to reduce these costs. In the Irish context, where social housing rents are linked to income rather than the costs of housing provision, rents are unlikely to cover the costs of fees paid to managing agents who manage the communal areas in mixed tenure, high density developments such as apartments.

The local context and the relative density of social housing in relation to the mixed tenure development is also important. As argued by Norris (2005: x):

**the Irish population is relatively dispersed compared to many other Western European countries, as is the social rented housing stock. Therefore, despite the low average incomes of social housing tenants in Ireland, the small numbers, and dispersed locations of households of this type mean that there are relatively few clusters of social renting households of sufficient size to have negative consequences for the local economy or to place excessive strain on social and community services.**

Cheshire, (2012) argues that the larger the city is, the larger segregated areas tend to be. This is because segregation is a natural part of urbanisation, having been in existence since ancient Rome and relatively stable in cities like London over time, and that the larger the city is, the more likely a particular group of people will fill up a particular area (Cheshire, 2012). Degrees of existing segregation will have a bearing on appropriate levels of social housing and clustering in new developments.

The economic context in which mixed tenure policies are being implemented will have a bearing on how tenure mix plays out post-construction. The economic crisis in Ireland following the global financial crash in 2008 meant that higher proportions of developments have become social housing than planned at the design and construction stages (Lawton, 2015). It is also difficult to control how much of the development will be privately rented post-construction and this can have implications for management of standards with absent landlords (Roberts, 2007; Camina and Wood, 2009). The eventual diversity of the development will be affected if there is a reliance on rental subsidies in the private rented sector to meet housing need.

Already established areas will have an existing community who will have heterogenous opinions about location and spatial configuration of their housing. As Darcy (2010) reminds us, social mix strategies assume a level of homogeneity in existing estates, whereas this is unlikely to be the case. In Lawton's (2015) study of three mixed communities in Dublin: Adamstown, Dublin Docklands and Fatima Mansions/Herberton, the importance of the voice of the existing community is highlighted. His research found that residents' preference for where they would like to be located in a development might differ from the planners' expectations. For example, in the Docklands residents wanted to live

on the street rather than be looking out onto the water. In Herberton, the existing community naturally had different opinions about whether they wanted to live near to family and former neighbours or not.

The likely gender profile of the development must also be taken into consideration in design and planning decisions. Foran (2013) describes how following gender mainstreaming in urban design in Austria, planners acknowledged the different uses of public and domestic space by women and men due to the higher childcare and care of relative's burden experienced by women. This led to alternative designs of apartments, courtyards, and parks to account for the different use and different travel patterns by women. For example, they found that women tended to make several shorter journeys taking children to appointments, to school, grocery shopping and caring for relatives, often using public transport, whereas men tended to travel mainly to and from work by car. This led them to have facilities and services such as shops, GPs and creches within developments which reduced the travel and time burden for women. Rather than reinforce gender stereotypes they sought to achieve 'fair shared space' in urban design.

The ability of residents to access mobility and communication technologies, such as public transport and smart phones, impacts on the degree to which social networks are maintained beyond the typical geographical boundaries usually considered when implementing mixed tenure policies (Gwyther, 2011). Arthurson (2010) argues that social interaction objectives assume that residents in disadvantaged areas limit their social networks to the immediate area and that social mix policies do not specify or explore spatial scales for social interaction. Gwyther (2011: 74,87) states that social mix policies 'view community as geographically bound rather than as dynamic networks in social space' and that this 'sedentary notion of 'community'' does not consider the role of technology in forming and maintaining social networks in the digital age. The access to these technologies is not equally distributed and so face-face interaction might be more important for some groups than others and dispersing social housing residents could increase their social isolation rather than reduce it (*ibid.*).

## Conclusion

The literature on tenure mixing is vast, the literature on spatial configurations of tenure mixing is less so, but some common themes can be drawn from to give insight into tenure mixing policy in Ireland. What is meant by tenure mixing and what it seeks to achieve is often not explicit. The expected benefits are wide-ranging and there have been positive studies of tenure mixing, albeit with strong caveats. There have been criticisms of tenure mixing policy, particularly that there is a lack of evidence of causation of neighbourhood effects, namely that living in a poor neighbourhood is an additional cause of poverty over and above an individual's characteristics, and it has been argued that concentrations

of poverty are instead a spatial manifestation of income inequality meaning that mixing tenure treats the symptom and not the cause of urban disadvantage.

There is criticism that tenure mixing can have negative consequences for the communities it purports to help and that it does not lead to the level of social interaction required to achieve the expected benefits of tenure mixing. There has been some criticism of the quality of reviews of studies for being overly positive of mixed tenure. A further criticism is that a tenure mixing orthodoxy has formed in policy circles and this limits the consideration of alternatives to addressing urban disadvantage, and that it does not sufficiently acknowledge the positive aspects of social housing communities.

Contemporary advice appears to be that 'pepper-potting' housing in mixed tenure estates is required for successful communities but there are strong arguments from the literature that 'tenure-blindness' is key and that this can be applied in both clustered and dispersed settings. It is clear from the literature that social interaction and successful mixed communities are not an automatic result from mixing tenure. Arguably, what is important for mixed tenure estates is the same as for any residential area. 'Place-making' should be the central objective as well as design and management to avoid reinforcing difference and creating conflict between *and within* tenures. Quality public space, open green space, walkable distances, schools, health centres, leisure facilities, shops, creches, gyms, libraries, community halls, diversity of house size and type, employment opportunities and access to public transport are all important components of place-making for successful communities.

There are important allocations considerations, particularly the level of income or socio-economic difference and the complexity of need. There must be a sense of equality in design and layout but also equality in ongoing management to avoid scapegoating and to engender tolerance and resolve conflict.

Finally, an area that has received less attention to date in tenure mixing policy is the importance of context. Funding arrangements, the existing density of social housing and the economic context, particularly regarding the potential levels of private rented accommodation in the development must be taken into consideration. Of critical importance is listening to and responding to the different needs of all those that will be living in the mixed tenure community. The voice of the existing community, a gender analysis of need and how social networks are created and maintained beyond a sedentary notion of community must be incorporated at the earliest stage of planning.

Despite the vast literature on tenure mixing significant knowledge gaps remain. Understanding whether tenants prefer clustered or dispersed housing (Markovich, 2015), research which directly engages with the experience of housing organisations (Mullins and Sacranie, 2016), and the impact of buy-to-let and the private rented sector on mixed tenure estates (Markovich, 2015; NHBC Foundation, 2015) are all areas which require more research to strengthen housing policy outcomes.



# Chapter Two

## Mixed Tenure Housing Policy and Practice in Ireland

### Introduction

This chapter reviews the framework of policies intended to deliver social housing in mixed tenure estates in Ireland and traces their evolution since their introduction in the 1990s. Guidance issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage to local authorities and AHBs on the implementation of these measures is also reviewed here.

This analysis focuses on the policy on the construction, purchase and renovation of social housing and the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000, Part V of which enables local authorities to require that a proportion of new housing developments are used for social housing or affordable housing for rent. It also devotes particular attention to the extent to which the location of social housing in social housing estates has been addressed in the guidance on the implementation of these policies.

### The Evolution of Policy on Tenure Mixing

As mentioned in the Introduction to this report, the desirability of providing social housing in mixed developments was first flagged by policy makers in Ireland in the early 1990s. The 1991 housing ministry policy statement – *A Plan for Social Housing* – suggested that new social housing should be provided in smaller groups than was the case traditionally and also in 'in-fill' developments interspersed within existing developments (Department of the Environment, 1991). The stated rationale for this policy change was to avoid the developments of very large, mono tenure of social housing estates. This rationale was

rooted in a view that mono tenure communities have led to concentrations of disadvantage particularly in urban and suburban areas.

In addition to the mixing of social and private housing provision, this strategy also envisaged that in future there would be increased diversity in the sources of social housing supply. As well as the local authority provision which had been the main source of social housing supply prior to this, *A Plan for Social Housing* envisaged that in future there would be an 'enhanced contribution from voluntary and co-operative sector' approved housing bodies to social housing provision (Department of the Environment, 1991). These objectives were restated in the next housing ministry statement – *Social Housing – the Way Ahead* – in 1995, but no further significant evolution in policy on tenure mixing occurred until the end of this decade when the Planning and Development Act, 2000 was enacted (Department of the Environment, 1995; Brooke, 2006).

This landmark legislation consolidates and rationalises all of the existing planning legislation, and many existing planning regulations, but it also included some significant new planning provisions which are relevant to tenure mixing. It requires local authorities to include within their development plan a housing strategy to make provision to meet the housing needs of the existing and future population of the area. Part V of the Act requires that this strategy should include an assessment of all persons in need of social housing or affordable housing for sale at less than market value. It also empowers local authorities to take up to 20 per cent of land designated for housing developments to meet this social and affordable housing need. Under the terms of the Act, developers sell the land to local authorities at existing use value which in most instances is less than its development value. Local authorities can also pay developers additional sums to purchase serviced sites or completed dwellings on this land at a price to reflect the cost of construction plus the developer's reasonable profit. This legislation thereby established an important new mechanism for delivery of social housing via the planning system and in mixed tenure developments. The latter provision reflects the commitment made in this legislation to 'mitigating undue social segregation' (Norris, 2005, 2006).

Notably, the provisions of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act have been amended on several occasions since its introduction (see Table 2.1 below). For instance, amendments introduced by the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2002 provided housing developers with new options for complying with their obligations under Part V. These are: reserving land or providing houses or sites at another location, making a payment to the local authority to be used for the provision of social and affordable housing, or a combination of these two. This provision was removed by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015, which also reduced the maximum proportion of a development required to be reserved for social and affordable housing to 10 per cent. Together with trends



in total levels of new housing output, these changes to the legislation regarding Part V have had a significant impact on the level of mixed tenure social housing delivered under its auspices and the character of developments in which it is located. Figure 2.1 below reveals that Part V output was particularly high in the mid-2000s when housing output overall was also high.

**Table 2.1 Amendments to Part V of the Planning and Development, 2000**

Date	Amendment
2002	The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act, 2002 provided housing developers with new options regarding compliance with the Part V provisions of the 2000 Act. These are: reserving land or providing houses or sites at another location, making a payment to the local authority to be used for the provision of social and affordable housing, or a combination of any of these options. In addition, the rules regarding the exemption of small housing developments from the requirements of Part V were amended. The limit was reduced from 0.2 to 0.1 hectares or five dwellings or more.
2011	The Housing Policy Statement announced the cessation of all existing affordable housing programmes as part of a review of Part V.
2015	The options for developers to fulfil Part V obligations by making a financial contribution; making available land outside the development site and making available serviced sites on the development land were removed by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015. Developers were given a new option of leasing units to a local authority or AHB in order to meet their social and affordable housing obligation. In addition, maximum proportion of a development required to be reserved for social and affordable housing was reduced to 10 per cent. However, the affordable housing programmes remained suspended.

Source: Norris and Winston, (1990); Department of the Environment Community and Local Government, (2015).

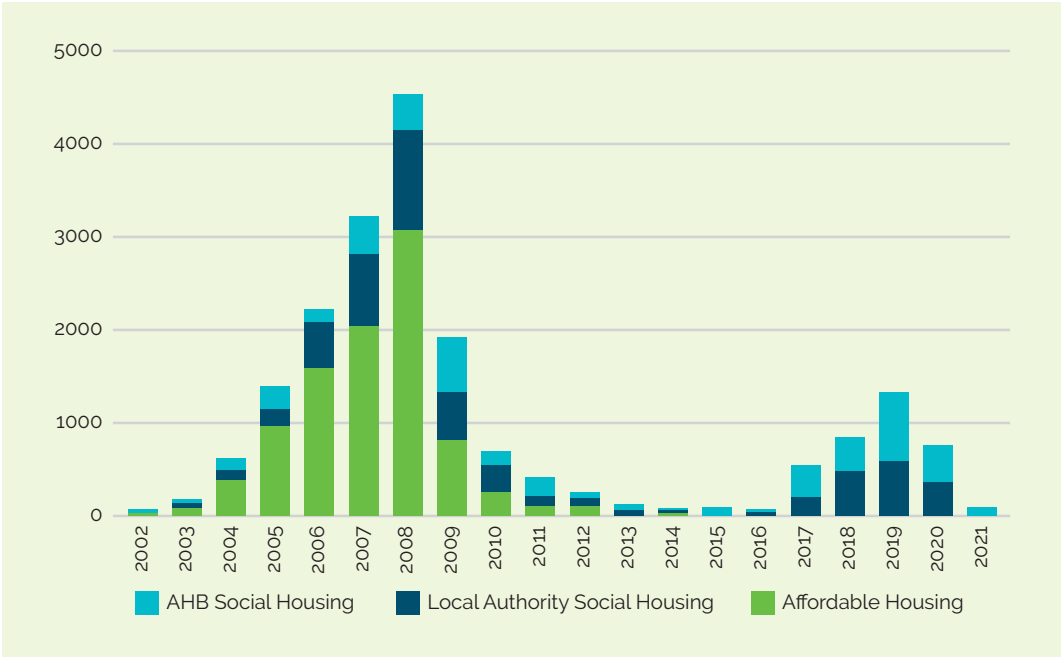
However, affordable housing provision made up a large proportion of Part V output during this time. In recent years by contrast, all Part V output has been used for social housing provided, either provided by AHBs or local authorities, although a proportion of this has been leased rather than purchased by these social landlords. This has implications for the objective of combatting undue social segregation which, as mentioned above, is a core objective of the Act.

Many other policy statements published since 2000 have reaffirmed policy makers' commitment to providing social housing in mixed tenure developments. Notably, the need for the social mixing of other housing tenures has also been increasingly emphasised by policy makers.

For instance, this was evident in the reforms to housing subsidies for low-income private renting households which were initiated in the mid-1990s. A specific objective of the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), which was

established in 2004 to enable local authorities lease accommodation from private landlords for re-letting to housing allowance recipients, is to avoid the socio-spatial segregation previously associated with the main housing allowance for private renting tenants called Rent Supplement (Norris and Coates, 2007).

**Figure 2.1 Social and Affordable Housing Output Delivered Via Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 between 2002–2021**



Source: Department of Housing Planning and Local Government (various years).

The government housing policy statement *Social Housing Strategy – 2020* published in 2014 reaffirmed that tenure mix is an essential part of social and private housing delivery (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2014). Indeed, it indicated a more ambitious role for tenure mix stating that the traditional mechanism of imposing tenure mix on new developments would go further than previous measures. With reference to the four local authorities responsible for Dublin the strategy highlighted the need to deliver more social housing on a larger scale and refers to the importance of mixed tenure in meeting objectives of developing sustainable communities. The strategy announced that the Dublin Social Housing Delivery Task Force, established as a mechanism to address the acute shortage of social housing in the capital, would work with AHBs and other stakeholders to ‘establish mixed tenure developments that maintain the objectives of sustainable communities, while addressing issues of scale’ (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2014: 27). The aim was to deliver housing developments which would include a more comprehensive mix of tenures including more where social renting, private renting, affordable housing for sale and cost rental

housing – a new form of affordable rental housing intended for households with incomes too high to access social housing. The *Social Housing Strategy – 2020* envisaged that:

**... delivering developments where social renting, private renting and affordable and cost renting options are provided side by side... will have the potential to further promote the evolution of mixed tenure communities, increase overall supply of housing and to deliver social housing on a scale that is more reflective of the extent of social housing need (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2014: 27).**

The recent government housing strategy – *Rebuilding Ireland* (2016), also places strong emphasis on the importance of locating social housing in mixed tenure estates (Government of Ireland, 2016). In this vein the report argues:

**Irrespective of the method of their housing provision, our citizens deserve to live in sustainable communities with an appropriate tenure mix. The size of the individual construction projects in the new social housing building programme reflects that clearer thinking on achieving good tenure mix. Building a mix of smaller scale and infill developments is essential, if we are to deliver on our commitment to create long-term sustainable communities and avoid repeating the mistakes of the past (Government of Ireland, 2016: 46).**

The National Planning Framework, published in 2018, repeats these commitments (Government of Ireland, 2018b). It states that sustainable growth will be secure by 'tackling legacies such as concentrations of disadvantage in central urban areas through holistic social as well as physical regeneration and by encouraging more mixed tenure and integrated communities' (Government of Ireland, 2018b: 26). Mixed tenure housing is a central plank in tackling these legacies and in ensuring sustainable and integrated communities into the future. Under the National Planning Framework also investment in public housing on local authority and wider State lands is to be used to drive renewal and rejuvenation of cities and towns but in addition more affordable homes are to be provided in urban areas as part of the creation of mixed-tenure communities (Government of Ireland, 2018b: 66).

The establishment of the Land Development Agency will also introduce a new actor to the stage with the deployment of State-owned lands delivering a wide range of housing options and diverse tenures. Delivering mixed tenure into the future therefore will go well beyond the aspirations of earlier housing policy statements and indeed the remit of the original Part V legislation.

## Guidance on the Implementation of Tenure Mixing

### Guidance on the Design of Purpose Built or Procured Social Housing Estates

Housing ministry guidance on the design of social housing and social housing estates was set out in a 2007 publication called *Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities* (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2007). These contain several recommendations relevant to social housing in mixed tenure estates, but these recommendations are rather high level and imprecise. For instance the guidelines recommend that local authorities should ensure that 'social housing and mixed tenure schemes' should 'contribute to the integrated development of the areas in which they are located' (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2007: 9). They also recommend that 'mixed tenure schemes should be provided with an appropriate balance between social, private, affordable, voluntary and special needs housing regardless of the size of scheme' (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2007: 22).

### Guidance on Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000

Much more extensive guidance on the implementation of the tenure mixing provisions of Part V has been published by the DHLGH, most notably in two detailed documents issued in 2000 and 2017, the content of which reflects the provisions of the 2000 Act, of the various legislative amendments made to this Act and the associated regulations (Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2000; Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, 2017). However, this guidance is also rather vague on the matter of the location of the social housing within the estates.

The 2000 guidelines on the implementation of Part V requires local authorities to consider Part V requirements in all relevant planning applications (as in those over a certain size for example). The implementation of these requirements in practice is managed via Part V agreements between local authorities and relevant developers which are negotiated as part of the planning permission process. Notably the guidelines specify that the negotiation of the Part V agreement is a matter for the local authority solely. This means that there is no provision to engage any external body, such as an approved housing body, in the negotiation of Part V agreements. Although the 2000 guidelines on Part V do suggest that AHBs should be consulted regarding the content of the housing strategy section of the development plan which underpins the Part V process (Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2000).

These guidelines also state that Part V agreements should be made at the earliest possible stage in any pre-planning discussions. The intention to make an agreement should be written into the planning permission as a condition and

both the authority and the developer should have a common understanding of the nature of this agreement when the decision to grant permission is made. This agreement should include a description of the proposed houses, the land, or sites to be transferred as set out under the 2000 Act. Part V agreements must be in place before the development commences.

When it comes to the location of Part V units on a particular site (leaving aside instances where agreements result in units in other locations or a site transfer) the 2000 guidelines specify that the section of the development which is subject to the Part V agreement 'should be integrated with the rest of the development' and that provision of houses (rather than land or sites) is the preferred route from the point of view of achieving social integration and protecting the integrity of the development (Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2000: 23). The guidelines also state that 'the number and location of these houses should be such as to avoid undue social segregation and foster the development of integrated communities' (ibid). The 2000 guidelines also include several recommendations in relation to the management of Part V developments which include apartments and high-density housing. For instance, they suggest:

**In order to preserve the amenity, quality, and visual character of a particular development and to ensure adequate maintenance of common facilities and areas, planning authorities should ensure that appropriate estate management arrangements are put in place upon the completion of the development. Such estate management provisions should therefore form an integral part of the agreement negotiated between the planning authority and the developer. These provisions are important for all future residents of a development comprising private, social and affordable housing units (Department of the Environment and Local Government, 2000: 31).**

Following the amendment of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act by the Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015, new guidance on Part V was issued by the housing ministry in 2017 (Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, 2017). These guidelines, reflect the outcome of consultation with local authorities, developers, and other stakeholders, but much of their content is similar in tone to 2000 guidance.

