



Housing Policy Discussion Series

# **Regenerating Local Authority Housing Estates: Review of Policy and Practice**



Centre for  
Housing Research



Housing Policy Discussion Series

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## **Regenerating Local Authority Housing Estates: Review of Policy and Practice**

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## Preface

Almost €1 billion has been spent on regeneration and remedial works for local authority estates since 1997 and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in *Building Sustainable Communities* commits to the rolling out of a programme of regeneration to all run-down estates nationwide. In this context it is hoped that this policy and practice review paper by the Centre for Housing Research, *Regenerating Local Authority Housing Estates*, will play a valuable role in informing policy development and offering examples of good practice.

The paper draws on the international literature, which points to the need for much regeneration work to be multi-faceted. The clear conclusion from Section 2 of the paper is that design, housing management and social and economic elements often need to be addressed simultaneously if regeneration projects are to be successful in the long run. Section 3 of the paper, however, concludes that current policy and funding arrangements in this country may inhibit that required multi-dimensional response. The value of giving more emphasis to identifying the sources of problems on estates and responding promptly to prevent their escalation is also stressed. Different approaches to project implementation are examined by way of three case studies in Section 4 of the paper. The strengths and potential weaknesses of each approach are highlighted. In the final part of the paper, Section 5, emerging issues from the work are brought together and discussed, focusing on sustaining regeneration achievements.

The paper also compliments *Regenerating Estates, Rebuilding Vibrant Communities* Good Practice Guidelines, developed by the Centre as part of its mandate to help facilitate improved social housing management.

The Centre wishes to thank all those who helped to inform this discussion paper, particularly those who were interviewed as part of the case studies and those who supplied supplementary information. John Whyte, Chief Executive of the Fatima Regeneration Board and officials from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government provided their very useful comments on different drafts of the review. A working draft of the paper was the focus of a conference organised by the Centre and held in Limerick in October 2005. Particular appreciation is also due to the paper's authors, Dr Kasey Treadwell Shine and Dr Michelle Norris.

**David Silke**

Director

Centre for Housing Research



## SECTION ONE



## Introduction

Since the 1970s a large number of programmes for the regeneration of unpopular social housing estates have been introduced in Western European countries. This development is related to the end of large-scale social house building in many of these countries. Governments have tended to shift their attention away from social housing construction to estate management, and to the social problems associated with residualisation or increased concentrations of low-income households in a shrinking sector (van Kempen *et al*, 2005).

In Ireland, similar concerns led to the establishment of the Remedial Works Scheme (RWS) in 1985 by what is now the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG) (Norris, 2001). This scheme funds the refurbishment of dwellings rented from local authorities (which accounts for the majority of social housing provision in Ireland). Since the mid-1980s, the DoEHLG has established a number of other programmes to fund regeneration initiatives. An example of such an initiative is the Area Regeneration Programme, which funds the refurbishment of older flats complexes in Dublin city. Local authority estate regeneration projects have also secured funding from schemes administered by other government departments and state agencies (Norris and Winston, 2004).

This discussion paper reviews policy and practice in relation to the regeneration of local authority housing estates. It was prepared by the Centre for Housing Research in response to a request from the DoEHLG. The Department indicated the need to intensify efforts to rejuvenate much of the existing social housing and has made a commitment to roll out a programme of regeneration to all run-down estates nationwide (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, 2005). Estate refurbishment and/or regeneration is a key element in the Department's recently announced new housing policy framework, *Building Sustainable Communities*, in which there is a commitment to high quality social housing, and the regeneration, refurbishment and/or other remedial works to all existing stock. This paper aims to help inform the development of policy and practice in this area. It reviews current estate regeneration policy and practice in this country and, drawing on international research and domestic case studies, makes suggestions for improvement.

The discussion is organised into the following sections:

- Section 2 reviews the Irish and international research evidence regarding the factors that precipitate problems in social housing estates and the potential solutions to these problems.
- Section 3 examines estate regeneration policy and funding mechanisms.
- Section 4 focuses on estate regeneration practice. In this section three case studies of recent projects are examined: Moyross estate in Limerick City, Knocknaheeny in Cork and Fatima Mansions in Dublin. The key issues arising from these projects are highlighted.
- Section 5 summarises issues arising from the preceding discussion and makes suggestions regarding the reform of estate regeneration policy and practice.







## The Research Evidence

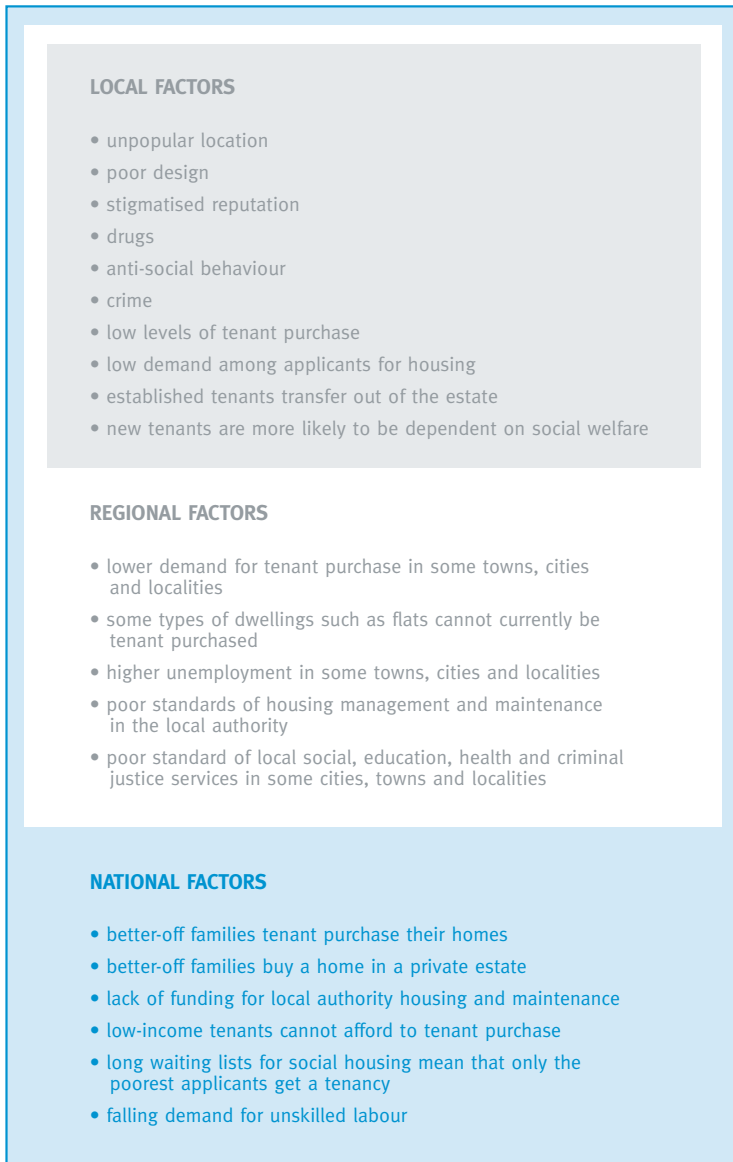
If estate regeneration is to be successful, an understanding and appreciation of why some estates decline is needed. There are a number of factors contributing to estate decline; four prominent themes (design, management, social and economic) are discussed in more depth below. This section also draws upon the literature and these four themes to suggest solutions to estate decline.

### 2.1 Causes of Estate Decline

Research evidence regarding the factors which contribute to problems on local authority estates shows that these reasons are numerous and multi-layered – as summarised in Figure 1. Estate decline can be related to national policies, regional developments or the characteristics of the estate itself.

Four themes are particularly prominent in the research on estate decline. These are: the design of dwellings and estates, housing management standards, social aspects and economic factors. Each of these four factors is examined in turn.

**Figure 1** Factors which Contribute to Local Authority Estate Decline



## Design factors

Research on the built environment (for instance: Newman 1972, Coleman 1990) indicates that the following aspects of estate and dwelling design are most likely to create problems:

- High-rise dwellings. These are generally unpopular with tenants, particularly families with young children.
- Very large estates. These impede the development of a sense of community. Residents are therefore less likely to feel a sense of 'ownership' over the estate. They are less likely, for example, to challenge anti-social behaviour should it occur.
- Apartment complexes where a large number of dwellings use a single entrance. These require the use of overhead walkways or long internal corridors. Because they are protected from public view, such walkways and corridors are likely to be locations for crime.
- Large open spaces. These also impede the development of a sense of ownership. Residents are therefore unlikely to take responsibility for maintaining these areas.
- Entrances to dwellings and car parking spaces that are shielded from public view. These entrances, e.g. back doors that are accessible from laneways, facilitate robberies.

## Housing management factors

Anne Power, a British academic who has extensively researched housing issues and especially estate decline (1987, 1997), names inadequate housing management as a key contributor to the decline of social housing estates. Her research on British and Irish local authorities (1997) highlights several aspects of traditional management practice that have contributed to this decline. Firstly, she criticises staffing arrangements in local authorities. Staff are rarely specialists in housing management but work in several departments within the local authority over their careers. These arrangements lead to staff not having enough experience in housing management, which is often reinforced by inadequate training.

Secondly, she criticises the fragmentation of housing services across several departments, the centralisation of services in a head office, and the lack of estate-based services, which results in housing managers being unresponsive to the needs of tenants. Power is particularly critical of the centralisation of decisions regarding the letting of local authority rented dwellings. She argues that a centralised allocation system allows dwellings to remain vacant for longer periods, with an attendant risk of vandalism. She also notes that within such a system units are not necessarily allocated in accordance with the needs of the wider community.

Significantly, Power's views in relation to the fragmentation of housing management services and lack of estate-based services are echoed in the two reports produced by the Housing Management Group (1996, 1998) which was established by the DoEHLG to examine housing management standards in Irish local authorities. Other research in the Irish context, both with respect to housing management and wider public sector/local government management practices, also reflect Power's findings (Forde, 2004, Norris and O'Connell, 2003). However, it is important to recognise that Irish housing management practice has improved in recent years, on foot of the implementation of many of the Housing Management Group's recommendations (together with the impact of local government reform generally). For example tenant liaison officers have been appointed to work in specific estates. Nevertheless, current restrictions upon recruitment to, and numbers in, the public service hamper attempts to fill additional posts.

### **Social factors**

Social factors include stigma, anti-social behaviour, and the sale of social housing. Dean and Hastings (2000), conducting research on estates in the UK, emphasise the role that stigma plays in precipitating estate decline. Their research indicates that estates that suffer from a poor public image are more likely to require regeneration measures and are more difficult to regenerate. Attention to addressing negative image and stigma has played an important part in some regeneration projects in Ireland, for example in Ballymun in Dublin and in Moyross in Limerick (see [www.brl.ie](http://www.brl.ie); also Community Development Network Moyross Ltd., 2004).

Fahey's (ed.) (1999) study of six local authority rented estates in Ireland highlights the role of anti-social behaviour on the part of a few families in destabilising a community. Other research suggests that a number of demographic and related social factors, including for example the number of lone parents in an estate, or the age profile of an estate, can have an impact upon the stability of the area and estate decline (Lipton, 2003).

The role played by the sale of social housing in precipitating estate decline is also a prominent theme in the British research literature. This research concludes that tenants who buy their dwellings are generally wealthier than their counterparts who continue to rent. Sales are higher in popular estates. Therefore the less popular estates commonly remain in local authority ownership (Forrest and Murie, 1988). These estates are more difficult to let and more likely to suffer the types of problems that require the establishment of a regeneration scheme.