For instance, the need to consider the content of Part V agreement at the earliest opportunity is emphasised, but with added emphasis on the importance of pre-planning consultations between local authorities and developers. The importance of reaching a 'shared vision' between local authority housing and planning departments in relation to the delivery of 'appropriately located' Part V

units is also highlighted. In addition, the benefits of acquiring social housing units on the site of the relevant development to advance the aim of counteracting undue social segregation are emphasised, as is the necessity for appropriate mixture of house types and sizes to ensure a proper match of housing type with need (Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, 2017).

Design concerns feature more prominently in the 2017 guidelines. They recommend that it is important that the developer be informed of the social housing requirements for the site at the earliest stage so that this can be considered in the design of the development, e.g., the type of unit the local authority is interested in acquiring. The guidelines emphasise the benefits of allocating Part V social housing units to AHBs and the pre-planning process in the context of AHB engagement in Part V agreements is mentioned too. Specifically, the guidelines suggest that:

**where the local authority is considering using an Approved Housing Body (AHB) to deliver Part V, the views of the developer in relation to a possible partner AHB may also be obtained at this stage, although the selection of an AHB is ultimately a matter for the local authority. Preliminary discussions can also take place regarding number of units, costs, local market rent, etc (Department of Housing, Planning, Community and Local Government, 2017: 5).**

Although local authorities remain responsible for negotiating Part V agreements, they are under no obligation to consult AHBs which is a departure from the previous guidance issued.

The 2017 guidance also address the amendments to Part V provisions introduced by the 2015 Act. As mentioned above these amendments allow for the leasing, rather than the purchase, of Part V units for letting as social housing. The 2017 guidelines explain that 'the main purpose of this was to enable Part V agreements to continue to be made in cases where insufficient capital funding is available for the acquisition of units', but they propose that:

**As units leased may revert to the developer at the end of the lease period, and hence be removed from the local authority's social housing stock, the aims of Part V, and of the Government's social housing policy, will be better achieved by the acquisition of houses, rather than leasing (Department of Housing Planning Community and Local Government, 2017: 9).**

Local authorities are also asked to consider whether the Part V units should be purchased upfront, as provided for in order to support the development of private housing in a particular area. This approach was recommended in the *Rebuilding Ireland* housing policy statement (Government of Ireland, 2016).

## Other Relevant Guidance

### **Guidelines for Local Authorities on Housing Minority Ethnic Communities**

Ireland has become an increasingly diverse society over the last few decades. In line with the increase in minority ethnic communities the Housing Agency in 2011 published good practice guidelines on *Good Practice in Housing Management Guidelines for Local Authorities Housing Minority Ethnic Communities, Facilitating Inclusion* (Housing Agency, 2011). These guidelines state that local authorities should take steps to avoid the development of overly segregated neighbourhoods, in terms of socio-economic group or ethnicity. Segregation, the document notes, can lead to concentrations of disadvantage, inadequate local facilities such as shops and services and increased social problems. They also suggest tenure mixing can help to address or prevent segregation and can also mitigate the stigma sometimes associated with social housing estates and social needs and thus reduce the strain on local social and community services.

The guidelines further recommend that social interaction be promoted within the neighbourhood with well-designed and well managed open spaces, commercial and community infrastructure, as part of mixed tenure housing developments, on a scale appropriate to the development. The provision of public spaces in a settlement can help to improve interactions between communities. This 'soft infrastructure' includes courtyards, parks, playgrounds, community centres, leisure centres, allotments, museums and galleries, youth centres, restaurants, and bars. Public spaces enable people to interact with each other and to develop local ties and the guidelines cite research which highlights the role that public space can play in promoting meaningful contact between different groups of people, thereby promoting better relations between communities (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2009).

### **Housing First Manual for Ireland**

Housing First is an internationally recognised, evidence-based solution for people who sleep rough and long-term users of emergency accommodation with complex needs (Tsemberis, 2010). As its name implies, Housing First operates by providing homeless people with immediate access to a home coupled with person centred, community-based and recovery-oriented supports. The model was developed by Sam Tsemberis at Pathways, a housing organisation in the USA.

The Housing First Manual for Ireland sets out the manner in which housing is to be provided to Housing First residents (Tsemberis, 2010). The bulk of properties for Housing First programme are expected to be social housing units provided by either local authorities or AHBs, with some units leased from landlords in the private rented sector (Government of Ireland, 2018a). Notably, from the perspective of tenure mixing clustering of housing is not deemed desirable under the Housing First programme (Tsemberis, 2010). Indeed, clients are selected for participation partially on the basis of their capacity to live autonomously in scattered-site housing.

### **Residential Density and Building Height Guidelines**

As discussed in the chapters which follow, the density of mixed tenure estates and in particular the presence of apartments has a significant influence on decisions to cluster or disperse social housing. Therefore, land use planning legislation and guidelines on the density of residential developments and building height are also relevant to the provision of social housing in these estates.

Residential density guidelines are issued by the Minister for Housing under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended). Both local authorities and An Bord Pleanála (the national planning appeals authority) are required to have regard to these guidelines in carrying out their functions and apply any specific planning policy requirements (SPPRs) included in the guidelines when making decisions regarding applications for planning permission. Several sets of residential density guidelines have been issued since the 2000 Planning Act was enacted (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2007; Department of Environment Heritage and Local Government, 2009; Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage, 2018b). Each subsequent set of guidelines has updated and/or partially or wholly superseded the preceding set. From the perspective of the discussion at hand the most significant development which has occurred during this period is that the requirements regarding the minimum density of new residential developments (in terms of dwellings per hectare) have been increased in recent years, particularly in urban areas.

Guidelines on *Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas* issued in 2009 superseded the previous 1999 guidelines on the density of new residential developments, for instance (Department of the Environment and Local Government, 1999; Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2009). The 2009 guidelines recommend appropriate locations for increased densities. These include:



- City centres and brownfield sites in cities and towns – where the guidelines recommend that there be no upper limit on the number of dwellings provided, subject to good design principles being followed
- Public transport corridors – the guidelines recommend a minimum density of 50 dwellings per hectare (DPH) adjacent to train and tram lines and quality bus corridors
- Inner suburban / infill and institutional lands: minimum densities of 35–50 DPH, with the potential for higher densities in part of these sites
- smaller towns and villages – recommended densities vary from 30–40 DPH or more in centrally located sites, to 15–20 DPH on the edge of towns and villages.

However, it is important to note that when these minimum density requirements are combined with rules regarding minimum site coverage in the relation to city centre developments, this can result in much higher density requirements in practice of 100 DPH and more. The *Dublin City Development Plan 2011–2017* aspired to achieve densities of 135 DPH in new residential developments, for instance (Dublin City Council, 2010).

To achieve these densities, increased levels of apartment development will be required. Guidelines on apartment development issued by the housing minister in 2018 mention that the prevalence of this form of housing increased by 85% in Ireland between 2002 and 2016. In addition to their key role in achieving the densities required in city centre and suburban developments, these guidelines suggest that apartments could also be included in lower density developments to provide a wider range of dwelling types and sizes (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2018a). In addition, *Urban Development and Building Height Guidelines* issued by the housing ministry in 2018, recommend that increased building heights will also be required to higher residential densities (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2018b). The guidelines require 'general building heights of at least three to four storeys coupled with appropriate density in locations outside city and town centres and which would include suburban areas', while in the centre of cities and major towns residential developments should be at least six storeys high or more on suitable sites (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2018b: 2).

These changes in residential density guidance reflects national planning policy as set out in the *National Planning Framework* (Government of Ireland, 2018b). The National Planning Framework commits government to concentrating new residential development in cities and towns and also within their existing footprint. In this way the National Planning Framework aims to achieve compact growth.

## Provisions for Built-to-Rent and Co-living Accommodation

The 2018 guidelines also address the provision of housing in new developments which are built specifically for rent (called built-to-rent or BTR) and developments which include shared living facilities (called co-living developments) which it mentions were starting to be provided at the time of publication, but have since become more widespread (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2018a). Both of these accommodation types are generally owned and managed by institutional landlords or by third level institutions in the case of co-living provided as student housing. Under the terms of the 2018 guidelines, they are subject to different (and generally less onerous from a developers' perspective) rules regarding the minimum size of dwellings and car parking provision for instance.

Notably, from the perspective of the discussion at hand, the guidelines explain that provisions of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 do not apply to co-living accommodation, so developers of this form of accommodation are not required to provide any dwellings for social housing. The guidelines specify that Part V does apply to build-to rent developments, on the other hand and they explain that build-to-rent housing developers can meet their Part V requirements by transferring land or dwellings for social housing provision. Notably the guidelines also mention that:

**The particular circumstances of BTR apartment projects may mitigate against the putting forward of acquisition or transfer of units and land options outlined above and the leasing option may be more practicable in such developments (Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, 2018a)**

## Multi-Unit Developments Legislation and Guidance

Multi-Unit developments are residential developments where there are at least five dwellings and the dwelling share facilities, amenities, and other services. Apartment developments almost always fall into this category as do some duplex and housing estates. Apartment developments will comprise shared areas, such as hallways and foyers, shared infrastructure such as external walls and roofs, shared utilities such as electricity and water. Internal walls, ceilings and floors are also shared, and legal rights must be in place to provide for shared access to and servicing of these common facilities. In addition, other facilities such as lifts, car parks and landscaping which are used by all residents, and which must be maintained.

In order to deal with all these management and common ownership requirements, commonly a legal entity called an Owners' Management Company (OMC) is established and run by the owners who usually hold their units by way of long lease. The OMC collects a service charge which covers the cost of maintaining and providing services for the whole development. The OMC will also make provision for a sinking fund to ensure that when items such as lifts and roofs need replacing this can be funded without significant extra cost to the owners. Notably only owners are eligible for membership of the OMC, tenants are not.

These arrangements are governed by the Multi Unit Development Act 2011. This legislation was introduced in response to a 2008 Law Reform Commission report which highlighted significant problems in the governance of apartment block management and maintenance (Law Reform Commission, 2008). These problems included residential developers retaining control of OMCs in developments they had built, inadequate sinking funds and non-payment of service charges. However, the legislation is not without its critics. Research commissioned by the Housing Agency and Clúid Housing argues that its provisions for sinking funds are still not adequate (Mooney, 2019).

## **Critiques of the Effectiveness of Tenure Mixing Policies and Proposals for Reform**

The policies on tenure mixing in Ireland which were described above have been evaluated on several different occasions and some proposals for reform have been made.

For instance, in their analysis of the impact of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, DKM Economic Consultants and Brady Shipman and Martin (2012) specifically address criticisms that the effectiveness of this legislation has been undermined by clustering the Part V units together, often in peripheral locations within the development and that these units had clearly identifiable exteriors and poorer internal finishes. Their analysis of developments subject to Part V provisions in three different regions concluded that Part V had been successful in delivering social and affordable housing in mixed communities and that:

**the quality, accessibility and integration of the units have been successfully delivered. The units delivered in the schemes reviewed have been typically well-located with respect to facilities, generally not distinguishable from private owner-occupied houses and well-integrated in the communities examined (DKM Economic Consultants and Brady Shipman and Martin., 2012).**

The Housing Agency in a review conducted in 2011 concluded that practical considerations such as the location of a site (brownfield, greenfield, etc.) and the wishes of an AHB in relation to management and maintenance and other cost factors influenced whether social housing was clustered or dispersed (Housing Agency, 2014). It also concluded that relevant Irish research tended to echo the recommendations of international research on tenure mixing by expressing a preference for dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure developments and emphasising the importance of tenure blind external design of dwellings to ensure that one tenure cannot be distinguished from another. However, the research did not investigate the extent to which these approaches had been adopted in practice in the implementation of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act or the success or failure of these approaches.

Hayden and Jordan's (2018) study of the practicalities of delivering mixed tenure housing in Ireland found that the central government and local authority officials and developer and AHB representatives interviewed held largely positive views about the Part V provisions for tenure mixing generally, but interviewees were particularly keen on 'tenure blind' external design of dwellings which means that dwellings in different tenures are indistinguishable. This they suggested was more important considering than whether the social housing units were clustered or dispersed in a development. Tenure blindness, good quality design which facilitated ease of maintenance and active management were all seen as critical to the success of mixed tenure estates and also in facilitating the sale of private dwellings. The key informants interviewed by Hayden and Jordan (2018) also placed great importance on arrangements for the management of mixed tenure estates in ensuring their long-term success. They argue that agreed rules and covenants should be put in place to manage shared facilities and management must be visible, hands on, consistent and easy to access. They also highlight the importance of good, early communication with local communities to establish a positive image for the development from the beginning.

## Conclusions

This chapter has examined the development of policy on provision of social housing in mixed tenure estates since the 1990s and reviewed the guidance provided to local authorities and approved housing bodies on the implementation of this policy. It has revealed a very strong emphasis on the provision of new social housing in mixed tenure neighbourhoods is evident in housing policy since the 1990s. This preference is underlined by the introduction of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 which enables local authorities to require that parts of new private housing development are used for social housing. Although this legislation has been amended on several occasions since its introduction, these amendments have related primarily to the provision of affordable housing for sale in private developments and the requirements regarding the inclusion of social housing in private developments have remained essentially unchanged.

Despite the ubiquity of policy commitments to providing social housing in mixed tenure estates, the guidance on the implementation of these policies in practice are less well developed. Relatively little guidance has been published by the housing ministry on the design and location of social housing in developments which are purpose built by social landlords or bought from developers. The guidance provided on the implementation of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 is much more extensive, by contrast. However, these relate primarily to the land use planning aspects of tenure mixing and the calculation of the purchase price of social housing and guidance on the appropriate location and design of this housing is less detailed. Therefore, it can be assumed that decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, with factors such as the specifics of the site, cost and housing type factors that influence where social housing is located.

The chapter also examined other policies and guidance which are relevant to tenure mixing, including those related to the integration of ethnic minority communities and formerly homeless people into housing developments and also guidance on the density of new residential developments and on residential building height. Among these policies, those related to density and building height have seen most radical change in recent years, as policy makers have emphasised the need for higher density and higher rise residential development than was traditionally the norm in Ireland in order to achieve compact growth in towns and cities and prevent sprawl. This is likely to require the much more widespread provision of apartments. The implications of these developments for the provision of social housing in mixed tenure developments has not yet been examined in policy guidance, but it is explored in later chapters of this report.



# Chapter Three

## Extent of and Need for Tenure Mixing

### Introduction

This chapter examines the extent to which social housing delivered by AHBs in Ireland has been delivered in mixed tenure estates and the key characteristics of these developments particularly in terms of the dispersal and clustering of the social housing within them. This analysis draws on the survey of 13 approved housing bodies' mixed tenure provision which was conducted for this study. It also relates trends in the tenure mixing of social housing provision by these AHBs to the policies which have shaped these trends and were detailed in the preceding chapter.

The second half of the chapter examines the need for tenure mixing in Ireland, its benefits, and challenges and also the desirability of dispersing or clustering the social rented units within these developments. This analysis draws on the in-depth interviews with key informants from the housing ministry and central government agencies responsible for devising housing policy and funding and planning for social housing delivery. In addition, the views of the AHB and local authority staff and housing developers involved in the delivery and management of the five case-study mixed tenure estates are examined here. Their views are probed in more depth in the next two chapters which examine the construction and delivery and the management and maintenance of mixed tenure estates respectively.

## Tenure Mixing of Approved Housing Body Social Housing

The only research conducted heretofore on the use of tenure mixing in social housing delivery in Ireland was conducted by Norris (2005) in the early 2000s. This research included both local authority and AHB provided social housing and concluded that by the end of 2003 some 114 estates of this type, incorporating 9,996 dwellings in total, had been constructed. She also found that tenure mixing was a relatively recent phenomenon in Ireland and 95 per cent of these estates have been constructed since 1998 and that the use of tenure mixing was comparatively low by this time compared to the UK. Her survey of local authorities found that 21.3 per cent of the 17,895 local authority social housing units provided between 1998 and the end of 2003 were located in mixed tenure estates, as were 20 per cent of the 6,308 social housing units provided by AHBs between these years. In contrast, research on England conducted by Martin and Watkinson (2003) found that 48 per cent of AHBs and 58 per cent of local authorities claimed that they 'usually' or 'always' provided mixed tenure in new developments.

Since Norris' (2005) research, the size of the approved housing body sector has expanded very significantly and they provided approximately 22 per cent of the social housing stock in Ireland at the time of writing. Thus, the survey of the location of AHB provided social housing in mixed tenure estates which was conducted for this research fills an important gap in the knowledge base regarding tenure mixing in Ireland.

The organisational characteristics of the 13 AHBs which participated in this survey are summarised in Table 3.1 below. As mentioned in the Introduction to this report 12 of these organisations are categorised as 'Tier 3' by the Voluntary AHB regulator (which means they own 300+ dwellings) while one is in the Tier 2 category (which includes AHBs with 50–300 units). The size of the social housing stock owned, leased, or managed by the AHBs included in the survey reflects the dominance of larger organisations in the sample. Table 3.1 reveals that the 13 organisations surveyed have a social housing stock of 29,624 units in total. These dwellings are distributed across 1,491 housing estates, which each contain an average of 114.7 social housing units. The survey revealed that the AHBs employ an average of 79.4 staff each and that just below half of their social housing stock consists of apartments, while houses make up slightly more than half.



**Table 3.1 Characteristics of the 13 Approved Housing Bodies Surveyed for this Research**

Category	Details	Total N	Mean N
<b>Staff employed by these AHBs in the survey</b>	Number of housing management and maintenance staff	400	30.8
	Number of staff who provide social care or health care support	267	20.5
	Total number of staff employed	1,032	79.4
<b>Social housing units owned, managed, or leased by these AHBs</b>	Total number of social housing units	29,624	2278.8
	Number of these units used for general needs housing (i.e., housing with no additional supports)	26,989	2076.1
	Number of these units used for special needs housing (i.e., housing with additional supports such as social care or healthcare)	2,635	202.7
<b>Physical characteristics of these social housing units</b>	Total number of houses	15,908	1223.7
	Total number of apartments	13,133	1010
	Total number of other units (e.g., halting site bays)	583	44.8
<b>Housing developments in which these AHBs own, manage, or lease social housing units</b>	Total number of housing developments	1491	114.7

Source: generated by the authors from a survey of AHBs conducted for this research.

Table 3.2 below examines the extent to which the dwellings owned, leased, or managed by the 13 AHBs which responded to the survey are located in mixed tenure estates. It demonstrates that 23,168 of the total of 29,624 of social housing units provided by these AHBs (i.e., 78.2 per cent) are located in mixed tenure developments. This indicates that a substantial proportion of AHB provided social housing is now provided in mixed tenure settings and the level of tenure mixing has increased substantially since the early 2000s. Although it is important to emphasise that this finding may have been influenced by the sample of AHBs included in this survey which are primarily large, whereas Norris' (2005) earlier research on this issue examined local authorities' estimates of all AHB stock.

**Table 3.2 Tenure Mixing of Social Housing Units and Estates Provided by the 13 Approved Housing Bodies Surveyed for this Research by City and County Council (N)**

City or County Council	Total social housing units	Of which are located in mixed tenure developments		Total social housing developments	Of which are mixed tenure	
	N	N	%	N	N	%
Carlow	744	594	79.8	52	43	82.7
Cavan	201	162	80.6	16	9	56.3
Clare	340	285	83.8	31	17	54.8
Cork City	1,326	1,110	83.7	58	35	60.3
Cork County	1,969	1,613	81.9	142	81	57.0
Donegal	299	237	79.3	26	13	50.0
Dublin City	6,441	5,036	78.2	181	146	80.7
Dun/L-Rathdown	1,214	1,048	86.3	58	42	72.4
Fingal	1,980	1,696	85.7	76	54	71.1
Galway City	535	510	95.3	38	23	60.5
Galway County	423	325	76.8	46	20	43.5
Kerry	698	622	89.1	49	29	59.2
Kildare	1,131	1,087	96.1	59	46	78.0
Kilkenny	445	311	69.9	25	11	44.0
Laois	650	533	82.0	39	21	53.8
Leitrim	24	20	83.3	3	2	66.7
Limerick City and County	838	691	82.5	43	29	67.4
Longford	256	140	54.7	14	6	42.9
Louth	2,276	1,017	44.7	71	41	57.7
Mayo	235	150	63.8	17	7	41.2
Meath	1,048	766	73.1	62	31	50.0
Monaghan	284	187	65.8	15	7	46.7
Offaly	327	185	56.6	40	28	70.0
Roscommon	104	100	96.2	13	9	69.2
Sligo	370	302	81.6	18	9	50.0
South Dublin	2,317	2,134	92.1	161	79	49.1
Tipperary	739	492	66.6	46	16	34.8
Waterford City and County	1,006	784	77.9	61	26	42.6
Westmeath	180	170	94.4	16	13	81.3
Wexford	759	538	70.9	53	29	54.7
Wicklow	405	323	79.8	20	14	70.0
<b>Total / mean</b>	<b>29,624</b>	<b>23,168</b>	<b>78.2</b>	<b>1491</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>62.8</b>

Source: generated by the authors from a survey conducted for this research.

Table 3.2 also details the geographical distribution of social housing provided by these AHBs in mixed tenure developments and it reveals that the level of tenure mixing is high countrywide, but particularly in cities. The proportion of AHB provided social housing located in mixed tenure developments is over 50 per cent in every local authority operational area with the exception of Louth County Council (44.7 per cent) and is also less than two thirds in County Offaly (56.6 per cent). However, in most cities over 80 per cent of the social housing provided by the AHBs included in the survey is in mixed tenure developments and in Galway City the level is 95.3 per cent.

This pattern is most likely related to the higher numbers of rural social housing units which are single dwellings and are not located in housing developments / estates. This interpretation is supported by the data on the numbers of mixed tenure social housing developments (i.e., estates or streets of houses) which is also set out in Table 3.2. This demonstrates that less than half of the social housing developments owned, leased, or managed by the survey participants in counties Kilkenny, Longford and Tipperary are located in mixed tenure developments.

As explained in the preceding chapter, the increased level of tenure mixing reflects policy recommendations and also the introduction of mechanisms for providing social housing such as Part V of the 2000 Planning Act. The interviews with approved housing body staff and central and local authority officials conducted for this research also suggest that the very strong commitment to tenure mixing across all those involved in social housing provision may have been influential in this regard. For instance, one of the senior local authority officials interviewed highlighted the problems generated by large mono-tenure social housing estates constructed in the 1970s and 1980s:

**The density in Ballymun wasn't high. It was the level, the amount of social housing. 2,817 apartments in the one location, that was the real problem there. And it's the same with Darndale and Cherry Orchard. Same with Michael's Estate. Fatima Mansions/O'Devaney Gardens were smaller. O'Devaney Gardens was only 300 apartments. But mostly the problems were caused by large – same with Moyross down in Limerick – you know, really, really large social housing schemes with no mix whatsoever (OKI 3).**

This view was echoed by a senior central government official:

where we've had large mono-tenure social housing they can be some of the most deprived communities in the country. The outcomes are really bad in places – I remember seeing stats around north Tallaght I couldn't believe about the long-term intergenerational unemployment, educational, health outcomes etc (OKI 2).

And also, by a AHB social housing manager involved in the Willow Close case study estate:

I think back to Ballymun and the ten years I spent there, and like there were two debates, you know, and they're kind of strongly held by different opinions. One was that a lot of the ills experienced in estates, high-rise estates, but large estates like Ballymun was a factor of mono-tenure. You know, that was the reason this had happened (Willow Close KI 2).

Other interviewees highlighted the social benefits generated by providing social housing in mixed tenure settings. This point was raised by an AHB social housing manager involved in the Hazel Gardens case study estate. He argued that in a mixed tenure estate 'the tide that rises kind of brings everybody up a little bit and people who were out of step with that or if people aren't behaving the way they should' (Hazel Gardens KI4).

## Clustering and Dispersal of Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates

When asked where social housing should ideally be located in mixed tenure estates, a clear majority of the AHB staff and central and local government officials and councillors interviewed favoured its dispersal (referred to as 'pepper potting' by some interviewees). However, not every interviewee agreed, some argued that this decision should depend on the local context.

For instance, an AHB housing manager responsible for the Birch View estate argued:

if you're asking me immediately, like, the preferred would-be pepper-potted, absolutely, and mixed tenure, okay. That's a given. But we wouldn't turn our nose up [at clustered] because you understand the need in an area, and you understand the people on that list and that require it and that it makes sense to have a scheme of maybe fifty or sixty and to move that through a process and create those homes (Birch View KI 5).

A colleague from another AHB agreed, suggesting: 'The whole concept, of course, of mixed tenure and Part V is that you do not know who lives behind what door, you know. And I suppose a fault of the clustering is that there is de facto segregation going on' (Ash Mews KI 5). When probed further, the AHB housing managers often identified social and also management benefits to dispersing the social housing. For instance, the CEO of the AHB which owned social housing in the Birch View estate argued when social housing is dispersed their tenants:

**feel that they're part of a settled estate, effectively, of – although it's new, people are moving in all the time, they are dispersed between people who own as well as people who are letting, and it feels different for people. So, we don't have as much antisocial behaviour (Birch View KI 4).**

The same interviewee also suggested: 'I believe... the lack of clustering, the dispersal, it creates role models for all of those kids who are now growing up in social housing to see actually there is another way of life, we can see how that works for other people' (Birch View KI4). These views were echoed by a colleague from the AHB which owned dwellings in the Oak Mount case study estate, who suggested: 'So sometimes when they're all put into the one block they can be stigmatised as social tenants, where if they're scattered – and family housing that is scattered sometimes it's better because you've got one or two here but it's people pointing out 'that's the social block' (Oak Mount KI 6). While one of the local authority officials interviewed reported that 'our councillors, our members would prefer dispersal rather than clustering' (Oak Mount KI4).

However, a senior local authority official disagreed with the view that clustering or dispersal of social housing is a critical consideration. He argued:

**... at the end of the day what we really need is integration, you know. And integration is that you know – which we're getting now at the moment – that we have a chance for the first time ever in our lifetime, a chance of getting social housing in Donnybrook, Ballsbridge, and places like that, which is great. And I think if we can get that. The argument of pepper-potting, clustering, or dispersing it doesn't really matter (OKI 3).**

For this reason, he reported that his local authority is:

**... not interested in pepper-potting, we're far more interested in clustering. And the clustering works very well where you have maybe blocks and blocks of apartments and we take one block. We can manage it. We can focus on in that one' (OKI 3).**

One of the AHB social housing managers agreed. She suggested '... from the social tenants' point of view I think they – I imagine they would feel better clustered together than maybe isolated in a scheme where there might be a person either side of them who'll resent, well, I paid for my house, you got yours for nothing' (Oak Mount KI 1).

Other interviewees argued that decisions regarding the clustering and dispersal of social housing should reflect the particular neighbourhood or community where the dwellings are located. In this vein, an approved housing body CEO argued:

**I would hope your research wouldn't come out with clustering is better than dispersal or dispersal is better than clustering. What I would hope it would say is that it needs to be balanced based on location, existing environment, etc., because all those things then determine which one will work better for that location or that community (Birch View KI 4).**

This view was echoed by a senior manager in the same organisation who argued 'I think it [dispersed or clustered] depends on the need within the community and the number of homes that are acquired there and what those people in those communities expect' (Birch View KI 5). A director of housing in an urban local authority expressed the same view, arguing that 'you really have to look at each development, take your time in reviewing it and saying, would it work there, would it not work there?' (Oak Mount KI 4). As did a colleague in a rural local authority:

**I think the sprinkling is important. And I think people need to get over this hang-up about just because from the social housing they're going to be sort of lunatics, that's not the case. ... But I think you need to have the option of clusters as well. I don't think it's either/or, to be honest. And there's nowhere perfect (Willow Close KI 3).**

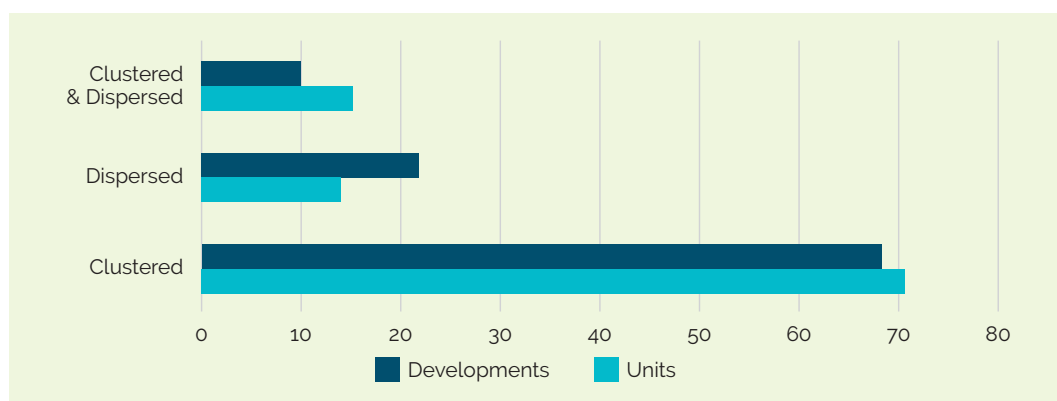
A councillor from the rural local authority where the Willow Close case study estate was located argued that in rural communities clustering, or dispersal of the social housing acquired under Part V of the 2000 Planning Act is not a major

concern because '... we only seem to get two in every estate that's being built. So, you know, it's not a huge issue because it's not like there's a lot of houses; there's only two' (Willow Close KI 1).

In view of the support for dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure estates among the AHB staff and central and local government officials, it is striking that the survey of AHBs which was also conducted for this research indicates that in practice the vast majority of their units in mixed tenure developments are clustered. Figure 3.1 below, demonstrates that 70.8 per cent of the social housing units provided by these AHBs in mixed tenure developments is clustered, whereas 14 per cent is dispersed and 15.2 per cent is located in developments which contain a mix of clustered and dispersed social housing. When examined from the perspective of housing developments (rather than units or dwellings) the proportion which are clustered is similar, but the clustered developments make up a higher percentage of total and clustered and dispersed developments account for a proportionately lower share.

More detailed analysis of the survey of AHBs reveals some geographical variations in the use of social housing clustering and dispersal in mixed tenure developments (see Table 3.3 below). It reveals that a lower proportion of mixed tenure social housing in urban or suburban locations is clustered, whereas the opposite is the case for many (but not all) rural counties. Between 55 and 70 per cent of the social housing provided by these AHBs in mixed tenure estates in the operational areas Dublin, Galway and Waterford City Councils, Limerick City and County Council and Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council areas is clustered. Whereas, in more rural counties such as Longford, Leitrim, Donegal and Cavan a higher proportion of mixed tenure social housing is clustered. However, there are exceptions to this trend – mixed tenure estates in Roscommon and Laois include relatively low proportions of clustered social housing for example.

**Figure 3.1 Clustering and Dispersal of the Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates Provided by 13 Approved Housing Bodies Surveyed for this Research (%)**



Source: generated by the authors from a survey conducted for this research.

**Table 3.3 Clustering and Dispersal of the Social Housing Units in the Mixed Tenure Estates Provided by the 13 Approved Housing Bodies Surveyed for this Research, by City and County Council (N)**

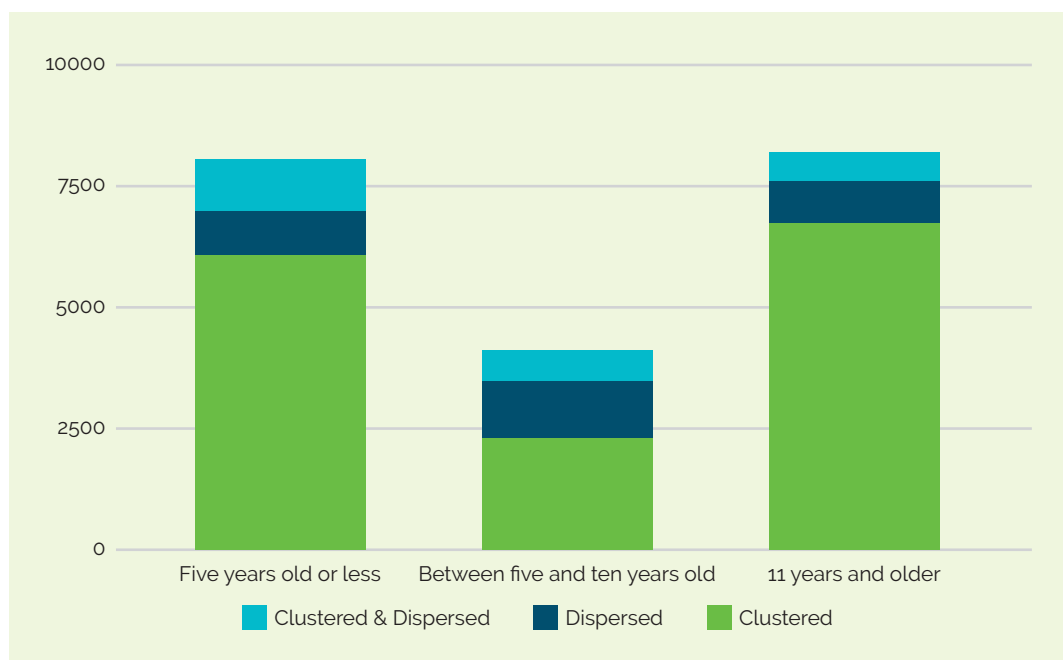
City or County Council	Clustered social housing N		Dispersed social housing		Mix of clustered and dispersed social housing	
	Units	Estates	Units	Estates	Units	Estates
Carlow	462	22	57	20	75	1
Cavan	146	8	16	1	0	0
Clare	249	17	15	0	21	0
Cork City	864	28	133	6	113	1
Cork County	1,206	56	235	20	172	5
Donegal	228	12	0	0	9	1
Dublin City	3,122	99	872	31	1042	16
Dún/Laoghaire-Rathdown	726	29	132	8	190	5
Fingal	1,213	35	234	13	249	6
Galway City	354	18	53	1	103	4
Galway County	284	15	41	5	0	0
Kerry	535	24	13	1	74	4
Kildare	593	20	204	11	290	15
Kilkenny	161	9	43	1	107	1
Laois	345	12	142	7	46	2
Leitrim	20	2	0	0	0	0
Limerick City and County	392	26	101	2	198	1
Longford	133	5	7	1	0	0
Louth	823	29	120	8	74	4
Mayo	129	6	21	1	0	0
Meath	606	21	83	6	77	4
Monaghan	172	5	0	0	15	2
Offaly	127	7	38	20	20	1
Roscommon	57	6	13	1	30	2
Sligo	236	9	18	0	48	0
South Dublin	1,694	55	298	16	142	8
Tipperary	364	14	46	1	82	1
Waterford City and County	463	23	110	3	211	0
Westmeath	98	7	32	3	40	3
Wexford	306	14	136	12	96	3
Wicklow	253	7	38	4	32	3

Source: generated by the authors from a survey conducted for this research.



The survey also generated information on the age of clustered and dispersed mixed tenure social housing developments and these data are summarised in Figure 3.2 below. They indicate the level of mixed tenure social housing provision by AHBs has increased significantly in recent years. AHBs delivered twice as much social housing in mixed tenure estates during the last five years as they did in the five preceding years for instance. This graph also demonstrates that clustering has remained the dominant mode of delivery of social housing in mixed tenure estates over time, although its popularity has declined marginally in recent years. 75.9 per cent of the social housing provided by AHBs in mixed tenure estates during the last five years was clustered, compared to 82.0 per cent of the units provided in similar dwellings 11+ years ago.

**Figure 3.2 Age of Clustered and Dispersed Social Housing Units Provided in Mixed Tenure Estates by the 13 Approved (N)**



Source: generated by the authors from a survey conducted for this research.

Note: this question was not answered in full by all respondents, these missing answers account for 2,737 dwellings. This is the reason for the discrepancy between the data in the total number of units presented here and that presented in Figure 3.1 and Table 3.3 above.

## Other Tenure Mixing Considerations

Although this research is focused on the clustering and dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure developments, several other broader land use planning considerations were raised by a significant number of interviewees. These impact on the success and failure of mixed tenure over the long-term, so they merit some attention.

For instance, several interviewees highlighted the emergence of increased tenure segregation and associated socio-spatial polarisation outside mixed tenure estates. In this vein one central government official argued:

... we are at risk of repeating some of the mistakes of the past by, you know, a huge and very understandable political and public focus on ramping up and delivering public housing in various urban locations around the country. We just need to remember that ... it is not axiomatic, that, you know, that a rising tide would lift all boats and that market housing will happen in some of these locations as well. In fact, I think there is a potential for a perverse effect, you know, where the market will turn off a particular location... So doing a development plan, zoning the land, providing public housing over here through various different means, and assuming the market is going to deliver housing in other locations, that's the biggest mistake you'll make is making that assumption in many rural locations around the country (OKI 5)

An official of a large urban local authority raised a related concern: 'So we'll never build... huge social housing estates like Darndale or Ballymun again, but you could be coming close to it if you add in HAP and all the other stuff that's out there' (OKI 3). As did another central government official who cited the case of a Leinster County where:

... the only people building units were the AHBs in recent years or developers with significant proportion of AHB. In one case, which the planners were not impressed by, there were 180 units – 60 AHB, 60 under HAP and 60 units for LA housing – effectively there was no private/open market housing. There were other such cases where say a development ended up going to maybe two different AHBs and then with some HAP the actual 'private units' were negligible, or you could see how the design was laid out so that they might not be delivered in short/medium term (OKI 6).

To address these concerns, a central government official argued that 'proper guidance around housing strategies' is required because 'the only guidance around housing strategies has traditionally been around how in effect the Part V piece is calculated' (OKI 5). He suggested:

**I think until development plans actually integrate a methodology for assessing that and segmenting it out and then relating that back to the land bank and figuring out how they're going to be activated, that's the territory we need to be in... to really address this issue properly (OKI 5).**

A rural local authority official concurred, arguing that:

**when we're looking at issues around tenure mix, we should be looking at the wider environment rather than looking at each individual development and saying this development should be a mix of tenures, but if the surrounding units are, say, 600 social, would you not be better off putting in 300 private? (Willow Close KI3).**

A second significant wider consideration raised by interviewees relates to the need to plan to provide other amenities in the neighbourhoods where mixed tenure estates are located. For instance, one of the local authority councillors interviewed made the point that: 'you need a balance of income, and you need a balance of amenities and commercial retail, etc., to have a sustainable community' (OKI 1). This view was echoed by a councillor from another local authority:

**there is a lesson to be learned about learning lessons, about providing proper facilities for people if you're building social estates. And where you're adding to them, you know, try to provide the situation where people and potential objectors don't believe or can't make the point that more housing is taking away from their facilities, their rights as they see it (Birch View KI 1).**

Similarly, an approved housing body CEO argued: 'you just can't cluster and have very dense developments and not provide the infrastructure. I think you're asking for trouble at that stage. (Hazel Gardens KI 7).