### **Economic factors**

Research on the economic drivers of local authority estate decline highlights a wide variety of influential factors. Some authors emphasise the negative impact of economic restructuring on traditional manual industry in developed countries. Local authority renting communities were often heavily dependent on unskilled or manual employment, and thus were adversely affected when these industries declined (United Kingdom, Department of the Environment, 1999).

Other research indicates that estates located in popular and higher-income neighbourhoods are most likely to thrive because residents have access to a wider range of commercial services and employment opportunities. In addition, social services in these areas, e.g. schools, are less likely to be strained by large numbers of low-income clients (Van Kempen and Musterd, 1991).

In conclusion, it is important to emphasise that although this summary of the research evidence on estate decline has highlighted the different themes in the literature, most relevant studies conclude that problem local authority estates are usually the result of the interaction of a number of these factors, rather than of a single issue (For instance: United Kingdom, Department of the Environment, 1999).

Solutions to estate decline are now examined.

## 2.2 Solutions to Estate Decline

The research on solutions to local authority estate decline emphasises that regeneration interventions should be tailor-made to address underlying causal factors. As mentioned above, the literature indicates that the causes of estate decline generally include a number of factors: design, housing management, social and economic. Effective solutions must be similarly orientated (Arthurson, 2001; McGregor *et al*, 2003).

### Design solutions

Built environment interventions can help to address problems with the built quality, design and standards of dwellings and the overall environment of estates. These can also help to address problems with the density of the estate, for example by providing in-fill housing on under-utilised open spaces within the estate, or if necessary demolishing dwellings. Such interventions can also resolve security problems by ensuring for instance that entrances to dwellings can be seen by neighbours; and minimising the amount of open public space by incorporating it into gardens (Coleman, 1990). Creating smaller public spaces that are overlooked can also help to address problems such as illegal dumping and anti-social behaviour.

Built environment interventions are perhaps more appropriately viewed as ‘estate refurbishment’, forming only one part of a broader ‘estate regeneration’ agenda. The distinction between a relatively narrow focus on ‘estate refurbishment’ as opposed to a more multi-faceted focus on ‘estate regeneration’ is important. Research evidence indicates that, on its own, estate refurbishment is rarely sufficient to regenerate estates suffering decline due to a number of multi-faceted factors. However, it is also true that refurbishment can significantly improve the quality of life of residents, and so it is a vital part of the majority of regeneration schemes. In addition, refurbishment can have social benefits such as improving the image of the estate, thereby addressing stigma (Arthurson, 2001).

### **Housing management solutions**

The following regeneration interventions to address housing management issues have been identified in the literature:

- appointing ‘estate-based staff’ who work from local offices and are more accessible to tenants
- introducing ‘estate-based management’ whereby all housing management services are administered on a regionalised rather than a local authority wide basis (Housing Management Group, 1996)
- putting in place programmes to address anti-social behaviour and help curtail high tenant turnover (Fahey (ed.), 1999)
- involving tenants in housing management to try to address poor relationships between local authorities and tenants
- consulting with tenants regarding the design and implementation of the project, to address possible tensions between different groups of tenants during the regeneration process (Power, 1997)
- promoting collaborative planning efforts with tenants in the design and implementation of projects
- implementing and improving cyclical and/or planned management and maintenance programmes, including prompt response to repair requests.

## Social solutions

Of all the categories of potential interventions, social interventions are perhaps the most complex to design and implement. However, evidence suggests that these are particularly crucial for the long-term success of estate regeneration projects. Social interventions can encompass efforts to address a variety of issues, for example:

- local issues such as tenants' decision-making roles in the project
- the provision of community or social infrastructure
- neighbourhood stigma
- the integration of the target estate with surrounding areas
- broader concerns such as social exclusion and concentrations of multiple disadvantage.

Examples of social interventions include:

- conducting an audit of the social infrastructure
- providing appropriate community infrastructure
- facilitating active working partnerships with tenants through tenants associations
- providing mixed tenure and different dwelling types in order to promote a variety of household types and income levels
- promoting networks and linkages with the wider community
- working with local media to generate a positive image of the target estate.



## **Economic solutions**

Economic interventions range from efforts to address unemployment to tackling educational disadvantage. Unemployment can be addressed through, for example, local labour clauses when refurbishment and/or new build is undertaken, providing apprenticeships, or providing premises and/or funding for small business and social economy projects. These interventions can also take advantage of existing job initiative schemes, e.g. utilising childcare training schemes to create local childcare staff for local crèches provided through the regeneration project. Educational disadvantage, for example, can be tackled by involving schools in the regeneration project, establishing homework clubs, or promoting back-to-education schemes (McGregor and McConnachie, 1995).

Economic interventions may also incorporate efforts to involve local businesses in the regeneration project and establish new community enterprises to implement aspects of the regeneration project, e.g. by setting up an enterprise employing residents of the estate for day-to-day grounds keeping and litter control (McGregor *et al*, 2003).

# SECTION THREE



## **Policy and Funding**

This section of the paper examines policy and funding issues. It also examines the implications of the lack of an explicit policy statement on estate regeneration and the diffused nature of funding in this area in Ireland.

### 3.1 Current Policy and Funding Arrangements

To date in Ireland no national policy statement in relation to local authority housing estate regeneration has been published in this country. This contrasts with the situation in many other Western European countries such as England (for instance, Social Exclusion Unit, 2002) and the Netherlands (for instance, Netherlands, Ministry of Housing, Spatial, Planning and the Environment, 2000). In these countries an explicit social housing estate regeneration policy has been articulated, usually as part of a broader policy statement on developing and renewing urban areas.

In Ireland the *Building Sustainable Communities* framework announced by the DoHELG in December 2005 may provide an explicit policy directive for social housing estate regeneration to date in Ireland. However, at the time of publication of this paper more detail on the framework, which might contain explicit policy statements, has not yet been published.