A large proportion of the local authority officials and councillors and AHB CEOs and staff interviewed also raised concerns about objections to new social housing developments by existing communities. They commonly suggested

that these objections are very widespread and are consequently of greater concern than objections from developers to being forced to provide mixed tenure housing, for instance by the Part V provisions or objections from home buyers or renters regarding the purchase or rent of dwellings in mixed tenure estates. For instance, an AHB housing manager involved in the Oak Mount case study estate argued: 'You get more resistance from local residents than you do from the developers' (Oak Mount KI 1). A councillor from a rural county in Munster agreed: 'We've all read in the papers and in the media where they'll say, well, councillors want social housing, but then they object. You know, they object to them then. They don't want them in their own areas' (Willow Close KI 1). As did another councillor from a large city who argued that private residents rarely name social housing as a factor which has inspired their objections to new housing developments '... they base their objections on other issues, you know, relating to the environment of the area, traffic, pressure on schools, and pressure on facilities and so on' but in reality, social housing is a key concern (Birch View KI 1). A local authority official argued that concerns about social housing provision in high income neighbourhoods are one of the factors inspiring objections to the leasing of new developments for social housing:

**effectively what we're doing we're converting private apartments, or private developments, that had planning permission as a private development. We're all of a sudden at the stroke of a pen converting them into social housing. And that's the real objections out there to it, to long-term leasing is the fact that we're bringing social housing, a significant volume of it, into areas that never had social housing before (KI 30).**

## Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed the extent to which AHB social housing is provided in mixed tenure estates in Ireland and its distribution within these estates in terms of clustering or dispersal. It demonstrates that the delivery of social housing by AHBs in mixed tenure estates has become more widespread in recent years. Research conducted by Norris (2005) in the early 2000s found that 20 per cent of the 6,308 social housing units provided by AHBs between 1998 and the end of 2003 were located in mixed tenure estates. In contrast the survey of AHBs conducted for this research reveals that 78.2 per cent of all housing they currently own, rent or manage is located in mixed tenure estates. New AHB social housing, provided in the last five years, is particularly likely to be in mixed tenure estates. This indicates that the use of tenure mixing by AHBs appears to have increased. This development reflects the objectives of

policy, the introduction of mechanisms such as Part V of the 2000 Act which enable the delivery of social housing in mixed tenure settings and also a very strong preference for tenure mixing among the AHB staff and local and central government officials interviewed for this research.

The chapter also examined the extent to which the social housing in these case study estates is clustered or dispersed. Despite a preference for the dispersal option among a majority of the key informants from AHBs and local authorities, a majority of the social housing provided in mixed tenure developments by the AHBs surveyed is clustered. 74.3 per cent of the social housing provided by these AHBs in mixed tenure developments is clustered, whereas 13.9 per cent is dispersed and 11.8 per cent is in developments which contain a mix of clustered and dispersed social housing. Data on the age of mixed tenure estates indicates that the use of clustering of social housing has remained consistently high over time.

The key informants interviewed stressed that the provision of social housing in mixed tenure estates and decisions regarding its location in these estates are only one of several measures required to combat socio-spatial segregation and promote social mixing. Some interviewees highlighted the need to provide neighbourhood amenities to ensure mixed tenure estates are successful. Others argued that factors external to mixed tenure estates such as large single tenure social housing estates or geographical concentrations in the take-up of housing allowances for low-income households such as Housing Assistance Payment can precipitate neighbourhood, town, or city level socio-spatial segregation. They argued that the housing strategies which local authorities produce as part of their development planning process need to have cognisance of the latter meso and macro manifestations of socio-spatial segregation as well as addressing its manifestation at the micro level via Part V of the 2000 Planning Act which enables tenure mixing of individual estates.



# Chapter Four

## Procuring, Funding and Designing Mixed Tenure Estates

### Introduction

This chapter examines the methods used to procure social housing in mixed tenure estates and the associated issue of how the purchase or leasing of these dwellings is funded. The contribution of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act to the procurement of social housing in mixed tenure estates is examined as are government subsidies for the purchase of land for social housing and the construction of dwellings.

The design of mixed tenure estates is then examined with a view to ascertaining how design decisions are reached and AHBs' role in them, as well as which designs work best in terms of facilitating the future management of mixed tenure estates and promoting the integration of the communities which live there. The preceding chapter examined the extent to which AHB-provided social housing in mixed tenure estates is clustered or dispersed. This chapter returns to this issue and explores the drivers of decisions to cluster or disperse social housing. The specific drivers considered here are density of developments, developers' preferences and housing market considerations and housing management considerations.

At the time of writing the Affordable Housing Act, 2021 had just been enacted. This allowed for the introduction of new forms of housing tenure designed to promote greater affordability such as cost rental housing and the reintroduction of other supports of this type, such as affordable housing for sale, which had existed in the past but had been abolished following the financial crash of the late 2000s. The potential for mixing these new 'intermediate forms of tenure' into the mixed tenure estates is examined in the closing part of the chapter.

# Procuring and Funding Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates

## Methods Used to Procure Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates

As set out in the previous chapter the survey of AHBs conducted for this research reveals that almost 80 per cent of the social housing they provide is located in mixed tenure settings and that the level of tenure mixing has increased substantially since the early 2000s. The discussion which follows also draws on the survey data to examine the methods most commonly used by AHBs to procure these social housing units in mixed tenure estates and to fund their procurement.

Table 4.1 it reveals that the vast majority of this housing (69.6 per cent) has been purchased by AHBs from developers (either on the open market following completion or via a commission by the AHB which is usually paid for in stage payments) or, less commonly, purpose-built by AHBs (19.9 per cent). Part V of the 2000 Planning Act delivered only 6.7 per cent of the social housing provided by AHBs in mixed tenure developments, although a further 3.8 per cent was delivered using a combination of all of these methods. This Table also examines the extent to which these different methods were used by AHBs to procure clustered social housing in mixed tenure estates, compared to dispersed units or a mixture of both. It reveals no obvious relationship between the particular procurement method employed and the spatial distribution of the social rented dwellings in the estates, 7 per cent of clustered social was procured using Part V, for instance, as was the same percentage of dispersed social housing and this reflects the total proportion of all social housing in mixed tenure neighbourhoods procured using these methods.

**Table 4.1 Methods Used by 13 Approved Housing Bodies Surveyed for this Research to Procure Clustered and Dispersed Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates (% Dwellings)**

Procurement Method	Total %	Clustered %	Dispersed %	Clustered & dispersed %
Procured using Part V of the 2000 Planning Act	6.7	7.0	7.0	2.5
Purchased/ commissioned from a developer	69.6	70.9	71.0	45.9
Purpose built by AHB	19.9	19.5	19.4	27.8
Procured using a mix of the aforementioned procurement measures	3.8	2.6	2.6	23.8

Source: generated by the authors from a survey conducted for this research



The choice of different methods to procure social housing in mixed tenure estates were explored in more depth in the interviews with key informants in the local authority and AHB sectors. These interviews revealed that there was also a lot of support for engaging with developers to secure purpose built (often called 'turnkey') developments from the local authority sector. One local authority councillor argued that there are serious obstacles standing in the way of both local authorities, and to a lesser extent AHBs engaging in direct development, which can be overcome by acquiring turnkey units. Not least among these is 'the Department of Housing can be very bureaucratic in my experience' as one interviewee argued (Willow Close K 11). As another official put it the local authority 'we're actually getting better value for our turnkeys than even for our own developments' (Willow Close K1 3). The manner in which finance could be drawn down also was seen as problematic. As another director of Housing commented:

**If you're building a road and you're acquiring land through CPO, by whatever means, there would be stage payments in relation to acquiring the land. That model doesn't apply in the housing arena, and we feel that it would be a fairer system if it did because the local authority then wouldn't be left holding the can as we are now in relation to this (Ash Mews KI 3).**

### **Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000**

As explained in Table 4.1 above, 6.7 per cent of the social housing owned, leased, or managed by AHBs in mixed tenure estates was procured using Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000. The interviews with AHB and local authority staff and councillors conducted for this research examined the process used to procure these units. As explained in the preceding chapter, these negotiations are the sole responsibility of local authorities. Therefore, in theory these organisations are the sole decision makers in negotiating with a developer regarding the dwellings which will be acquired, what price it will pay and where the units will be located in terms of whether they will be clustered or dispersed throughout the estate. Several of the AHB staff interviewed mentioned that they are not generally involved in these negotiations and are consulted only after the completion of the agreement to transfer the units for use as social housing. Some AHB managers argued that this approach causes problems for them – particularly when involvement at an earlier stage would produce better engagement around design and ultimately leading to better services for clients and better capacity to manage a development. Being left out of the process as one AHB development manager commented:

**Their [certain councils] whole approach is 'don't come talk to us at all until this is resolved and we'll tell you then what you're going to get and where you're going to get them and how much you're going to pay for them and what family mix will be in them'. And that's fine if you're comfortable and confident that they have the expertise, skills, and knowledge to be able to do it (Birch View KI 4)**

One of the AHB CEOs interviewed argued that a variety of approaches are used by different local authorities:

**[Some councils] will allow us to continue the discussions with the developer, they'll allow us to continue discussions with them. They still make the decisions. They still do the negotiation around the price, etc. But actually, where you've got that level of input you also have the opportunity to influence the outcome (Birch View KI 5)**

However, local authority officials disagreed that this was the case, particularly where the Part V element was part of a bigger scheme involving an AHB, as one official put it:

**the reality is the planning people are under huge pressure, the housing side are under huge pressure, and very often, yes, the AHB will, you know, will have been approached by the savvy developer, to then approach the local authority and say, look, we've got a whole arrangement here and how can we mix maybe Part V into that as well, you know? (Hazel Gardens KI 2)**

While local authorities have ultimate control over the decision to retain Part V units for their own social housing stock or to transfer them to an AHB, there are factors which influence that decision. The impact of management costs, particularly for apartment developments, was identified as a key driver in local authorities' decisions to retain Part V units. One authority official (OKI 7) commented that almost as a matter of course, if the development had an apartment block the default position was to allocate it to an AHB, whereas if the available units were houses it would be more likely to take the units themselves. Another official supported this, saying: 'generally, if they're apartments, to give them to an AHB and that has been our tendency. And if they're houses, we tend to kind of keep them. I suppose that's the honest way of putting it' (Hazel Gardens KI 1)

The availability of a Payment and Availability Agreement leasing payment for AHBs providing social housing – which is set at a maximum of 92 per cent of market rent – as well as better management capabilities were identified as key drivers of these decisions by local authorities (the funding of social housing is discussed in more depth in the section which follows). Local Authorities are not funded adequately to pay the management fees required by Owners' Management Companies in high density mixed tenure developments. This is because local authorities are solely reliant on their rental income for this purpose and rents in this sector are related to tenants' incomes at an average of €52 per week (Norris and Hayden, 2018). As one local councillor put it: 'We've so much on our plate, you know, and it costs us an awful lot of hassle to be looking after them, to maintain them, always looking for funds, that we have to balance our books on it, that it's more hassle than it's worth' (OKI 1).

The local authority officials and AHB staff interviewed had differing views on whether or not units taken under Part V were always of the same quality as the other units in a development. Most of the local authority officials agreed that they negotiated the best deal possible to secure the maximum number of units for use as social housing. This often meant change to the interior of units such as the removal of en-suite bathrooms and less expensive fittings. As is discussed in the next chapter, other changes might involve a reduction of car parking spaces and smaller gardens. However, there was general acceptance that these changes were usually minor and that it was critical that the social rented dwellings shouldn't be able to be singled out from other units.

Most local authorities consulted for the research had a protocol for determining which AHBs would be offered social housing units procured using Part V. The four local authorities in the Dublin region have a protocol determining which AHB is engaged with a Part V project designed to ensure a fair allocation of units to the AHBs working in an area. It was acknowledged however that often if a particular AHB is already operating in an area and working with a developer it was prudent to let that relationship continue if a second phase was being developed for example. Similarly, if the type of housing suited one AHB more than another – because the AHB provided specialist services such as in the provision of housing for older people, for instance – that also might influence the decision. Outside of Dublin there are also systems in place – the local authority where the Willow Close case study estate is located operates a forum of the key AHBs working in the county who met regularly with senior local authority staff. However, there was little or no private estate developments taking place in this area, which impacted on the number of Part V units available. As one local councillor said: 'We have a dysfunctional housing market here in [named local authority], full stop, and there is no private estate development happening at this point in time' (Willow Close KI 1).

Build to rent developments have the same Part V requirements as all other residential developments. In most cases, leasing is the agreed option for delivery. Several of the AHB managers expressed concerns that units leased in this way would never come into their ownership. Some have leased dwellings in their housing stock which have now reached the end of the leasehold period and the lack of an option to purchase these units has created significant uncertainty for both AHBs and their tenants who live in leased dwellings. The plans to phase out leasing of dwellings for social housing announced by the government in 2021 may resolve this issue (Government of Ireland, 2021).

## Funding Social Housing

Table 4.2 draws on the results of the survey of AHBs conducted for this research to identify the sources used to finance AHB social housing in mixed tenure estates. There are three main schemes through which AHBs are funded by government to provide social housing:

**Table 4.2 Funding of Social Housing Units in Mixed Tenure Estates Provided by the 13 Approved Housing Bodies Surveyed for this Research (%)**

Funding mechanism	Total		Clustered		Dispersed		Clustered & dispersed	
	Units %	Estates %	Units %	Estates %	Units %	Estates %	Units %	Estates %
Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS)	11.8	8.9	6.9	8.1	17.5	6.4	36.2	26.8
Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (CLSS)	32.4	25.8	39.8	32.6	10.2	7.8	11.1	12.2
Capital Advance Leasing Facility and a Payment and Availability Agreement	30.0	42.6	28.1	35.4	40.1	66.0	30.7	41.5
Leased for social housing	7.8	7.2	6.8	7.4	12.0	6.4	9.5	7.3
Managed on behalf of a local authority	8.9	9.1	8.2	9.2	14.0	9.9	6.9	4.9
Funded using a mix of the aforementioned schemes	9.1	6.4	10.1	7.2	6.3	3.5	5.7	7.3

Source: generated by the authors from a survey conducted for this research.

- The Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) is a government funding scheme for the provision of social housing by approved housing bodies. It is most commonly used for the provision of housing for those with additional support needs. The CAS scheme continues to operate.
- The Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (CLSS): this scheme closed in 2011 but during the period 2002 to 2013, it funded the provision of 6,823 social housing units (Department of Housing Planning and Local Government, various years). The vast majority of these were 'standard' housing units for households with no support needs.
- The Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF) – a government loan which is used to part fund the provision of social housing by approved housing bodies. It effectively acts as a 'deposit' which enables AHBs to borrow the remainder of the capital required to build or buy social housing. A government agency called the Housing Finance Agency provides this loan finance or the AHB can borrow from banks or financial institutions. To help AHBs repay these loans they receive a lease payment from the housing ministry called a Payment and Availability Agreement which is set at a maximum of 92 per cent of the rent the dwelling would have secured on the open market. The CALF scheme was introduced in 2011 to replace CLSS.

Therefore, newer units owned by AHBs will have been funded by the CALF scheme while older units will have been delivered using CLSS funding. Also, AHBs which have expanded rapidly since 2011 will have a disproportionate number of units financed under CALF.

Table 4.2 reveals that almost one third of the social housing units provided by the AHBs surveyed for this research in mixed tenure were funded by the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (32.4 per cent) and almost as many (30.0 per cent) were funded by the Capital Advance Leasing Facility. The remaining 37.6 per cent of AHB social housing units were funded by the Capital Assistance Scheme, leased for social housing, managed on behalf of a local authority, or were funded using a mix of these measures.

The data set out in Table 4.2 suggested that there is a relationship between the arrangements used to fund social housing in mixed tenure estates and the clustering and dispersal of these units. A large proportion (39.8 per cent) of the clustered social housing units in mixed tenure estates were funded by the CLSS, whereas the CLSS funded only 10.2 per cent of the dispersed social housing units in these estates. The opposite pattern applies to the CALF funding scheme. 28.1 per cent of clustered social housing units in mixed tenure estates were funded using this scheme, as well 40.1 per cent of dispersed units.

## Social Housing's Role in the Economics of Housing Development

A significant finding of this research is the critical role which social housing and tenure mixing now plays in underpinning the economics of commercial housing development. Interviewees from the AHB and local authority sector and also from the developers which had constructed some of the case study estates argued that many commercial housing developments would not be economically viable without the inclusion of social housing.

The consensus among the key informant interviews was that social housing plays a particularly important role in underpinning the financial viability of housing developments outside Dublin. This is because the weakness of the commercial development market means that very little development could be financed without guaranteed sales of some dwellings to local authorities and AHBs for social housing. As another senior planner reflected on her experience of working in a local authority in Leinster and concluded:

**The wider role that social housing, but in particular AHB housing, in [name of local authority] county's market over the last years, since the crash, is probably similar to the rest of the country i.e., not really reflective of the Dublin market. The economic margins for building are generally very poor due to low property values i.e., developers constantly saying it is not viable to build smaller units, terrace, apartments as it costs more to build than the returns would be. 3-bed semis are just about seen as borderline 'safe' for the developers. (OKI 6)**

The same interviewee argued that, as a result of these commercial viability issues, the Part V provisions, were particularly critical in underpinning the economics of housing developments. She commented: 'Ironically in the past developers wanted to buy their Part V out, but the pendulum swung in recent years as the AHBs and Part V are seen as a safe bet for banks, so they were keen to deliver units and get cash flow confirmed (OKI 6). The developers of the case study estates who were interviewed for this research were open about the importance of Part V units to the economics of their housing schemes. As one developer put it: 'we would be mindful of it, I suppose, at design stage of making sure that we have sufficient units that, that the local authority's going to be happy to take' (Oak Mount KI 3). Another developer agreed:

Originally, going back quite a number of years ago, it was a question of offering them (local authorities) even something offsite as opposed to – you know, this was in the early days of the Part V. Part V now has become sort of... not on our site, but on a lot of sites it's nearly the bread and butter for a lot of builders because the first thing they do when they go in is want to get their Part V built so that, as you said, it gives access to funding, you know (Ash Mews KI1).

However, some of the key informants interviewed highlighted some risks associated with the increasing centrality of social housing to the economics of housing developments. As one senior local authority official put it:

We're seeing that the local authority housing is rolled out first and the deal is done and then that bankrolls the remainder of the development. And the challenge then is will the remainder of the development get built or at what sort of timespan will be it built? The developers might tell us that that's not the case, they're not funding it with Part V – but what we are seeing is that they're developing a lower amount 20 percent, a 10 percent Part V and the 10 percent turnkey which we're taking, and then the development seems to stall because whether the market's not there or because pricing is just – the price point is just not right. There always seems to be an opportunity to score a few pounds more when it's the local authority that's buying it (Ash Mews KI 3).

Another interviewee acknowledged that sometimes a local authority will take units for letting as social housing under the terms of Part V, knowing that the remainder of the development might not be completed. As one senior housing official put it:

Say if we have a development of 300, a developer wants to sell the whole lot and leaves the whole lot till somebody says, well, that's too much, there's too much social housing in that area, we'll only take 50 percent. But the end result of that is the other 50 percent of the development may not happen at all or it may happen later. We'd be better off taking the whole lot (OKI 3)

The same interviewee raised concerns that construction of the social housing first in a development and indeed the possibility that the development wouldn't be completed leads in a higher level of social housing than had been planned but also to greater clustering of units.

In terms of the drivers of these developments, the key informants interviewed for the research identified the changes to the residential density guidelines which were introduced in the late 2000s (and described in the preceding chapter) as influential on the economics of housing development. The requirement for higher residential densities has resulted in more apartment construction and as one local authority director of housing put it:

**Apartments are more expensive to build. As I said, the rationale behind it is that they [developers] have to build the whole apartment block before they can sell one, whereas you can sell a house. You can build your five houses and continue on with the next phase and sell those five houses, and that probably is forward funding for the next few houses.**

**So, the density issue is pushing apartment developments, because their cost is pushing their acquisition in bulk either by ourselves [a local authority], an AHB, or institutional investor as opposed to private owners *per se* (Oak Mount KI 4)**

In this context the capacity for an AHB to purchase an entire block of apartments is increasingly seen as a real benefit by developers. One AHB director of development argued that this trend has strengthened in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic:

**I suppose with the way the economy is and people still on the PUP payments and, you know what I mean, it's inhibiting private mortgages. I suppose it would be the – the AHB would be the favoured route for a lot of developers to go down. See, the problem with a lot of them couldn't, with the financial downturn, couldn't get finance and the only way a lot of them will get finance now is having an agreed contract from an AHB in place. (Birch View KI 2).**



Some of the local authority officials and AHB staff interviewed raised concerns about these trends for the housing system as a whole and for the provision of social housing in mixed tenure developments. In relation to the former, an AHB CEO put it that these housing market and finance pressures are leading to tenure change, in his view:

**everything around tenure is PRS [private rented sector], where the developers are just selling a whole block to an Approved Housing Body, to a REIT [Real Estate Investment Trust], to somebody like that, because it's much easier for them to sell a block (Oak Mount KI 1).**

A director of housing for a large local authority raised concerns about the implications of these developments for mixed tenure estates:

**So basically, what I would say is that we are being more forced, if that's the right word, to cluster because it's apartments. 'we'll give you this block. We'll build you this block first.' What would concern me is they [developers] build the block, they won't build the rest of it out because it's guaranteed income to build the block. (Oak Mount KI 4)**

### **Relationships between Local Authorities, AHBs and Housing Developers**

There was a consensus among the key informants interviewed for this research that housing developers prefer to deal with AHBs in the development of mixed tenure estates, rather than local authorities. One local authority official acknowledged that 'the developer always prefers the Approved Housing Body in with them [compared] to the Council' (Oak Mount KI 4). The same official acknowledged that where an AHB was active in an area it was easier to pass on a development to them than for the council to take units itself. From the developer's perspective there was positive feedback in relation to their ability to do business with AHBs: 'They're [named AHB] able to close the deal. You know, the snag process is straightforward with them, you know. So, I suppose they would certainly be ones we're always quite happy to deal with'. (Oak Mount KI 3).

From the perspective of many AHBs, many indicated that they had built up good relationships with local developers. As one AHB development officer put it:

**We deal quite a lot with local developers, say, in Waterford there and I suppose it's repeat business. It's the key. If you deal with a good Tier 1 developer, got a lot of repeat business, it's a lot easier than dealing with some of the smaller – nothing wrong with the smaller developers either, but I suppose the other guys have the landholdings (Birch View KI 2).**

Another AHB manager also acknowledged that they had 'favourite developers' that understood their requirements (Oak Mount KI 2). While one of the developers interviewed expressed confidence that particular AHBs managed their developments professionally (Ash Mews KI 1). But there was also evidence of competition within the sector. As one AHB CEO put it:

**First is that we've identified which is the local authority and their you know, developments that they're proposing. Second is the Part Vs, which is essentially the developer having to accommodate the social housing aspect of the development. And then there is the competition between Approved Housing Bodies themselves because any schemes that we talk about and put ourselves forward towards to the Approved Housing Body is also – we may be one of three or four other housing bodies that are also looking to provide the same service. (Oak Mount KI 2).**

## **Designing Mixed Tenure Estates**

### **Social Landlords' Involvement in the Design of Mixed Tenure Estates**

The design of mixed tenure estates was considered a critical factor in their success by many of the central and local government officials and AHB staff interviewed. However, these interviewees also raised concerns about the numerous barriers to achieving good quality and integrated design of mixed tenure estates.

For instance, a central government official raised concerns about the 'paucity of considered and integrated guidance between the housing in the planning sides and the architectural sides' in relation to the design of developments subject to Part V of the 2000 Planning Act (OKI 5). The same interviewee raised concerns about the lack of joint working between planning and housing departments in local authorities regarding the negotiation of Part V agreements with developers:

despite all of the work in Part V and social integration and so on, you know, housing and planning disciplines in local authorities still very, very much work in different silos... once the planning file is determined, you know, to some extent the file hands over to the housing side. But no group of experts, housing, and planning professionals and so on, you know, with the community or with other stakeholders is really sitting down to think about the applications (OKI 5).

Several of the AHB staff interviewed raised concerns that the process of negotiating Part V agreements (discussed above) often precludes them from having a say in the location of social housing units in a housing development but also in the design of dwellings. As one AHB CEO put it:

as you know, we're presented with a *fait accompli*, as it were, in terms of the design. And while we might be able to tweak it to a certain extent by putting in wet rooms or putting in technology to assist the elderly, the overall structure has already been predetermined at the design stage so that we can only do tweaked elements (Oak Mount KI 2).

Consequently, several interviewees from AHBs emphasised that it would be preferable for them to be involved at an earlier stage in the negotiation of Part V agreements.

The developers interviewed did not necessarily agree however and argued that any development which extended the timeline for negotiating Part V agreements would be problematic for them. Some of the processes which local authorities and AHBs must follow to secure government funding were seen by developers as making decisions more time consuming than they would be in the private sector. As one developer put it:

So, for us to bring in, you know, a local authority or an AHB at design stage, you know, they'd want to be very organised now and be able to make decisions, and they're not, do you know what I mean, they're not really at the pace that we would. So that wouldn't be something we would be overly interested in, to be honest, no. (Oak Mount KI 3)

As a result of the restrictions which the Part V process imposes on their involvement in the design of mixed tenure estates, several of the AHB CEOs interviewed expressed a preference for procuring social housing in mixed tenure developments by purchasing turnkey units or using a design and build project.

One AHB was in the process of designing its first design and build project for a mixed tenure development, and its director of development emphasised the benefits:

We're involved from the start, with the design especially, so that we can try and kind of get rid of any problems before they even arise. And by that, I mean making sure there's no areas of shelter for gangs to hang around in and make sure that there's certain landscaping in place so that it's not left to just one tenant to do. So, yeah, the design is a huge part of it as well (Birch View KI 3).

### Tenure Blind Design

There was an overwhelming consensus among the AHB staff and central and local government officials, and councillors interviewed for this study that ensuring the external design of housing in mixed tenure estates is 'tenure blind' – so that the different tenures are not externally distinguishable. For instance, an AHB CEO argued that:

Our culture needs to change. It needs to adapt to the Austrian model or the Danish model where you don't know what the income stream of your neighbour is. You don't know whether they own their property or not. You don't care so long as they're, you know, doing the neighbourly things (Oak Mount KI 2).

This view was echoed by one of the councillors interviewed:

Like if on a block you have people paying their mortgage and then there's somebody beside them paying what they would see as a relatively small rent, well, that's unfair to single those people out. So, in my view, you know, to respond to your question, no, I would prefer that they're all the same, that you cannot distinguish between a private and a council house, because that's real integration in my view (Birch View KI 1).

And also, by a senior local authority official who reported that his council would not accept Part V social housing units which had a different external design to private dwellings:

**Except sometimes maybe the block where we have City Council tenants may not be kept as well. But certainly, the quality doesn't change. So, like if you look at a development in Rathgar, Marianella, where we took one block, you can't tell the difference between them. So no, we don't entertain the idea (OKI 3)**

In support of their preference for tenure blind design, the AHB housing managers interviewed cited numerous examples of very successful estates in their housing portfolio which employ this design, including the case study estates examined in this research. For example, the AHB housing manager responsible for the Hazel Gardens estate argued:

**And there's an awful lot of real examples where people just don't know that there's social housing there, and that's one of the really, really wonderful things about mixed tenure and with our new housing estates, you just don't know where the social housing is within there as long as they're really well-managed (Hazel Gardens KI 5).**

The AHB development manager who had been involved in procuring the Birch view estate agreed, he argued:

**people might say, 'Oh, look, I don't want a social house next door to me.' But a lot of the time it's hard to even know which is the Part V and the social. There might be – the spec might be a bit lower internally, but again it'd be hard to know from the exterior, you know (Birch View KI 2).**

Notably, the housing developers interviewed for this study shared the view that tenure blind was the most appropriate form of design for mixed tenure estates. For instance, the developer of the Ash Mews estate reported that 'in the development of the 255 units externally there's no difference in any of the houses' and suggested that tenure blind design is 'I think it's very important, certainly externally. Internally we tend to offer more, obviously, in a private house. We'd upgrade the kitchen maybe. We'd put in maybe different doors. There may be a greater tile allowance. But other than that, there's no real difference' (Ash Mews KI 1). The builder of the Oak Mount estate agreed arguing that 'when you pass along, you drive along, you shouldn't be able to tell the difference between housing in different tenures' (Oak Mount KI 5). As did the developer who had contracted the construction of this estate:

you know, if they're dispersed, they're going to look the same anyway because we've already planned it. So, you know, we're not going to put on different facades or anything onto Part V units. There might be internal finishes that the local authority has decided they don't – you know, they want to change, or they want to have a lower specification, but like all of our Part V units would be the very same externally as any other unit (Oak Mount KI 3).

## Drivers of Decisions to Cluster or Disperse Social Housing

### Density of Developments

The survey of AHBs conducted for this research reveals no obvious relationship between the density of mixed tenure developments and decisions to cluster or disperse the social housing within them. Table 4.3 below, demonstrates that the 38.0 per cent of the social rented dwellings owned, leased, or managed by AHBs in mixed tenure estates are houses, 43.1 per cent are apartments and 18.9 per cent encompass a mix of houses and apartments in a single development. Notably the proportion of clustered social housing units in mixed tenure estates which are houses does not vary significantly from these averages. Although apartments are slightly less likely to be clustered and more likely to be dispersed through mixed tenure estates.

This pattern may reflect the period in which these different dwelling types were procured however, because the interviews with social housing landlords conducted for this research indicate that more apartments will be built in the future and therefore procured to provide mixed tenure developments and that social rented apartments are more likely to be clustered. In terms of social housing procured using Part V, one of the local authority directors of housing interviewed commented that everything crossing her desk was apartments (Oak Mount K1 4). A senior local authority official reported the same experienced and complained that: 'The whole issue of apartments is causing all kinds of difficulties. And, you know, the government are pushing, An Bord Pleanála are pushing not just apartments but high-rise and we won't be doing houses at all' (OKI 3). As did one AHB senior manager who claimed 'in our urban areas we're seeing kind of higher densities of that and we're probably at about 40 per cent of our homes being kind of high-density apartment duplexes' (Hazel Gardens K1 5).

**Table 4.3 Design of the Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates Provided by the 13 Approved Housing Bodies Surveyed for this Research (%)**

Design	Total		Clustered		Dispersed		Clustered & dispersed	
	Units %	Estates %	Units %	Estates %	Units %	Estates %	Units %	Estates %
Houses	38.0	44.4	38.1	43.6	36.4	46.6	39.2	45.3
Apartments	43.1	42.2	41.1	42.0	46.8	41.7	49.3	44.2
Mix of houses and apartments	18.9	13.4	20.9	14.4	16.8	11.7	11.5	10.5

Source: generated by the authors from a survey conducted for this research.

The economics of commercial housing development, as outlined earlier in this chapter, were identified as a key reason why social housing is likely to be clustered in new apartment developments and in the apartment blocks in mixed apartment and housing estates. One senior AHB housing manager argued that AHBs and institutional investors are currently nearly the only participants in the housing market which can afford to buy apartments and were willing to do so (Oak Mount KI 5). In the case of local authorities, one AHB CEO argued that council officials wish to cluster their social rented apartments in order to reduce the OMC management fees because their revenue from rents is insufficient to fund these (Birch View KI 4). A local authority councillor agreed, arguing 'we would definitely see a tendency to cluster in apartments' (OKI 1).

Notably, some interviewees were opposed to the emphasis on apartment provision in the residential density guidelines. One local authority official suggested that there are other ways of achieving higher densities by combinations of three-storey duplexes and other innovative ways of getting higher density, with bigger units for families on the bottom with play areas and end of block gardens (Hazel Gardens KI 1). This was echoed by a senior planner who argued that there were alternative designs to apartment blocks which are '... capable of delivering good quality density or uses... You know, good quality utilisation of scarce land and infrastructure' (OKI 5). The same interviewee suggested that providing apartments was an easy and commercially viable way of meeting the residential density requirements:

What people really want, which is the, you know, the own-door and the front and the back garden and you can pull two cars up on the driveway, you know, and that's probably at, you know, twenty-five or thirty dwellings to the hectare, but you've got to get to fifty [dwellings per hectare] because you're within, you know, so many metres of the main street. Ooh, brilliant. Right, [add] three blocks [of apartments to the scheme] and you're sorted, you know. (OKI 5)

### **Developers' Preferences and Housing Market Considerations**

Developer preferences with regard to dispersal and clustering seemed to vary depending on the size and scale of the scheme in question. One developer interviewed speaking more generally about the various developments they were engaged in which included mainly houses expressed a preference for dispersal of social housing, saying that:

Overall, the dispersed works better for us as developers. It works better from the sales side. And I think from what, you know, from what we're seeing is that it works better from the tenant side as well, social tenant side, integration is better when they're dispersed. I think there's more of a stigma when they are all together in one area,' (Oak Mount KI 3).

The developer of another case study estate argued that the clustering of social housing is better from a commercial perspective, but that the key consideration is that private buyers need to be informed of the location of the social housing:

People were saying you'll never sell the private houses here – and they're selling – because the public – there are people say, 'It's a council estate. Why would I buy a private house in a council estate?' But that hasn't happened at all.



Well, I think from the perspective of ourselves and builders and in the climate that we're in at the moment I think most builders would opt for clusters. Forgetting about the climate, having had our experience of doing clusters here, I would suggest that clusters are the way to go because having your Part V sorted and built at the same time if you're building your private sales there's nothing hidden, (Ash Mews KI 1)

An AHB social housing manager argued that most developers prefer clustered social housing:

I think that from the developer's perspective it probably works better to have them all clustered together rather than pepper-potted because then essentially nobody who's building off the plans is beside a social tenant if that's what they're concerned about, you know. Like this is a social block, but it's not really impinging on anybody else. (Oak Mount KI 1)

A colleague from another AHB agreed:

They [developer] know there's going to be less kickback from people if they know they're just beside another privately owned property as opposed to a social housing property. So, it probably would look better to them if they were selling, and the social were just in one block (Birch View K1 3)

A local authority planner also suggested that developers' preference for clustering of social housing in mixed tenure estates would be reinforced by the increasing provision of apartments:

The landscape has changed in the last eighteen months, two years and, as I said, it's not houses that are coming to us, it's apartments. And the developers don't – and you can understand the developers don't want to give you, say, five in one block, five in another block, five in another block. they want you to take the full block. (OKI 7)

## Housing Management Considerations

Housing management considerations were mentioned repeatedly by the social housing landlords interviewed as a major consideration when deciding whether to cluster or disperse social housing in mixed tenure estates. However, these considerations were not the sole driver of decisions to cluster or disperse these units. As one AHB housing manager put it:

**There's always the asset management side of it and the, you know, the acquisition side which would lean more towards clustering, which kind of makes more financial sense, but in terms of communities blending and people blending in with their neighbours certainly I think pepper-potting is a better approach. (Hazel Gardens KI4)**

The benefits of clustering for certain groups were emphasised for example older age groups where services might be easier to provide in clustered settings (Oak Mount KI 2)

High density apartments, duplex or townhouse developments presented a particular difficulty for the social landlords interviewed in terms of the management fees to the Owners' Management Companies responsible for managing the common areas and shared facilities such as roofs. These charges are higher again where additional services such as gyms or concierges are provided and could be up to €3,000–€4000 per year which would lead an AHB or local authority not to take Part V units for social housing for instance or to insist the units in one block where they could control costs. (Hazel Gardens KI 1).

The issue of balancing out costs and benefits was constantly repeated, as a housing ministry official noted 'from the other perspective it [dispersed] needs to be balanced with the management costs of doing something like that, acquiring high end units' (OKI 4). These financial challenges are particularly acute for local authorities and as a result the interviewees for this sector reported that they are more likely to cluster their social housing in mixed tenure estates in order to enable them contract out of some Owners' Management Company services and reduce the associated fees. This is because they are reliant entirely on tenants' rents (which are determined on the basis of tenants' incomes and therefore are often low), to fund the management fees. For instance, one of the local authority councillors interviewed told us:

**I don't think the Council, the local authorities, have made the shift to apartment management. It's also an expense to them as well because of the management fees. And they're conscious of their budgets and they're conscious of I suppose maximising their budgets as well (OKI 1).**

An official from another local authority argued that: 'it would be advantageous if we had a funding stream for management fees for local authorities. It certainly would help' (Hazel Gardens KI 1).

In contrast an approved housing body CEO highlighted the benefits of the different arrangements used to finance social housing provision by this sector. In this case a payment and availability lease agreement (PAA), set at a maximum of 92 per cent of market rent, is paid by the housing ministry for AHB housing procured using a Capital Advanced Leasing Facility Loan (CALF) loan. This interviewee argued that the PAA subsidy allows housing associations to meet the costs of management fees:

**So, if they were dispersed and we had to pay very high service charges, it wouldn't have been economic to develop the units at all or to manage and maintain the units. So, the improved funding model in terms of CALF and PAA has enabled us to – you know, the whole thing about whether dispersed or clustered is now no longer an economic thing, it's just about which is better (Hazel Gardens KI 7).**

However, another AHB housing manager argued that even where management fees can be covered, clustering of social rented dwellings in high density developments brings benefit in terms of clarity and control of management costs. He suggested:

**It comes down to kind of really the management of it and depending on the heating system and the payment of things and even setting up electrical bills and stuff like that. We found that we have one – like even that can be difficult, you know, because there's always differences about who's using what, and even the bins and all those things, you know. It's just – it is easier. And if there is antisocial behaviour it's easier for us to deal with it when we have access to our own block, you know. (Hazel Gardens KI 3).**

## Mixing Intermediate Forms of Tenure

The Affordable Housing Act 2021, which had recently been enacted at the time of writing, has introduced a number of new measures which have the potential to impact significantly on mixed tenure housing development. The Act makes provision for the supply of new 'intermediate' forms of tenure, affordable rental (cost rental) and affordable purchase offer potential new avenues to deliver mixed tenure housing. It also increases the maximum proportion of new housing developments which are subject to the provisions of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act from 10 to 20 per cent.