As detailed in Table 1, a wide range of schemes to fund estate regeneration measures has been established by central government departments and agencies in Ireland. These include tapping into funds available for community development and social inclusion initiatives, and those targeted at specific groups (for example young people or Travellers). The DoEHLG also finances estate regeneration, but many of its funding schemes, such as the Remedial Works Scheme and the Traveller Accommodation Programme, are geared towards refurbishing the built environment. While the DoEHLG also funds the Housing Management Initiative Grants Scheme for innovative or new housing management projects, and while there are other funds for local authorities to address housing management issues, evidence suggests these are under-utilised. Furthermore, these funds may still not address social and economic factors in estate decline.

As well as central government funding, local authorities can also draw on their own resources to finance estate regeneration projects. The management and maintenance of local authority housing is funded principally from rents and other charges to tenants. This money could potentially be employed to finance housing management, social and economic interventions and built environment improvements as part of a regeneration project. This is the ideal scenario.

However, in practice, revenue funding is often insufficient to meet the level of expenditure required for day-to-day management and maintenance costs, never mind funding broader regeneration projects. This has implications for its effect on the requirement for estate regeneration in the first place, where insufficient or poorly resourced management and maintenance programmes may lead to the need for regeneration. It also has implications for the sustained success of regeneration projects, which require ongoing programmes of cyclical or planned management and maintenance.

**Table 1** Sources of Central Government Funding for Estate Regeneration Projects

Responsible Agency		
Many different implementing bodies but see National Development Plan/ Community Support Framework Office for information on accessing EU structural funds		
Details of Funding Scheme		
Name	Status	Focus
<b>European Regional Development Funds and European Social Funds:</b> various programmes under numerous operational programmes (e.g. Economic and Social Infrastructure, Employment and Human Resource) and Community Initiatives (e.g. LEADER, EQUAL, URBAN)	Ongoing	A range of funding programmes intended to e.g. promote urban and rural development, tackle social inclusion/exclusion, increase employment opportunities, etc. particularly in disadvantaged communities/neighbourhoods. Also intended to help generate balanced regional development

Responsible Agency		
Pobal (formerly Area Development Management Ltd)		
Details of Funding Scheme		
Name	Status	Focus
<b>Local Development and Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP)</b>	Funding allocated and projects in progress	Services for the unemployed, community development projects and community-based youth initiatives
<b>Ceantair Laga Árd-Riachtanais (CLÁR)</b>	Ongoing	Parts of counties Cavan, Clare, Cork, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Limerick, Longford, Louth, Mayo, Meath, Monaghan, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, Waterford, Westmeath and all of Leitrim
<b>Dormant Accounts Fund</b>	Applications for the first round of funding are now closed	Programmes or projects designed to assist the personal, educational and social development of persons who are economically, educationally or socially disadvantaged, or persons with a disability
<b>Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development (RAPID)</b>	Ongoing	Targets the 45 most disadvantaged large urban centres and provincial towns

Type of funding	Eligible Organisations
Intended to complement public expenditure funds of member states and usually accessed by specific projects and/or organisations through different managing authorities/ implementing bodies within the context of the National Development Plan and Community Support Framework	Local authorities, community and voluntary groups, social partners and NGOs

Type of funding	Eligible Organisations
Dedicated funding goes to local partnerships, community groups and employment pacts which provide eligible services	Community and voluntary groups
Frontloading of investment under the National Development Plan in the target localities	Local authorities and community and voluntary groups
Capital and revenue funding	Community and voluntary groups
Grant aid for the improvement of the physical, community and social infrastructure which may require co-funding and must be spent in the target localities	Government Departments, State Agencies and Local Authorities

**Table 1** Sources of Central Government Funding for Estate Regeneration Projects  
(continued)

Responsible Agency <b>Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, Voluntary and community services section</b>		
Details of Funding Scheme		
Name	Status	Focus
<b>National Anti-Poverty (Inclusion) Plan, Community Development Programme</b>	Ongoing	Specific, very small-scale funding primarily to cover physical costs, e.g. security measures, room rental, etc. aimed at enhancing community capacity. Also incorporates Community Supports for Older People (CSOP). This is primarily for physical security measures on older people's homes
<b>National Anti-Poverty (Inclusion) Plan Programme of Core Funding for Community and Family Support Groups</b>	Ongoing	Funds smaller scale self-help work amongst specific target groups
<b>Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSF)</b>	Open to enquiries regarding new projects	Employs National Development Plan funding for the development of youth facilities, including sport and recreational facilities, and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop

Responsible Agency <b>Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform</b>		
Details of Funding Scheme		
Name	Status	Focus
<b>Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme</b>	Ongoing	To improve the quality of childcare; maintain and increase the number of childcare facilities and places; and introduce a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of childcare services



Type of funding	Eligible Organisations
<p>The following grants schemes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Scheme of equipment and refurbishment grants;</li> <li>2) Scheme of education, training and research grants and</li> <li>3) Scheme of community supports for older people</li> </ol>	Community and voluntary groups
Capital and revenue	Community and voluntary groups
Capital assistance for projects submitted to the National Assessment Committee and thence to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion	Voluntary agencies in the 14 Local Drug Task Force areas and 4 other urban areas and the Springboard initiative under the Department of Education and Science

Type of funding	Eligible Organisations
Three sub-measures giving capital grant assistance/schemes; a staffing grant assistance; and grants towards quality improvement, which incorporate a range of funding for childcare committees, innovative projects, etc.	Community/not-for-profit organisations; Self-employed childcare providers; Private childcare providers