These changes were viewed very positively by the AHB staff and local authority officials interviewed for this research. For instance, one local authority director of housing said that:

**If the Part V comes in as in 10 percent, back to 10 percent social and back to 10 percent affordable, that will certainly assist with the dispersal, yeah, the more dispersal in the apartments. You could still have a block, you see, that way (Hazel Gardens KI 1)**

An AHB CEO noted the larger size of schemes that the larger AHBs were now dealing with, and the potentially useful role intermediate tenures would play in preventing socio-spatial segregation in schemes of this type:

**We're dealing with developers now and the schemes are much bigger. Like there's going to be many bigger schemes. So, the schemes would be – 200 would be kind of the smallest that people are developing. Others would be 400 and 600. So what people are thinking – the developer's thinking – 200 private, 200 cost rental or PRS, and 200 social. So, cost rental has the real potential to get tenure mix, you know. It has a real potential. My personal concern is what happens to those people when they reach retirement? Who pays their rent, you know? (Willow Close KI 2).**

Another local authority Director of Housing, discussed plans to use the intermediate tenures to mix housing in a large south Dublin site:

We have in our [named] scheme 200 social, 306 cost rental, and 91 affordable purchases, and I think it's good to have the mix actually. And I think maybe that will be the way they probably could go. Even just to do even a small proportion of affordable purchase might be no harm. You could team up with a developer, especially if they can't do cost rental. But if they're to get a decent big site it can't all be social because they'll find it difficult to manage it themselves at that level. (Hazel Gardens, KI 1)

One AHB CEO said that he would also like to see cost rental and affordable rental being introduced into existing exclusively social housing blocks so that:

as a proportion of those voids become available that they will be switched into and made available to different income brackets. So, they would change from being social to affordable or cost rental. Again, you know, at this stage that's viewed with horror by the Department, but I think that has to happen. (Hazel Gardens, KI 7)

However, not all of the key informants interviewed thought that these intermediate tenures are a viable option in all parts of the country. One local authority official argued:

The reality is in [named major city] affordable purchase is not an option, and the Government should simply say that. It is not an option. If it's costing us 450,000 to build, 500,000, within the next year or so they can't be made affordable. So, you know, the Government should give up and simply say that affordable purchase is not possible in [named major city], except maybe in some of the older estates (OKI 3).

## Conclusions

This chapter has examined methods for procuring and funding social housing in mixed tenure estates. It has revealed that the vast majority of AHB social housing units in these estates (69.6 per cent) have been purchased by AHBs from developers or, less commonly, purpose-built by AHBs (19.9 per cent). A smaller proportion of these units than might be expected – only 6.9 per cent – have been procured using the provisions of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act. The sources used to fund AHB social housing in mixed tenure estates was also examined. The majority of these dwellings were funded by the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (32.4 per cent) and almost as many (30.0 per cent) were funded by the Capital Advance Leasing Facility. The remaining 37.6 per cent of AHB social housing units were funded by the Capital Assistance Scheme, leased for social housing, managed on behalf of a local authority, or were funded using a mix of these measures.

Notably the analysis presented here reveals no obvious relationship between the particular method employed to procure social housing in mixed tenure estates and the spatial distribution of these dwellings in terms of whether they are clustered together or distributed throughout the estate. However, there does appear to be a relationship between the funding method employed and the clustering and dispersal of social housing. A large proportion (39.8 per cent) of the clustered AHB social housing units in mixed tenure estate are funded by the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme. Whereas the CLSS funded only 10.2 per cent of the dispersed social housing units in these estates. The opposite pattern applies to the Capital Advanced Leasing Facility funding scheme. 28.1 per cent of clustered social housing units in mixed tenure estates were funded using this scheme, as well 40.1 per cent of dispersed units. The interviews with AHB and local authority social housing managers conducted for this study suggests that this phenomenon may be related to the more generous revenue funding (for the management of dwellings) provided by the CALF scheme compared to the CLSS. This enables AHBs to pay the management fees levied by the Owners' Management Companies which manage high density developments to fund the upkeep of public areas, shared roofs, etc. Whereas the less generous revenue funding available for local authority housing and also AHB housing funded under the CLSS funding programme encourages the clustering of social housing in mixed tenure developments in an effort to negotiate reduced management fees because social landlords take on some of these tasks themselves.

The other drivers of decisions to cluster and disperse social housing were also examined in this chapter. The interviews with key informants revealed that clustering is seen as preferable in some contexts from both an AHB's perspective and from a developer perspective. From an AHB's perspective it has benefits in terms of management and maintenance of units, particularly in

apartment developments (considered in more detail in the next chapter). From a developer's perspective clustering minimises any risks to the saleability of the market housing.

A related, significant finding of the analysis presented here is the important role which social housing plays in underpinning the financial viability of market housing provision in mixed tenure estates. The purchase of the social housing provided to meet the developers Part V obligations provides a guaranteed source of funding which enables developers raise borrowing to fund the remainder of the development. For this reason, it is now common for developers to negotiate to sell dwellings to AHBs or local authorities (or private investment funds) when planning new developments and these 'presales' are an important part of their business model. The amendments to the residential density guidelines, described in the preceding chapter, require more residential construction at higher densities particularly of apartments. However higher density construction is more challenging for developers to finance because the money required must be raised upfront and, unlike housing estates, apartments can't usually be built, funded, and sold off in stages. This means that developers are particularly keen to sell apartments to social landlords (and investment funds) and also to provide the social housing element of developments first of all, before the market housing. This brings opportunities for AHBs and local authorities, but also risks since it may encourage the clustering of social housing in a single apartment block in a development, for instance, or mean that in some cases the market housing planned for mixed tenure estates is not provided in full or at all.

The design of mixed tenure estates was also examined in the chapter and the interviews with key informants conducted for the research revealed a strong support for tenure blind design, whereby dwellings in the different housing tenures are externally indistinguishable. Notably, tenure blind design was considered by the social housing managers interviewed to be a more important factor in enabling the success and integration of communities in mixed tenure estates than the clustering or dispersal of the social housing.

Finally, the Affordable Housing Act 2021 presents an opportunity for AHBs to expand their activities and engage in larger developments using a design and build model which would not be possible if developed as a single tenure. The skills which the sector has amassed in the last number of years will equip it well to take on these challenges. Expanding the remit of AHBs in providing intermediate tenures may be an important mechanism for tackling the potential segregation discussed above.





# Chapter Five

## Managing, Integrating and Living in Mixed Tenure Estates

### Introduction

This chapter draws on the interviews with residents of the five case study estates examined in this research to explore their experiences of living in mixed tenure estates and to compare and contrast the experiences of residents of estates in which the social housing is dispersed and clustered. As explained in the Introduction to this report, three of these case studies are located in Dublin and two are outside Dublin. The location of the social housing varies between these estates. Oak Mount houses social residents in a separate apartment block within the wider housing estate. Hazel Gardens social residents are dispersed among private residents within an apartment complex. Birch View accommodates social residents in both one apartment block and also in dispersed housing throughout the estate. Willow Close is located outside Dublin and the social residents are dispersed throughout the estate. Finally, those social residents living in Ash Mews, also outside Dublin, live in clustered houses in one section of the estate.

The second half of the chapter examines the challenges of managing mixed tenure estates from the perspective of social housing landlords. The allocation of social housing and the management of anti-social behaviour and neighbour disputes are discussed as are the challenges of collaborating with the Owners' Management Companies which are responsible for the management of the communal facilities in high density developments. Strategies to integrate residents living in the different tenures in mixed estates are also examined in this chapter. These include community building measures, access to non-housing amenities and strategies to integrate residents in different age groups, different physical ability levels and care needs.

## Living in Mixed Tenure Estates

### Views on Mixed Tenure Estates

The vast majority of the social and private residents of the case study estates who were interviewed for this research agreed that tenure mixing of social housing has strong benefits in principle. This is not surprising in view of the fact that all these interviewees were living in a mixed tenure estates and the private owners and tenants at least had made an active choice to do so (social tenants have less control over the dwelling which they are allocated). Nonetheless, the extent to which this was the majority view was striking. Indeed, as this quotation from an interview with a private resident of the Oak Mount case study estate illustrates, for some residents the mixed tenure nature of these estates was a positive attraction:

**I'm originally from a disadvantaged area and one of the things that I missed in previous neighbourhoods that I've lived in was there wasn't the sense of community – it was one of the things that attracted me to [buy] the house that I'm living in and being near the social [allocation in the estate]. I'm being honest... I want everyone to blend and to feel it inclusive (Oak Mount PR 1 owner).**

When probed in more depth, however, several of the private owners and renters recalled their initial preconceptions or worry about AHBs buying properties in their estate and social residents becoming their neighbours. However, as is illustrated by the following quotations from interviews with these residents, these concerns were mostly alleviated as private residents became familiar with a mixed tenure environment:

**There was obviously a nervousness about who [AHB] were and what was going to be involved. But to be honest, we met with somebody from [AHB]. They kind of alleviated any concerns that we had and, yeah, there hasn't really been any issues (Willow Close PR 1 owner).**

**it's very respectable people and all. But, you know, so for people that don't really live in this mixing they might have some preconceptions (Hazel Gardens PR 2 apartment renter).**

Thus, the case study estates have generally settled well and the resident communities, of all tenures, are well integrated. One of the residents of the Hazel Gardens estate reported that: 'You don't really get that feeling of, you

know, that they're like discriminating against you or anything' (Hazel Gardens SR 2). This view was echoed by a private renting neighbour:

I can't speak for other people, for me, I mean, look, you'd know who is a private and a social tenant. I would know but it's never – it's not a big deal. I don't think there's a snobby-ness or I don't think there's an exclusiveness about private and social people living together on our [apartment block] floor. (Hazel Gardens PR 1 apartment renter).

### **Dispersal and Clustering of Social Housing**

Most private residents of the case study estates felt in principle that dispersed social housing, whether in housing estates or in apartment complexes, was more beneficial for encouraging an integrated community. For instance, interviewee PR 2, an apartment renter in Hazel Gardens commented that social renters: '... don't have to be always precluded and have to come back to their social housing, you know, quarter... I think the mixed thing is a great idea'. While a homeowner resident in another case study estate:

It doesn't matter if they're clustered in a group of houses that, you know, is in the top left-hand corner of the estate. There's always going to be houses bordering onto that. And, you know, you don't want to create the perception, Jesus, stay away from there, you know... Whereas if it's dispersed throughout the estate, I just think that there's probably a bit more... peer pressure isn't the right word, but maybe a bit more peer pressure from the neighbours, that people kind of fall into line or act in a certain way or keep their houses in a certain way (Birch View PR 1).

As is discussed in more depth below, the sense of being fully integrated into the community was also identified as a high priority by social residents and living in a dispersed setting allowed them to integrate more easily into the community. This point was raised by a social renter in the Ash Mews estate:

I think everybody's equal. It doesn't matter whether they own a home, or they rent a home. You know, so it's like don't be putting all renters in one area, social housing in another, and then private homes. It causes a segregation if you get me. It's just there is a divide (Ash Mews, SR 1).

Living in a quiet respectable estate was also important to social residents, evidenced by one social resident who lived in a house in a dispersed setting commenting:

**I love being involved, kind of, in the community as well, like, you know, helping out as much as I can as well. So, it seems like a nice, quiet, I suppose more mature area. You know, you're not getting somebody over [beer] cans or whatever. It's an evening in, and a responsible kind of area, if you get me (Birch View SR 3 house).**

There were also benefits identified by some of the social renters interviewed who lived in a clustered setting. As the following quotation from a social renting resident of the Willow Close estate illustrates, the clustering of the social housing enabled the social tenants to form a community within the estate, where neighbours could support each other:

**Like there's a couple [social residents] that we knew before we kind of all moved in and like we were having an issue with the [heating system]. So, we went over to them [social resident neighbours] and they showed us how to do it and things like that, how to fix it. You know, so there is kind of that side of it as well where kind of we're a community within a community (Willow Close, SR 1).**

## **Concerns about Community Integration**

For social residents, being accepted within the wider housing estate community was a stronger concern than the location of their dwelling. Community integration was considered important for quality of life more broadly.

Achieving community integration seemed to be easier within the rural case study estates where everyone tends to know many of the people in their wider community and community bonds are therefore often stronger. One homeownership resident of the case study estate in a town in Munster commented: '[Name of town] is a small town, so invariably somebody, you know, somebody is somebody's sister or somebody's brother, you know' (Willow Close, PR 1 owner).

In general, for social residents, being accepted involved not to be made feel 'less than' to neighbouring private residents, by virtue of living in a social rented dwelling. Many of the social renting residents interviewed reported a fear of being judged when initially moved into their new homes in mixed tenure estates: For instance, a social renting resident of the Oak Mount estate suggested: 'Like the people who are paying their taxes and all that I'm only there [in a social apartment] because of them (Oak Mount SR 2). While another

social tenant living in Birch View mentioned: 'I thought they'd [private residents] be looking down their nose at me and stuff and they don't... apart from they have more money than what we have and, most of their houses they're all lovely and we're basic, but that's about it' (Birch View SR 2). As the following quotes from two residents on Birch View illustrate, some of the social renting tenants interviewed went to very significant lengths to 'blend in' with their private owning and renting neighbours:

What I will say is when I got this house, I was driving an older car and I got a loan to buy a 181 car. That was just because I didn't just want people looking down their nose at me, to be fair. Yes, very conscious. Like I wouldn't go and buy my kids Penney's clothes. Now, I used to. Now I don't. They've all got named brands on all their clothes (Birch View SR 2 house).

You do kind of have that feeling, a sense of like of, okay, they obviously know that this is a rented [social] house now and they're looking at me, going, 'Look, she's almost getting a free ride there while we're after buying our house and we're working our ass off.' But I work. I work every day. I work my ass off, like, you know (Birch View SR 3 house).

### **Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbour Conflict**

Concerns about anti-social behaviour on the part of some social renting tenants were raised by residents of several of the case study estates. It is clear that this behaviour undermines community integration, particularly if it is not addressed by social landlords.

The concerns raised included relatively minor examples of rude behaviour such as these examples from the Birch View and Oak Mount estates:

He [social resident] could be standing in the upstairs window and just stand there, you know, giving the finger as they're [private resident neighbours] walking by as a family or, you know, staring at them. And at bedtime he goes upstairs and bangs on the inner walls and, you know, things like that (Birch View PR 1 owner).

The next night I was standing at my hall door having a smoke and we always have to stand at the door. I've an ashtray there. Oh, Jesus, there he [another social resident] was going to the toilet over near the fence... [on another occasion] he was drinking, and he was actually smoking inside where the bins are. That was frightening. (Oak Mount SR 1).

However, as this quote from a Hazel Gardens resident reveals, some of the anti-social behaviour was more serious in nature:

So, look, there's a [social] tenant who's moved down the hall I think has drug problems, drink problems. The guards have been called three or four times. and I think for people down that end of the corridor it's been very challenging for them. So, I think you might get a very different vibe if you talk to those people versus talking to me... 90 percent of the people on our floor really respect the place, like their community, are friendly, open, and decent towards each other. I think this person [social resident] just shows a lack of respect. And it stands out actually (Hazel Gardens PR 1 apartment renter).

To avert the risk of anti-social behaviour occurring both the private and social residents interviewed argued that social tenants being housed by approved housing bodies should be vetted and concerted action should be taken against anti-social behaviour. In this vein a social housing tenant living in Ash Mews argued: 'Oh, God, we know of one guy that's living around here he's been in prison loads of times. So how come it didn't come up on their [AHB background check] radar? It's just a bit frustrating that's all, you know (Ash Mews SR 2). The same resident went on to comment:

[Name of AHB] don't take prisoners, you know what I mean. There's another side to it. People are saying, 'Oh, they're spying.' No, they're not spying on you. It's nothing like that. They're just managing the place properly. And that's the way I want to bring up my children. I've seen people move in here all cock-chested and blah, blah, blah. Now that they're like little kittens because word of mouth gets around, you know, this person was evicted, whatever, or this person got a slap on the wrist, and all of a sudden, they pull their horns in (Ash Mews SR 2).

A homeowner and a private renting tenant living in two of the other case study estates agreed:

**But if there's a certain level of – it just seems to be lacking, that piece of looking into people's [social resident applicants] behaviours and backgrounds and things like that (Birch View PR 1 owner).**

**Swift action. And if people are shown to be having the guards called on them or are ranting or raving in the hall, I just think that needs to be sorted quickly. Either the tenant moves out or give them a last warning. And it comes down to respect (Hazel Gardens PR 1 apartment renter).**

The other side of the coin was the feeling on the part of some social residents that they were being blamed for anti-social behaviour, which was not their fault and, in some instances, had been committed by their home owning or private renting neighbours. There was a feeling that this type of 'labelling' could be more easily attached to social residents living in clustered housing within a wider estate. There was also a level of fear among social residents that they did not have the right to complain or that if they did, they would themselves be at risk of eviction. Regardless of whether they were being wrongly judged, or accused, by some private residents. These concerns are illustrated by the following quotations from interviews with residents of the Birch View estate:

**I just think sometimes [the private residents] in the houses, like, just they were using the [social residents apartment block] bins, but like they were just chucking them in like they didn't give a shit and then we were getting blamed on it. So, it was little bits and pieces like that. But now we have it locked and it's never dirty ever because we know that it's us that are going to get blamed for it. But then we live in fear that way as well because certain little things we're like, oh, God, we're going to get blamed for it... But sometimes I feel like we can't rock the boat because we have been given the keys and technically it's not mine. So, I think sometimes we [social residents] just shut up and put up (Birch View SR 1 apartment).**

I believe the [social] tenants that were previously there before me were a bit of a nightmare. So, I kind of I suppose I feel all eyes are on me at the moment to suss me out and see what they are. So, I can only hope that, look it, they see, you know, my kids are good kids (Birch View SR 3).

## **Non-Housing Barriers to and Facilitators of Community Integration**

A notable issue revealed by the case studies of mixed tenure estates is the significance of non-housing amenities in facilitating the integration of mixed tenure estates and also acting as barriers to integration if social renting residents are not afforded the same access to their neighbours who live in private housing.

An instance of the latter phenomenon was cited by homeowner resident in the Oak Mount estate complained:

**I don't like the fact that it's non-social residents [WhatsApp group] only and that the social are sort of excluded on it, because they suffer from the same fears and that when these lads are tearing around [the estate] on these scooters (Oak Mount PR 1 owner).**

A social housing resident of the Birch View estate raised the same concern: 'They [private residents] have like a tenants', like, [Facebook] page and stuff up, stuff that's going on. We're [social residents] not included in that' (Birch View SR 1). A social renting tenant living in Birch View worried about private residents' children ignoring social residents' children the estate common areas – 'We could be overthinking it, but generally, like, kids would be quite welcoming. But not where we are (Birch View SR 1). While a social housing tenant in Ash Mews raised concerns that:

**At the end of the year the residents' association would have like a night out but wouldn't invite anybody from the [social] rented area, which it was kind of, you know – you know, you had to be in the gang, you know. The [social] renters were trouble as far as they were concerned (Ash Mews SR 1).**

Conversely a homeowner living in Oak Mount cited a local playground which was accessed by all of the residents of the estate as an important facilitator of integration. She said: I think then the fact there's a playground in the area I think that helps. It just – you don't care whether it's social or resident. you're just in the



playground with your kids (Oak Mount PR 1 owner). A private renting resident of Hazel Gardens proffered a similar view:

If you just think about it, having that central space [in apartment complex] that's neither private nor social, but having that third party central space [conciierge area] where people can meet is by its very nature then is not excluding anybody. I think that's been really helpful. And, you know, everybody gets their post delivered, packages delivered to the conciierge, so you'd be meeting people in the conciierge as well. so, they're used to the space (Hazel Gardens PR 1 apartment renter).