**Table 1** Sources of Central Government Funding for Estate Regeneration Projects  
(continued)

Responsible Agency <b>Department of Education and Science, Youth Affairs Section</b>		
<b>Details of Funding Scheme</b>		
Name	Status	Focus
<b>Department of Education and Science Projects for Disadvantaged Youth</b>	Ongoing	Funds out-of-school projects for disadvantaged young people. Aimed at facilitating the personal development and social education of at-risk young people
<b>Local Youth Club Grant Scheme</b>	Ongoing	Provides 1) grants to aid the ongoing costs of youth clubs and groups; 2) once-off grants to aid special youth work initiatives, particularly those aimed at disadvantaged young people
<b>Youth Service Grant Scheme</b>	Ongoing	Funds voluntary youth organisations to ensure the emergence, promotion, growth and development of youth organisations with distinctive philosophies, and programmes aimed at the social education of young people

Type of funding	Eligible Organisations
Once-off grants	Community and voluntary groups
1) Grants for ongoing costs 2) Once-off grants	Community and voluntary groups
Annual funding	National and major regional voluntary youth organisations

**Table 1** Sources of Central Government Funding for Estate Regeneration Projects  
(continued)

Responsible Agency <b>Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government</b>		
<b>Details of Funding Scheme</b>		
Name	Status	Focus
<b>Area Regeneration Programme</b>	The original fund is now finished so proposals are examined on an individual basis	Once-off upgrading of flats complexes, including: replacement of windows, installation of central heating, repairs to roofs and precinct improvements
<b>Inner City Flats Programme</b>	Ongoing	A mix of demolition, new build and refurbishment of inner-city flats
<b>Housing Management Initiative Grants Scheme</b>	Ongoing	Assist local authorities and voluntary or other appropriate organisations to undertake new projects in the area of housing management
<b>Regeneration Programme</b>	Ongoing	Mix of demolition, new build and refurbishment alongside works to improve the social environment such as the provision of childcare and community facilities. Also includes works to eliminate anti-social behaviour such as closing off back alleys and creating new road layouts
<b>Central Heating Programme</b>	Ongoing to 2008	Installation of central heating in local authority rented dwellings, that lack such facilities
<b>Remedial Works Scheme</b>	Ongoing	Principally refurbishment of dwellings and public space in estates. Also provides some funding for estate management and tenant participation
<b>Traveller Accommodation Programme</b>	Ongoing	Refurbishment of halting sites and group housing schemes for Travellers and management and maintenance of halting sites

	<b>Eligible Organisations</b>
Type of funding	
Grant aid for capital costs	Dublin City Council
Grant aid for capital costs	Local authorities, voluntary and co-operative social housing providers and other housing bodies
Grant aid for capital and revenue costs	Local authorities
Capital grant aid	Local authorities
Grant aid for capital costs. Co-funding by local authorities is also required	Local authorities
Grant aid principally for capital costs. Co-funding by local authorities is also required	Local authorities
Capital funding for both halting sites and group housing schemes, revenue funding for halting sites	Local authorities

Another potential source of funding for local community initiatives is provided for under Section 109 of the Local Government Act, 2001. This Act empowers local authorities to establish a community fund to support local community initiatives. The community fund is open to receive funding from a variety of sources, including: the local authority itself, other local authorities, voluntary or community groups, business organisations and individuals. It can be used for capital and revenue expenditure. It can therefore help support built environment, management, social or economic interventions planned as part of the estate regeneration project.

Local authorities can also accumulate capital finance for housing projects from three sources:

- the proceeds of sales of local authority dwellings
- the ‘cash compensation’ provided by developers in order to meet their social and affordable housing obligations under the terms of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended (DoEHLG, 2003)
- the proceeds of planning levies.

These monies could be drawn upon to fund the refurbishment aspects of regeneration schemes but local authorities are specifically proscribed from spending these funds on revenue expenses. However, the Department has given approval for the use of surplus internal capital receipts with respect to specific planned maintenance programmes.

## 3.2 Issues Arising

The available evidence indicates that a number of aspects of current estate regeneration policy and funding arrangements are impediments to achieving good practice in this area.

For instance, the lack of an explicit, cohesive policy on estate regeneration creates a number of problems. Current guidance on estate regeneration and/or refurbishment is largely limited to the terms of funding schemes, i.e. after the decision has been made to establish a regeneration project. As such there is little detailed guidance for local authority managers who are responsible for establishing estate regeneration projects. They lack information on why and when projects should be initiated, how to identify the reasons for estate decline and how to decide what types of interventions are appropriate for inclusion in such projects.

Problems are also created by the centralised nature of state regeneration funding schemes, the terms of central government finance arrangements and difficulties with the allocation of local authorities' own resources. Like most local government services, the majority of funding for estate regeneration projects emanates from central government and, as Table 1 reveals, this funding is channelled through eighteen separate schemes administered by five different government departments and agencies. The multiplicity of funding schemes makes it difficult to establish the kind of multi-dimensional regeneration projects that the research evidence indicates are usually required for successful regeneration.

The terms of central government finance arrangements pose two problems. First, local authorities have direct access to only a limited number of funds. Second, these funds tend to support primarily built environment interventions. Table 1 shows that many potential funding schemes only fund very specific types of interventions. As such, the funding that local authorities are able to directly access may not necessarily be sufficient to address the precise needs of a particular estate. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that local authorities employ built environment interventions more often than necessary in regeneration projects (Norris, 2001). The large proportion of the local authority housing

stock that has been refurbished under the auspices of the Remedial Works Scheme supports this view. A total of 13,576 dwellings was refurbished under the scheme between its establishment in 1985 and the end of 2004. This constitutes 12 per cent of the total stock in the latter year.

The type and limitations of funding directly available to local authorities can be particularly problematic when generating interventions relevant to the social and economic aspects of regeneration. These problems can be overcome by establishing strong working partnerships with other agencies. Such arrangements have several important advantages, particularly in relation to drawing in additional expertise, and in the case of many estates they are intrinsic to achieving successful regeneration. However, they are also time-consuming to establish and complex to manage (MacDonald, 2003). This may create disincentives to engage with a particular scheme. The local authority may therefore concentrate instead on applying for funding to the schemes that are open to direct applications, even if these are not the most relevant to address the regeneration needs of a particular area or estate. Again, this will impact upon prospects for the long-term success of the project.

Funding regeneration project interventions (particularly social and economic interventions) through local authorities' own resources is also problematic. Caveats attached to revenue funds can impede the allocation of such funds for regeneration. Thus while the combination of revenue from sales of dwellings to tenants and cash compensation under the terms of Part V of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) provides local authorities with a relatively large amount of money, DoEHLG rules stipulate that with the exception of some planned maintenance programmes these revenue funds cannot be spent on social housing construction and refurbishment.

Furthermore, revenue from rents and other charges to tenants is currently inadequate to cover day-to-day estate management and maintenance costs. In 2003 (the latest year for which data are available) income from these sources covered only three-quarters (77.3 per cent) of management and maintenance expenditure (Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, various years). This suggests that these revenue funds are



insufficient for funding any regeneration interventions. Finally, there are other funds such as the community fund or the Housing Management Initiative (HMI) Grants Scheme for local authorities to use for at least some social, economic and/or management regeneration interventions. However, evidence suggests that these are underutilised and/or are problematic for implementing in conjunction with specific regeneration projects. The process for applying for a HMI grant, for instance, can be time-consuming and it seems that relatively few local authorities have used this resource in tandem with establishing some kind of regeneration project (Conway, 2000). To date only a handful of authorities have established community funds as legislated for in the Local Government Act, 2001.

Apart from approval for internal capital receipts for some planned maintenance programmes, then, overall opportunities to redirect some of the local authorities' revenue funding to regeneration projects are limited. Indeed, the extent of Remedial Works Scheme (RWS) funded refurbishment, highlighted above, indicates that this source of finance is on occasions employed to make up for the shortfall in revenue income and to fund works which should normally be carried out as part of standard planned maintenance and upgrading (Norris, 2001). The RWS was established initially to fund the refurbishment of dwellings dating from prior to 1940 and low-cost dwellings built in the 1960s. The extent of the works carried out to date under its auspices, however, indicates that it has been applied more widely.

The predominant use of the RWS to achieve estate regeneration, together with funding difficulties, also has indirect consequences for other aspects of regeneration project design and implementation. For example, there are questions about how to deal with tenant-purchased or private dwellings on a target estate, and how to include owners of these dwellings in a regeneration project, given that the RWS deals for the most part with local authority housing and that there is a lack of overall policy direction on estate regeneration. Funding constraints may lead local authorities to consider contracting outside consultants to carry out a regeneration project, but the consultants may lack the expertise or resources to properly design, manage and implement the necessary oversights to ensure that the project meets target aims and objectives. Both of these questions are outside of the scope of the current policy review

paper; indeed, entire reports could be dedicated to the intricacies of project design, implementation and management. Thus, shortcomings in relation to policy and funding arrangements may have inspired the premature initiation of comprehensive regeneration projects in some estates, where addressing estate decline would have been better achieved through, for example, cyclical management and maintenance or estate management programmes. Built environment interventions seem to be employed more often than necessary and may represent the easiest path to achieving some kind of regeneration/refurbishment effort, even when such interventions do not entirely address reasons for estate decline. Evidence suggests that this trend is continuing even though subsequent guidelines on the RWS (in particular) and initiatives such as the Housing Management Initiative have stressed the need for estate management programmes to be initiated as part of the regeneration project. Moreover, estate management programmes will still not directly address some social and economic interventions, e.g. tackling educational disadvantage or providing employment opportunities. As noted, attention to estate refurbishment may be enough to comprehensively regenerate the target estate, but research shows that in most cases a more multi-faceted approach is necessary for the prospects of long-term, successful and sustainable regeneration of the target estate.



## SECTION FOUR



## Practice

This section of the paper focuses on the practical experience of undertaking estate regeneration projects. Three regeneration case studies are used to highlight variations in approach. The strengths and weaknesses of these approaches are then outlined, based on the experience of the three case studies.

### 4.1 Potential Approaches to Project Implementation

The development of a regeneration plan and securing funding are the first two steps in any project. Project implementation then follows. In Ireland, to date, funding has tended to dictate the implementation strategies employed in this area.

Projects funded primarily by grants secured by local authorities, such as from the Remedial Works Scheme, are usually managed directly by the authority in question. However, for larger projects such as Ballymun in north Dublin, a dedicated agency is often established by the local authority for project management (see: Ballymun Regeneration Ltd, 1998a, 1998b). Where projects are funded by multiple sources, a multi-agency partnership is often established, with the local authority working in close partnership

with community groups, statutory bodies and other stakeholders. Furthermore, in recent years several estate regeneration projects have secured finance from the private sector, e.g. by means of public-private partnership (PPP), rather than from traditional governmental sources.

## 4.2 Case Studies of Estate Regeneration in Practice

Three case studies of recent estate regeneration are now examined:

- Knocknaheeny in Cork
- Moyross estate in Limerick City
- Fatima Mansions in Dublin.

These case studies were selected because they have been established in different parts of the country, they utilise a range of sources of funding and they are examples of each of the three most common estate regeneration implementation strategies, respectively: the local authority led approach, multi-agency partnerships and public-private partnerships (PPPs).

These three projects were also chosen on the grounds of their scale. They are small-to medium-scale projects. Most of the estate regeneration and/or refurbishment projects undertaken in Ireland are similar in size. Thus the issues arising from these case studies are broadly applicable to the majority of projects in Ireland.

The information on the case studies presented below was gleaned from a combination of research on the estates in question, regeneration plans, and in-depth interviews with the key actors involved in devising, implementing and managing these regeneration projects.

## **Knocknaheeny, Cork City – Local Authority Led Regeneration**

Knocknaheeny is a local authority housing estate built in the 1970s and located in what was previously agricultural land on the north-west fringe of Cork city. The estate has a number of infrastructural or design weaknesses. It has few community facilities, the built quality of both dwellings and surrounding environs is poor, and there is no centre to the area. While relatively close to the city centre, both its location (on a steep hill overlooking the city) and its poor public transport and roads infrastructure isolate it from the rest of city and to some extent from surrounding neighbourhoods. Outsider perceptions of the area are negative.