## Managing Mixed Tenure Estates

### Owner Management Companies

The higher density estates examined as part of the case study research all had owners' management companies in place to manage the communal areas in the apartment blocks and many of the AHB staff and local authority officials' interviewed had experience of dealing with OMCs in other estates they managed. While accepting that OMCs were a necessary arrangement in high density estates, these interviewees argued that they create several management challenges for both social landlords and tenants in mixed tenure developments, in addition to the financial challenges outlined in the preceding chapter.

Underfunding of 'sinking funds' – which are effectively savings set aside to fund the refurbishment of buildings over the long term and the repair and replacement of major shared components such as roofs and lifts – was a significant concern among many social landlords interviewed who claimed that this is a widespread problem. They linked to non-payment of management fees by private owners according to interviewees and also to setting management fees at too low a rate. In this vein an AHB senior manager argued:

**we've been in mixed tenure schemes and the OMC hasn't had funds to do works and you'd have a lot of complaints around that. And actually, you'll find that the arrears are from the private owners who haven't paid and actually the social tenants have paid because it's incorporated into their rent, you know! (Birch View KI 5).**

A colleague from another AHB reported similar concerns:

Of our stock of the 2,057 units that in the OMCs only about 10 percent of them actually have a sinking fund and really none of them are adequate, because even if the OMC board have decided to get a planned maintenance report drawn up to inform the sinking fund plan for the next 20 years, the chances of them actually collecting it from the members is very, very slim because there's always debtors in an OMC setup (Hazel Gardens KI 3)

However, this same interviewee pointed out how challenging it can be to resolve these issues:

we hate to see that it looks like we're railroading private owners that maybe want to keep the fees as low as possible, because they're looking at, oh, well, my mortgage is 1500 a month and the service charges are another, you know, 300 a month on top of that and I can't pay that, you know. We want to double that so that we've got an adequate sinking fund and stuff like that. So, it can be hard to manage when it's heavy on the social side and mild on the private ownership side (Hazel Gardens KI 3).

Another widespread concern among the AHB and local authority staff interviewed was the overly strict and, in some cases, discriminatory estate management rules many OMCs use. These concerns are evidenced in the following quotations from interviews with an AHB manager and local authority official involved in the Hazel Gardens case study estate:

Fines are becoming a massive issue as well, just thinking about the negatives. We are finding certainly in one place it looks like we're being victimised, or our tenants are being victimised, in that we're fleeced on fines, but the private owners are being let away with the same breaches. And that's a whole other area that we're starting to do some research and work on at the moment (Hazel Gardens KI 3).

we find unnecessary problems as part of the OMC. They will say things like you can't smoke in the back garden. And we're kind of going, 'What?' 'No, because it might go into the window up on top.' They have rules that are actually – you can't bring a white van into the estate (Hazel Gardens KI 1).

There was a widespread view among AHB and local authority staff that OMC problems were more common in estates where the developer still owns a significant number of units and therefore has retained control of the OMC. For instance, one AHB staff member who deals with OMCs on several mixed tenure estates reported that: 'the ones where the developer is still acting as the managing agent are just awful' (Hazel Gardens KI 6).

The AHBs involved in the case study estates employed several different strategies to manage these challenges. One was very active participation on the boards of OMCs. As dwelling owners, social landlords can vote at OMC annual general meetings and most of the housing associations and local authority managers interviewed for this study report that they often appoint staff to be a director on the board of OMCs for estates in which they own dwellings. Although one of the local authority officials interviewed pointed out that this participation was not without its challenges:

**It does cause us problems that we have to be on management companies then, which is just another issue for us as well, you know, having the staff to be on management companies all the time. And because you're the Council, there's sometimes a view that you're going to be able to solve everything for them, you know (Hazel Gardens KI 1).**

As discussed in the preceding chapter, clustering of the social housing is another way in which social landlords manage the challenges of dealing with OMCs. This allows them to 'contract out' of some services provided by OMCs. The AHB staff interviewed for this research argued that they have the capacity to do this because they have very extensive property management experience. However, they pointed out that completely separating the management of one block of apartments or group of houses from the management of the wider estate where they are located is challenging:

**we've got another block where, you know, we take responsibility for cleaning and various different things, but then there's confusion about – you know, because we've got total control over our block, but then the intercom system is something that is kind of over the whole of the estate, the door entry, you know. And then it's how much do you contribute to that? So, if you can genuinely have it separate then there is an argument to be made. But if you can't, don't go there in my view (Hazel Gardens KI 5).**

## Social Housing Management Staff and Skills

In addition to effective arrangements for managing communal areas of mixed tenure estates and for funding the associated management fees and dealing with OMCs, the local and central government officials and AHB staff interviewed for this study highlighted the importance of having robust arrangements for managing social housing in mixed tenure estates.

The vast majority of the key informants interviewed, particularly those working in the AHB and council sectors, felt that by and large AHBs do an efficient and effective job managing social residents in mixed tenure estates. For instance, one AHB CEO argued that the skills of staff his organisation employs:

... is kind of a bit closer to homeless services' skill set. Like half our staff – like we've 315 staff. Half of them are qualified social workers, social care graduates, or psychology graduates... So, we're trying to look at the qualitative improvement of the environment, you know... we kind of think that [name of AHB] is well placed to do – kind of to do more than your traditional landlord/AHB thing (Willow Close KI 2).

A head of another AHB agreed:

I do think there's a national understanding now at national levels that actually AHBs can do really good job because we can specialise in the areas that people need us to specialise in. And I think, look, like I've a huge amount of respect for the local authority teams and the work they do, but it's spread. It's spread across a vast amount of different requirements of services, and they don't specialise (Birch View KI 4).

The ability of AHBs to successfully manage 'the product [estate / complex] post-purchase' (Oak Mount KI 5) and 'dealing with very complex needs' in a supportive manner which 'empowers and enables people to give them agency in their lives' (Willow Close KI 2). In contrast, the lower funding available to local authorities for housing management was cited as a barrier to their effective management of mixed tenure estates by some interviewees. For instance, a local authority director of housing argued:

**But part of that too, of that initial phase, is we need an awful lot more supports in place to more actively manage those estates where they're new estates... we would have five tenant liaison officers here to cover over 5,500 units, you know what I mean (Willow Close KI 3).**

Despite their support for robust management of mixed tenure estates, some of the AHB social housing managers interviewed raised concerns about the potential conflict between this approach and tenure blind design mixed tenure estates and also the goal of integrating different housing tenures seamlessly. In this vein, an AHB CEO reported:

**one of the biggest responses from our [tenant] surveys, whenever we did them, was that we're [social residents] fed up seeing you, you're too intrusive. And I think actually that's part of the problem, that we've – we've – we may have fabric of buildings that are tenure-blind, but actually our approach to management clearly designates them as places that need a significant level of management when maybe they don't (Birch View KI 4).**

## **Allocating Social Housing**

As mentioned above, the allocation of social housing on mixed tenure estates was a major concern for the private owners and renters living in the case study estates. In particular these residents supported robust arrangements for vetting social renting tenants prior to allocation of tenancies. However, the AHBs and local authority staff interviewed pointed out that this can be challenging to do in practice. Furthermore, they also argued that while the strict vetting of applicants for social housing may generate benefits for the residents of a particular mixed tenure estate, it can generate disbenefits and inequities from the perspective of the social housing sector as a whole and society more broadly.

Some of the AHB staff interviewed noted that in the past local authorities would nominate two potential tenants for one property and after the AHB would interview both, they would decide which one would be the best fit, however now councils only forward one nomination which makes refusal harder for AHBs. As a result, AHBs are reliant on the local authority nomination process to 'do the job as well as they should do at the beginning of the process and if they don't that creates difficulties at a later stage' (Birch View KI 4).

Quite often such a refusal by the AHB would only occur as a result of the results of Garda vetting of applicants for housing. An AHB housing manager explained that:

**But generally, you know, the Council do set their lists and there's no real turning back from them. The only thing that really can divert, you know, their decision is if something shows up on their clearance that – at that point we have a say and we can say, look, we won't be accepting this tenant (Ash Mews, KI 2).**

The same housing manager clarified that AHBs are not allowed to see the Section 15 Garda clearance form – they are simply made aware of a particular concern. AHBs also do their own background checks after receiving the potential resident's application form, and often interview prospective tenants.

A senior local authority official raised equity concerns about these practices, however. She commented:

**Not all local authority tenants are challenging tenants, but there is a strong proportion of them, and they happen then to be the ones that maybe the AHBs haven't chosen to take on board and have refused over time. So AHBs have a better I suppose name out there on that basis... the local authority then is left with more difficult and more challenging ones and yet we're the people that probably have the less resources. (Willow Close KI 3).**

In addition, several of the AHB social housing managers interviewed pointed out that no similar demands are made for vetting private owners or renters, even if they are receipt of government housing subsidies. In this vein, a social housing manager involved in the Birch View estate mentioned: 'if it was a private owner next door renting it out to somebody, renting out a three-bed house for two-and-a-half grand a month. I'm sure they don't do that many background checks' (Birch View, KI 3). While a colleague from another AHB agreed:

**They're [private purchasers] happy to buy a unit beside an investor unit, say, but that investor could well be renting to somebody who's in receipt of HAP, you know what I mean. So, it's kind of a funny attitude that people have towards it (Oak Mount, KI 3).**

## Integrating Mixed Tenure Estates

### Strategies for Building Integrated Communities

The interviews with the social housing managers involved in managing the case study estates also discussed the strategies they employed, if any, for integrating the residents of different housing tenures and building a strong collective community identity. The interviews revealed that having an active resident's association was the most common and effective strategy used for this purpose. In some cases, this worked and positive relationships were formed between residents living in social and private housing. For instance, an AHB social housing manager responsible for the Ash Mews estate reflected:

it's something that's – we [AHB] try to – you know, with housing officers that are taking on big developments, that we try to instil that, you know, to try and get the residents association set up, because at the end of the day, the way I see it and the way it generally works for me is there's always a chairperson amongst the residents' association (Ash Mews, KI 2).

However, a colleague from the same AHB reflected 'But in truth we do have a lot of schemes where there's a huge amount of integration and then there's others where there's not. And I think the more integration, the better is the truth of it (Ash Mews, KI 5).

### Access to Non-Housing Amenities in Mixed Tenure Estates

As mentioned above, access to non-housing amenities was a concern for some of the social housing residents of the case study estates interviewed. This was also a concern for the AHB staff and local authority officials involved in the case study estates. They took the view that access to non-housing amenities can play an important role in the integration of mixed tenure communities and conversely inequality in access to these amenities between residents of social and private housing undermines community integration.

Some amenities were commonly available to all residents, regardless of their classification of private or social within the estate. These provided communal spaces in which residents could inter-mingle and get to know each other. The construction of these within the development were essential to residents' mixing within the community, as an AHB housing manager commented:

**As opposed to having it all on one corner and they [residents] all integrate, because we'll have playing pitches and we've a school, and we're going to have a community centre, we're going to have a creche, and they'll all be mixing together. And, you know, you'll have the bar, restaurants and coffeeshops at the LUAS station and all that kind of thing (Oak Mount, KI 5).**

However, the difficulty arose when social residents were allocated apartments in more affluent areas which invariably had more high-end amenities such as gyms and cinemas within the complex. Private residents had automatic access to these services because they (or their landlord in the case of private renters) pay a higher management fee which covers their costs. Management fees paid by social landlords did not generally cover these additional services so in the Oak Mount case study estate and increasingly in other mixed tenure estates in affluent urban areas social tenants don't have access. Two of the AHB managers involved in the Oak Mount estate offered the following reflections on this situation:

**It's more noticeable in the more affluent areas of the city, but it's something that is going to continue... You're going to have managed private facilities being part of communities with excluded Part Vs and social housing units (Oak Mount, KI 2).**

**The tenants who are renting privately can use the gym, but our [social housing] tenants weren't allowed – from a social justice perspective it just didn't sit right with me that if somebody is prepared to pay for the gym themselves and you know that this person, you know, he's not going to sort of make a show of anybody else, you know, he just wants to work out in the gym (Oak Mount, KI 1).**

In some of the case study estates, unequal access to estate amenities also undermined efforts to ensure that the different tenures in an estate were not identifiable, for instance by using tenure blind design. For instance, in both estates where the social housing was clustered and dispersed, social housing residents were allowed fewer car parking spaces per dwelling than their private counterparts. This was the case in the Birch View estate where an AHB manager reported: 'the difference between private [houses] and social [apartments/houses] is that there's only one parking space per [social] apartment' (Birch View, KI 3). However, the same interviewee clarified that management of these spaces by the Owners' Management Company was the key concern in this case



because the social housing tenants had difficulty in using the spaces allocated to their dwellings:

**I did suspect that this would have been an issue [parking for social tenants in the spaces outside the social residents' block] from the start, so I've been asking since 2019 can we get bollards put in, but it hasn't been successful as of yet (Birch View, KI 3).**

However, some of the local authority officials and AHB staff interviewed questioned whether it is justifiable to spend tax-payers' money to finance social residents' access to non-housing amenities which would not usually be provided by social landlords. For instance, the CEO of one AHB argued: 'Like it's taxpayers' money, so, they're not going to pay for our tenants to join a gym because otherwise everybody in social housing will want the gym to be paid for if they're living in social housing' (Oak Mount, KI 6). The same interviewee suggested:

**We're an Approved Housing Body. We're a charity organisation. We only would pay reduced management fees... if you [social tenant] would like to join the cinema and if you would like to go to the gym you can actually talk to the owner or management company and maybe make an agreement and then you pay yourself (Oak Mount, KI 6).**

A colleague from the same AHB clarified that in this particular estate:

**Now, the block was offered [gym membership] collectively, not individually, but they were offered collectively [to all social residents in the block] by the managing company to avail of all those services if they paid for them. They wouldn't do so, or at least a certain percentage of them [social residents] wouldn't do so. So as a consequence, you end up with an all-or-nothing approach (Oak Mount, KI 2).**

## **Managing Anti-social Behaviour and Conflict Between Residents**

Managing conflict between residents, private and social, was identified by the AHB and local authority social housing managers interviewed for this research as one of the biggest challenges of managing mixed tenure estates. This is because this issue can be fraught with contention, often due to requests from private residents to evict social residents for any form of behaviour they, either individually or more commonly as a group, perceived to be socially unacceptable. An AHB social housing manager argued that there is a problem of double standards:

if something goes wrong, no matter whether it's something that's very high-risk or something that's very low risk, the expectation that maybe private owners would have around moving that family out, evicting them, taking them out of the home is very different to if it was a private homeowner next door (Birch View, KI 5).

A senior local authority official echoed this view:

And another thing is when maybe one of our tenants may get involved in criminal activity the expectation is that there's a different law for tenants – the same with Travellers – that there's a different law and it's up to [named local authority] to sort that out... So, we're being dragged into, you know, in some cases where a management company or residents don't even complain to the guards, but they want us to sort it out...there's very toxic attitude out there and it really is class warfare ... So, we're under a lot of pressure to evict those people. And also, there's a number of cases being brought by the courts where we are being sued as to our failure to make tenants behave, and we expect those cases to be coming up soon and we expect to lose them (OKI 3).

To combat these assumptions, one AHB manager suggested that her organisation tries to:

... explain and educate around social housing, you know, that there are people that have a housing need, but these could be people that are earning... and that they have a housing need for various reasons. But again, it's that case of, you know, it's the stigmatised view – that they're not working, that they're scrounging, and that they're going to cause problems and their children are going to cause problems (Birch View KI 5).

While a local authority councillor suggested 'When you are a social housing tenant this is your home for life, so you've a massive investment in it. I do think [names local authority] could do more to promote that sense of investment and that sense of ownership over it (OKI 1).

## **Integrating Different Age Groups, Physical Abilities and Support Needs**

Although this report is focused on the mixing of different housing tenures within a single estate, the key informants interviewed all acknowledged that social mixing is not just about mixing tenures. Properly mixed communities should also include a range of ages, household types, ethnicities and also accommodate people with different physical abilities and support needs.

One of the case study estates – Oak Mount – includes AHB housing for older people and the case study research on this estate did shed light on how residents in this demographic can be better integrated into mixed tenure neighbourhoods. Notably, all of the AHB staff involved in the provision and management of the social housing for older people in this estate all agreed that it is more appropriate to cluster this housing. As the following quotations from interviews with these key informants reveal, the position reflects both practical housing design and community building considerations. In relation to the latter, an AHB housing manager claimed:

**Especially with older people, a group of them [social residents] altogether. They can form a community within the community... But one person [social tenant] on their own might be vulnerable and mightn't be able to withstand even one attack [of accusations from private residents] (Oak Mount KI 1).**

While a colleague who manages the provision of care services to tenants argued:

**For the older persons, yeah, because even if you've to cluster and you want to try and put in supports down the line, it would be cheaper than having things all over the place... there's motion sensors in those apartments and through those motion sensors I can actually see that there's life in that apartment (Oak Mount KI 6).**

However, not all of the key informants interviewed agreed with this approach. Some noted the dangers of having homogenous groups, such as senior citizens, clustered in particular sections of an estate or apartment complex. One AHB CEO argued that this is not the natural settlement pattern of older established areas where 'you see different households at different stages of the lifecycle, and I think that's much more sustainable' (Hazel Gardens KI 7). A councillor from the Dublin region agreed:

**we tend to put all our senior citizens into senior citizen complexes. I'm not sure that's a good thing to do, in the sense that they're surrounded by their peers of a particular age and may enjoy seeing younger, particularly younger kids. I think there's a great connection between older and younger (OKI 1).**

There was also recognition that the key to success in placing groups with different support needs within estates or apartment complexes was in matching those needs to the neighbourhood in which the resident is placed. For example, some key informants said that placing an elderly resident in an estate with mostly young working professionals may impact the elderly residents' quality of life as there might be no possibility for social interaction throughout the day as most residents would be gone to work.

For other potentially vulnerable groups of tenants, such as those transitioning back into housing from homelessness for example or individuals coming from direct provision for applicants for international protection, dispersed social housing was identified by key informants as most appropriate. One senior AHB staff member argued that dispersal would promote better integration of these tenants into the estate community:

**Direct provision – again it's about community integration... So generally, pepper-potted if you're finding people coming out of congregated settings or something like that or may have additional support needs. Otherwise, you know, it's just the fear of ghettoisation, because if one tenant fails or something happens or there are particular support needs and that community find out about it or there's eight or nine families, everyone's going to get tarred with the same brush (Birch View KI 5).**

Whereas for those with additional support needs clustered environments enable easier service provision. This point was made by one of the local authority councillors interviewed who argued: 'But if you're talking about something like supported living, HAIL, for example, that provides mental health supports, it [clustered] works because the supports are put in place to allow those tenants live in a sustainable and supported way' (OKI 1).

## **Conclusions**

The case studies of five mixed tenure estates conducted for this research indicate that these estates have settled well and the private and social housing residents who live there have integrated well together into strong communities.

Even bearing in mind that most of these residents choose to live in a mixed tenure estate and are therefore likely to evaluate these developments positively, these case studies indicate that this model of housing provision has significant benefits and is a popular option for many households.