The estate also has social and economic challenges. The age profile of the estate is young. In 2000, over half of the total population of approximately 3,000 residents was under 20 years old. The estate has a high level of lone-parent households (46 per cent). The area is characterised by multiple disadvantage, with some 70 per cent of the population dependent on social welfare, high unemployment (officially, 83 per cent, but this does not reflect the heavy reliance on non-mainstream labour market activities such as the community employment schemes) and low educational attainment.

Despite these difficulties, the area is relatively stable (over half of the residents have been in the area for more than 10 years), there is a strong sense of community spirit, and there are a number of community and other support groups in the area (Cork City Council, 2000).

In 1997 Cork City Council decided to undertake a refurbishment of local authority housing blocks A through K in the Knocknaheeny area. However, in light of other problems facing the area, that initial project was quickly expanded to include a much more ambitious regeneration programme for Knocknaheeny.

On the basis of this decision a Master Plan was commissioned, which was developed in three phases:

- (a) a survey, giving an overview of the existing situation
- (b) an analysis of why that situation has developed
- (c) a set of proposals which generated a number of different potential scenarios for how, why and in what way the regeneration of the area could proceed.

An extensive consultation process then began, to further shape and select a proposal that would serve as the basis for the Master Plan. This process incorporated a broad range of views, from residents to statutory bodies.

The consultation process resulted in the decision to develop a polycentric ‘town centre’ model to include Knocknaheeny, but also incorporating the wider locality taking in the adjacent neighbourhood of Hollyhill to the west, part of Churchfield to the east and a hospital site with extensive grounds to the south-east. The proposed regeneration project would accommodate a population of about 8,000 people. The decision to expand the focus of the regeneration scheme was reached on the basis that a larger population would be necessary to support and sustain the new services to be provided as part of the regeneration.

This town centre model envisages a new town/neighbourhood centre with appropriate facilities, e.g. shops, a church, a neighbourhood town hall, community, health and educational facilities, etc., and a number of smaller, localised centres or ‘village greens’. It proposes to change existing land use and development densities by means of new roads and transport infrastructures, landscaping and an improved mixture of tenure and housing types in order to both sustain these centres and reintegrate the area into the wider urban fabric of Cork city.

On the basis of this model a Master Plan strategy was drawn up. It cited specific planned interventions in the areas of housing; infrastructure and roads; education, health and social welfare and community facilities; leisure and sports facilities; and plans for improving employment prospects in the area. Furthermore, the Master Plan suggested an implementation framework with costs and cash flow projections, proposed management structures and a programme for phasing and completing cited interventions. Other regeneration projects such as Ballymun and Temple Bar served as models for this implementation framework.

The Master Plan for Knocknaheeny states that the plan is like a ‘hat stand’ that serves as a structure for the regeneration of the neighbourhood. The day-to-day management and implementation of the plan is carried out by local authority officials and overseen by a local organisation with representatives from the statutory



bodies, councillors and elected residents. The project began in 2000 and is expected to take seven years to complete (Cork City Council, 2000).

### **Moyross, Limerick City – Multi-Agency Regeneration**

Moyross is a local authority housing estate of approximately 1,160 houses on the northern fringe of Limerick City. It is divided into 12 parks, built between 1973 and 1987. The initial built quality of most of the dwellings was good, but the area suffered from poor infrastructure and a surplus of functionless green areas. One area of the estate, Glenagross (which contains four parks), was isolated from the rest of Moyross by a railway line, with most of the social and community services on the other side of that railway.

In the mid-1980s, a small number of tenants in that area engaged in anti-social behaviour and this led to the abandonment of some adjacent houses. The abandonment of these houses in turn eventually led to the dereliction of some 80 recently constructed houses in Glenagross. This contributed to negative perceptions of, and a low demand for, housing in Moyross. These problems were further exacerbated by the effect of the surrender grant in the mid-1980s and by pre-existing factors such as a high rate of tenants suffering multiple disadvantages, and poor infrastructure (Fahey (ed.), 1999).

Moyross was the subject of a Remedial Works Scheme in the mid-1990s. Both the interiors and exteriors of abandoned and derelict houses were refurbished as part of this scheme. In 1992 a community enterprise centre and a playground were provided for the general Moyross area. Perhaps the most significant factor in what is generally considered the ongoing successful regeneration of Moyross is the commitment in 1996 of Limerick City Council to appoint a community liaison officer to the area. The role of this officer is to facilitate the formation of residents' groups, promote cooperation between the Council and residents, and in general foster a sense of belonging to, and pride in, Moyross. This officer is based in the City Council offices but makes frequent visits to Moyross and other estates in the area.

The commitment to localised estate management has coincided with the formation of the Moyross Residents' Forum, building upon earlier community activism to promote and actively pursue a multi-agency, partnership approach for addressing a wide range of physical and social problems on the estate.

As part of their ongoing commitment to estate management in Moyross, Limerick City Council also funds a development worker to support the Moyross Residents' Forum. This worker acts as an on-the-ground contact for, and point of connection between, local residents, the Residents' Forum, and the community liaison officer, and is based directly in the estate. The development worker's duties include facilitating residents' groups, building local networks and carrying out administrative tasks. Limerick City Council also covers rent and insurance of community premises, audits of accounts and training for residents' groups (€24,000 was allocated to these ends in 2005).

To date the Forum has contributed indirectly or directly to a range of environmental improvements in Moyross, including the installation of closed circuit television (CCTV); traffic calming measures; improved public lighting; recycling facilities; and the establishment of an Environment Group, which employs local residents to maintain greens. The Moyross Residents' Forum has contributed to an improved sense of trust between local authorities and tenants in the area; a strong sense of ownership for many residents, especially through the residents' associations; and active local involvement in the upkeep of Moyross.