Most of the residents of these estates, irrespective of housing tenure, favour the dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure estates. For social housing tenants, dispersal of social housing allowed them to avoid a 'them and us' scenario whereby there was a section of the estate that was clearly 'the social end'. However, tenure blind design of mixed tenure was considered even more important for the integration of residents of different tenures than the location of the social rented dwellings. In addition, the case studies identified some social and relationship factors which play a key role in encouraging or discouraging the integration of mixed tenure estate communities. A sense of community was important to all residents; however, social residents were sometimes excluded from the community social network groups set-up by private residents. Social residents were acutely aware of being judged and looked down on and some felt a certain degree of stigma and judgment unfairly directed at them. Anti-social behaviour on the part of social renting tenants was also a key concern among private residents but some social residents felt that they were unfairly labelled as a nuisance group for the antisocial behaviour of one individual or family.

Strategies for addressing these challenges and encouraging the integration of social housing estates were also discussed with the AHB housing managers and other key informants interviewed for this research. A strong residents association was considered useful for this purpose, together with non-housing amenities such as playgroups which enable residents of different tenure to meet and build relationships. However, due to cost considerations, in some cases it was not possible to provide social tenants with access to some amenities provided in high-end, expensive mixed tenure developments such as gyms and cinemas.

The social landlords interviewed did not think that mixed tenure estates were necessarily more difficult to manage than single tenure social housing estates and AHB CEOs and staff were confident that the sector has the skills and knowledge required. However, implementing the vetting of applicants for social housing in mixed tenure estates which was requested by some private owners was not always feasible or desirable according to some social housing managers. Owners' Management Companies which managed communal and shared facilities in high density developments such as apartment blocks are also challenging to deal with for social landlords. AHB managers raised concerns that the sinking funds to pay for long term maintenance and upgrading of communal areas in apartment blocks are commonly underfunded and that on occasions OMCs apply unfair or overly intrusive rules to social housing tenants.



# Chapter Six

## Conclusions

### Introduction

This report has drawn on a wide range of sources of information to explore the dispersal and clustering of social housing in mixed tenure estates in Ireland. These include: a review of the very extensive existing research literature on this issue and of relevant policies and guidelines on their implementation; a survey of larger approved housing bodies which examines the extent to which their social housing stock is delivered in mixed tenure settings and case study research on five mixed tenure estates which vary in terms of location around Ireland but also in terms of design and location of the social rented dwellings within them. These case studies were operationalised by means of over 50 in-depth interviews with residents of these estates and the AHB staff involved in their procurement and management and other key informants such as local and central government officials and councillors. This final chapter of the report sets out the findings of this analysis and reflects on their implications for housing policy and practice.

## Findings

### **Extent and Benefits of AHB Provided Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates**

The research presented in this report indicates there has been significant growth in the proportion of social housing which is delivered in mixed tenure estates in recent decades. Research conducted in the early 2000s found that 20 per cent of the 6,308 social housing units provided by AHBs between 1998 and the end of 2003 were located in mixed tenure estates (Norris, 2005). In contrast, the survey of AHBs conducted for this research reveals that 78.2 per cent of all housing they currently own, rent or manage is located in mixed tenure estates. New AHB social housing, provided in the last five years, is particularly likely to be in mixed tenure estates. This development reflects the objectives of policy, the introduction of mechanisms such as Part V of the 2000 Planning Act which enable the delivery of social housing in mixed tenure settings and also, the very strong preference for tenure mixing among the AHB staff and local and central government officials interviewed for this research.

The case studies of five mixed tenure estates conducted for this research indicate that these estates have settled well and the private and social housing residents who live there have integrated well together into strong communities. Even bearing in mind that most of these residents choose to live in a mixed tenure estate and are therefore likely to evaluate these developments positively, these case studies indicate that this model of housing provision has significant benefits in terms of combatting socio-spatial segregation of different income groups and reducing the potential for stigmatisation of social housing tenants. Furthermore, mixed tenure is a popular option for many households. Therefore, the increased levels of social housing delivery in mixed tenure estates seen in recent years is a very positive development.

### **Clustering and Dispersal of AHB Provided Social Housing in Mixed Tenure Estates**

Most of the residents of these estates, irrespective of housing tenure, favour the dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure estates. For social housing tenants, dispersal of social housing allows them to avoid a 'them and us' scenario whereby there was a section of the estate that was clearly 'the social end'. Most of the key informants from AHBs and local authorities interviewed also supported the dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure estates, but supported housing was an exception in this regard and in this case the provision of support services is more efficient where the social housing is clustered. Although the case study research indicates that both clustering and dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure estates works well and the research literature shows dispersal of social housing does not have a significant impact on the level of interaction and relationships between social and private residents



Despite the consensus in favour of dispersal of social housing, the survey of AHBs conducted for this research indicate, that 70.8 per cent of the social housing units provided by these AHBs in mixed tenure developments is clustered, whereas 14 per cent is dispersed and 15.2 per cent is located in developments which contain a mix of clustered and dispersed social housing. Data on the age of mixed tenure estates indicates that the use of clustering of social housing has remained consistently high over time.

The methods used to procure and fund social housing in mixed tenure estates were also examined in this survey. The vast majority of the social housing units provided by these AHBs in these estates (69.6 per cent) were purchased by AHBs from developers or, less commonly, purpose-built by AHBs (19.9 per cent). A smaller proportion of these units than might be expected – only 6.7 per cent – have been procured using the provisions of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act – which were introduced to promote tenure mixing. Some one third of the AHB social housing in mixed tenure estates of these dwellings were funded by the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme (32.4 per cent) and almost as many (30.0 per cent) were funded by the Capital Advance Leasing Facility. The remaining 37.6 per cent of AHB social housing units were funded by the Capital Assistance Scheme, leased for social housing, managed on behalf of a local authority, or were funded using a mix of these measures.

Notably the analysis presented here reveals no obvious relationship between the particular method employed to procure social housing in mixed tenure estates and the spatial distribution of these dwellings in terms of whether they are clustered together or distributed throughout the estate. However, there does appear to be a relationship between the funding method employed and the clustering and dispersal of social housing. A large proportion (39.8 per cent) of the clustered AHB social housing units in mixed tenure estates are funded by the Capital Loan and Subsidy Scheme. Whereas the CLSS funded only 10.2 per cent of the dispersed social housing units in these estates. The opposite pattern applies to the Capital Advance Leasing Facility funding scheme. 28.1 per cent of clustered social housing units in mixed tenure estates were funded using this scheme, as well 40.1 per cent of dispersed units. The interviews with AHB and local authority social housing managers conducted for this study suggests that this phenomenon may be related to the more generous revenue funding (for the management of dwellings) provided by the CALF scheme compared to the CLSS. This enables AHBs to pay the management fees levied by the Owners' Management Companies which manage high density developments to fund the upkeep of public areas, shared roofs etc. Whereas the less generous revenue funding available for local authority housing and also AHB housing funded under the CLSS funding programme encourages the clustering of social housing in mixed tenure developments in an effort to negotiate reduced management fees because social landlords take on some of these tasks themselves.

The interviews with key informants also shed light on other factors which influenced decisions to cluster or disperse social housing in mixed tenure estates. These revealed that clustering is seen as preferable in some contexts from both an AHB perspective and from a developer perspective. From an AHB's perspective it has benefits in terms of ease of management and maintenance of units, particularly with apartments. From a developer's perspective clustering minimises any risks to the saleability of the market housing. However, the interviews with social housing tenants suggest that many of them prefer their dwellings to be dispersed throughout mixed tenure estates,

### **Social Housing's Role in the Economics of Mixed Tenure Housing Developments**

A significant finding of the analysis presented here is the important role which social housing plays in underpinning the financial viability of market housing provision in mixed tenure estates. The purchase of the social housing to meet the developer's Part V obligations provides a guaranteed source of funding which enables developers raise borrowing to fund the remainder of the development. For this reason, it is now common for developers to negotiate to sell dwellings to AHBs or local authorities (or private investment funds) when planning new developments and these 'presales' are an important part of their business model. Changes to residential density guidelines introduced in the late 2000s (see chapter two) require more residential construction at higher densities particularly of apartments. However higher density construction is more challenging for developers to finance because the money required must be raised upfront and, unlike housing estates, apartments can't usually be built, funded, and sold off in stages. This means that developers are particularly keen to sell apartments to social landlords (and investment funds) and also to provide the social housing element of developments first of all, before the market housing. This brings opportunities for AHBs and local authorities, but also risks since it may encourage the clustering of social housing in a single apartment block in a development, for instance, or mean that in some cases the market housing planned for mixed tenure estates is not provided in full or at all so the final development may not, in fact, be mixed tenure.

### **Scale of Mix: Estates, Neighbourhoods, Towns, or Cities?**

A further significant finding is that the provision of social housing in mixed tenure estates and decisions regarding its dispersal through these estates are only one of several measures required to combat socio-spatial segregation and promote social mixing. Some interviewees highlighted the need to provide neighbourhood amenities to ensure mixed tenure estates are successful. Others argued that factors external to mixed tenure estates such as large single tenure social housing estates or geographical concentrations in the take-up of housing

allowances for low-income households such as the Housing Assistance Payment can precipitate neighbourhood, town, or city level socio-spatial segregation. They argued that the housing strategies which local authorities produce as part of their development planning process need to have cognisance of the latter meso and macro manifestations of socio-spatial segregation as well as addressing its manifestation at the micro level via Part V of the 2000 Planning Act which enables tenure mixing of individual estates.

### **Designing Mixed Tenure Estates**

The interviews with key informants and also with residents of mixed tenure estates conducted for the research revealed a strong support for tenure blind design, whereby dwellings in the different housing tenures are externally indistinguishable. Notably, tenure blind design was considered by the social housing managers and social and private housing residents interviewed to be a more important factor in enabling the success and integration of communities in mixed tenure estates than the clustering or dispersal of the social housing.

### **Mixing Intermediate Tenures**

The Affordable Housing Act 2021 which had just been enacted at the time of writing makes provision for new intermediate housing tenures – which are neither fully market nor fully social housing – such as cost rental housing and affordable housing for sale. This presents an opportunity for AHBs to expand their activities and engage in the development of larger estates than would be appropriate if these developments consisted solely of social housing. Therefore, intermediate tenures are a useful new mechanism for combatting socio spatial segregation and the skills which AHBs have amassed in managing existing mixed tenure estates will equip them to manage estates which include cost rental and affordable housing.

### **Integrating Mixed Tenure Estates**

The case studies of mixed tenure estates identified some social and relationship factors which play a key role in encouraging or discouraging the integration of mixed tenure estate communities. A sense of community was important to all residents; however, social residents were sometimes excluded from the community social network groups set up by private residents. Social residents were acutely aware of being judged and looked down on and some felt a certain degree of stigma and judgment unfairly directed at them. Anti-social behaviour on the part of social renting tenants was also a key concern among private residents but some social residents felt that they were unfairly labelled as a nuisance group for the anti-social behaviour of one individual or family.

Strategies for addressing these challenges and encouraging the integration of social housing estates were also discussed with the AHB housing managers

and other key informants interviewed for this research. A strong residents association was considered useful for this purpose, together with non-housing amenities such as playgroups which enable residents of different tenure to meet and build relationships. However, due to cost considerations, in some cases it was not possible to provide social tenants with access to some amenities provided in high-end, expensive mixed tenure developments such as gyms and cinemas.

## **Managing Mixed Tenure Estates**

The social landlords interviewed did not think that mixed tenure estates were necessarily more difficult to manage than single tenure social housing estates and AHB CEOs and staff were confident that the sector has the skills and knowledge required. However, implementing the vetting of applicants for social housing in mixed tenure estates which was requested by some private owners was not always feasible or desirable according to some social housing managers. Owners' Management Companies which managed communal and shared facilities in high density developments such as apartment blocks are also challenging to deal with for social landlords. AHB managers raised concerns that the sinking funds to pay for long term maintenance and upgrading of communal areas in apartment blocks are commonly underfunded and that on occasions OMCs apply unfair or overly intrusive rules to social housing tenants.

## **Implications for Policy and Practice**

### **Implications for Housing Policy**

The analysis presented in this report has several important implications for housing policy. The first of these relates to the value of tenure mixing. Tenure mixing had been largely successfully implemented in the five case study estates examined here and was supported by residents. There was overwhelming support for this policy among all the AHB social housing managers and central and local government officials interviewed who viewed it as key to combatting socio-spatial segregation. In addition, the increase in the proportion of AHB social housing delivered in mixed tenure estates in recent years is evident and that it is a practicable policy which has been and can continue to be successfully implemented at large scale.

The findings of the research on the case study estates are agnostic about the benefits of clustering compared to dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure estates. It found that both options worked well and estates in both categories are successful. Local authorities are currently considering setting guidelines on the composition of their mixed tenure estates in their operational areas and some (e.g., Limerick City and County Council) have already done so. This research suggests that these guidelines should not be overly formulaic or rigid.

In reaching decisions regarding tenure mix in new estates, consideration should be taken on the design and layout of the development and the tenure mix in the surrounding neighbourhoods, but also of the needs of older communities to downsize or move to more appropriate age suitable housing.

However, the research suggests that decisions regarding the location of the social housing in mixed tenure estates are not shaped primarily by the needs of tenants, or the characteristics of the particular development, but rather by other considerations including design, the economics of housing development and revenue funding considerations – in particular the availability of revenue funding to pay management fees to owners' management companies in high density estates. Funding management fees is more challenging for local authority social housing and AHB social housing funded by the Capital Assistance Scheme therefore these types of dwellings tend to be clustered to enable social landlords 'contract out' of the management fees levied on homeowners and private landlords. The opposite applies to social housing funded by the Capital Advance Leasing Facility. This suggests that if policy makers have a clear preference for the dispersal of social housing in mixed tenure estates then appropriate levels of revenue funding need to be available to social landlords to facilitate this.

The introduction of new intermediate tenures such as cost rental and affordable housing for sale by the Affordable Housing Act, 2021 bring significant opportunities because they will enable local authorities and AHBs to develop new forms of mixed tenure estates and also to mix at a greater scale than has been possible heretofore when tenure mixing private and social housing was the only option available. However, these new intermediate tenures will also bring new challenges particularly in relation to the payment of management fees in high density developments which, when added to rent or mortgage payments, have the potential to undermine housing affordability. Therefore, it is critical that this issue should be considered in the implementation of the Affordable Housing Act, 2021, including in the design of public subsidies for cost rental and affordable housing and the design of estates which include dwellings in these tenures.

### **Implications for Planning Policy**

The analysis presented in this report also raises issues relevant to land use planning policy and planning for housing development in particular. One of the most important planning issues raised by this report relates to the scale of social mixing enabled by planning policy. Housing policy and planning policy – particularly Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 – have enabled increasing levels of tenure mixing of individual housing estates in recent years. However, there are no provisions for monitoring, addressing, or preventing socio-spatial segregation at neighbourhood, town or city level therefore planning policy

and particularly the housing strategies included in local authority development plans should be reformed to include provisions of this type. A key reason why arrangements for monitoring and addressing neighbourhood, town and city level socio-spatial segregation require strengthening is that this research indicates that new drivers of this type of segregation have emerged over the last decade. Some of these new drivers are related to the housing market, construction industry and finance for construction which have undermined the financial viability of developing housing for sale to individual home buyers and small-scale private landlords. Others are policy related and linked in particular to unintended consequences of revisions made to residential density guidelines in 2009.

As was intended, the density guidelines have precipitated an increase in the numbers of apartment developments nationally. However, the guidelines have also had unintended impacts. Some of the AHB and local authority staff interviewed raised concerns this may ultimately lead to segregation in our larger towns and cities with much higher concentrations of rental tenures in these areas. Furthermore, within mixed tenure estates the practical advantages (for social landlords and developers) of purchasing whole apartment blocks for social housing is driving the clustering of this tenure. To address these challenges a holistic assessment of all aspects of the impact of the residential density rules, both intended and unintended, is required. The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage should also consider researching ways to achieve higher densities without relying entirely on apartment and high-rise developments. An architectural competition with this objective in mind was recently held in Los Angeles for instance. This identified innovative duplex, triplex and quadruplex dwellings designs which concurrently achieve high densities and at a liveable scale.

The analysis presented in this report has also flagged the potential for some improvements to the implementation of the aspects of planning policy which are relevant to tenure mixing. In particular it would be preferable if the AHBs which provide social housing in mixed tenure developments which has been procured using Part V of the 2000 Planning Act were involved at an earlier stage in the negotiations of Part V agreements. This would help ensure the design and location of the social rented units in these developments better suited the needs of residents and social housing landlords. Therefore, the DHLGH should review its guidelines on the implementation of Part V to facilitate this.

### **Implications for the Design and Management of Mixed Tenure Estates**

As mentioned above, tenure blind external design of mixed tenure estates has very clear benefits in terms of ensuring social rented dwellings are not identifiable nor their occupants. Therefore, DHLGH guidance on social housing design and the implementation of Part V of the 2000 Planning Act should recommend the use of tenure blind design as far as possible.

The provision of shared facilities in mixed tenure estates such as playgrounds also helps to promote the integration of mixed tenure communities and therefore Departmental guidance on the design and procurement of mixed tenure estates should also recommend their inclusion. In addition, the case study research revealed that residents' associations which include residents of all housing tenures also promote integration and therefore their establishment should be promoted by social landlords.

High standards of housing management are also important for the success of mixed tenure estates and management can be challenging, particularly in view of the stigma which still unfortunately attaches to social housing. This research has demonstrated approved housing bodies' strong record in this regard contributed to the success of the case study estates. Many of the measures taken by the AHBs which provide social housing in these estates, such as pre-tenancy training, pre-meetings with residents in advance of tenants moving in, ongoing and active liaison with others in the development and the wider community, were very valuable and should be adopted in all mixed tenure developments.

In high density mixed tenure estates, social housing landlords are not the sole managers however – owners' management companies funded by service charges managed communal areas and shared facilities such as roofs and car parks. Designing for easy maintenance to ensure that the development is easy to manage, and upkeep can be minimalised in the future ensures more manageable service charges. The AHB and local authority social housing managers interviewed also reported they prefer to cluster social housing in high density developments to control service charges and for management purposes. They also raised concerns about OMCs underfunding of sinking funds which pay for upgrading and large-scale maintenance in high density estates. To address these issues the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage should implement the recommendations of Mooney's (2019) research. The issue of service charges in low rise suburban and rural developments and how they are handled should be addressed through Departmental guidance. The issue of service charges in apartment developments could be addressed through amendments to the Multi Unit Development Act, 2011.

The increase in mixed-tenure developments over the last 20 years has been a very progressive policy development. Further policy guidance and advice on planning and managing mixed tenure developments will contribute to additional supply of well managed homes and neighbourhoods and advance this aspect of housing provision.

## **Implications for Research on Housing**

This report has revealed that the extent and nature of tenure mixing of social housing has changed significantly in recent years, as the use of this format for social housing provision has become more widespread but also more complex to deliver because new forms of social housing funding and housing tenure have emerged, and the housing market has changed significantly. Therefore, additional research is required to examine some of these challenges which are outside the scope of this study and also to examine emerging challenges.

In relation to the latter, research on integration of the new intermediate forms of tenure provided in the Affordable Housing Act, 2021 such as cost rental and affordable housing for sale into mixed tenure estates, will be required in order to inform thinking about best practice. This report has also revealed significant challenges associated with the provision of social housing in high density mixed tenure estates, which are managed by owners' management companies and regulated by the Multi Unit Development Act, 2011, which require further research if they are to be resolved. Finally, this report has identified some very important developments in relation to the role of tenure mixing in the economics of the housing construction and development industry. These issues have not been widely flagged heretofore and are not well understood and therefore also merit further research.



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