The Forum also helped to establish links with a number of city-wide and national bodies, including area partnerships in Limerick, the transport authorities and local schools. It also plans to establish a media group to promote a positive image of Moyross.

The individuals interviewed for this discussion paper all concluded that the refurbishment of Glenagross, together with the work of Limerick County Council in close working partnership with the Moyross Residents' Forum, has had considerable success in tackling both the social and physical problems of the estate. However, problems still remain. There are ongoing social problems, outsider perceptions of Moyross are still quite negative and there is still a low demand for housing in the area, despite the high built quality

standards of refurbished dwellings. Recent media coverage of the area has also highlighted both the sense of community spirit and these on-going difficulties. Therefore, the on-going commitment and active involvement of public officials, residents, community groups and organisations and others in continuing to address problems and overcome obstacles illustrates that even successful regeneration projects require ongoing efforts to sustain the improvements achieved.

### **Fatima Mansions, Dublin – Public-Private Partnership Regeneration**

Fatima Mansions is a local authority flats complex, originally consisting of 350 dwellings in 14 four-storey blocks located adjacent to Dublin city centre. These flats were built between 1949 and 1951 using conventional building techniques, with a reasonably good built quality standard and relatively spacious accommodation for the time. However, the design layout of the blocks – such as access to flats via enclosed stairways and open deck areas – created considerable public space that was difficult to police. Moreover, the internal orientation of the blocks created a physical barrier to the integration of Fatima Mansions with the wider surrounding Rialto neighbourhood.

The original residents of Fatima Mansions were moved there as part of inner-city slum clearances in the early 1950s. At that time Fatima was generally seen as a substantial improvement in dwelling standards and in quality of life, and this contributed to a strong sense of community spirit (and ownership) in the area (Fahey (ed.), 1999). However, things began to change in the mid-1970s due to a confluence of negative factors, including:

- the closure or relocation of inner-city industry
- the removal of local authority caretaking to monitor activities on the estate
- the effects of the tenant purchase scheme and the surrender grant which offered a subsidy to tenants who bought a private sector dwelling and encouraged many of those who were most active in the community to move away
- the demolition of other inner-city flats complexes with less stable populations, which contributed to an influx of less able, more disadvantaged tenants into the estate (Norris, 2001).

By the early 1980s the area had become a haven for vandalism, joy-riding and most especially the dealing and use of hard drugs (Corcoran, 1988). Research conducted at this time found that three-quarters of residents wanted to move out (Beggan, 1981).

During the 1980s considerable community activism was mobilised to address the problems of the estate. One of the main aims of this activism was to improve the quality of life for residents, particularly through addressing concerns with the built environment. In large part because of such activism the estate was targeted as one of the first refurbishment projects under the Remedial Works Scheme in 1988/89, costing at the time a total of £5 million or £13,500 per dwelling.

The project included improvements to dwellings, built environment interventions (e.g. sealing off some of the multiple entrances to the estate), and the entire demolition of one block of flats where the majority of drug dealers lived. Consultation was also carried out with residents regarding the planned refurbishment. This was a relatively enlightened approach by the standards of housing management at the time (Norris, 2001).

Despite the costs of and efforts at refurbishment, most residents and many Dublin City Council officials agree that on balance the project was a failure (Norris, 2001). The refurbishment did nothing to tackle the social and economic problems of the estate or to improve other aspects of residents' quality of life in the long-term. In fact the failure of the project has coincided with a decrease in community activism and for many a feeling that the entire estate should be demolished and rebuilt.

A local community coalition, Fatima Groups United, was formed in 1995 in response to the persistent social problems facing the estate. In 2000 this coalition published a plan for the regeneration of the area (Fatima Community Regeneration Team, 2000). After further consultation with residents and others their ideas were brought to fruition through a proposed Master Plan for the regeneration of the area by Dublin Corporation in 2001 (Dublin Corporation, 2001).

This project entails the demolition of all remaining blocks and the construction of high-quality housing, with a mix of different designs

and types and, where possible, own-door access and individual garden spaces. A range of community premises will also be provided. The plan outlines a range of interventions to tackle social problems, diversify tenure, improve employment and enterprise opportunities and address poor design and open space issues (including providing new access routes into and out of the area and new parks/green spaces and playgrounds).

Construction commenced on the first phase of the project in August 2004 and was completed in April 2006. Planning permission for a second phase of the development was granted in March 2006 and the expected date for completion of that phase is December 2008.

The project is funded through a public-private partnership (PPP). Under the deal, a private developer will demolish the existing social housing and rebuild replacement social and affordable housing and community facilities on part of the site in return for constructing private housing and retail facilities on the rest. Project management is overseen by a dedicated project manager (an official of Dublin City Council) and four full-time support staff, based in a project office within Fatima Mansions. There is also a Regeneration Board, established in 2001 to take over the work of the Fatima Task Force that was part of Fatima Groups United, and which was incorporated as a limited guaranteed company in 2005. As such it now has legal responsibilities for overseeing the work of the regeneration project and has also appointed an independent Chair.

The Regeneration Board is made up of local authority officials, members of Fatima Groups United (FGU), residents of Fatima Mansions and of Rialto, and other public officials. FGU continues its active role in supporting community development, providing a forum for residents' views to feed into the Regeneration Board, and facilitating other community and advisory structures to ensure that the regeneration project is responding to residents' needs and concerns. As part of this work FGU has recently published a guide document for other community organisations whose neighbourhoods and/or estates are targeted for, or require, regeneration (Donohue, *et al*, 2006).

A commitment to the social and economic aspects of regeneration was an inherent part of the FGU's original proposal for the regeneration of Fatima Mansions, as outlined in *Eleven Acres, Ten*

Steps (2000). Dublin City Council's subsequent Masterplan (2001) also incorporated these aspects, e.g. in provisions for community facilities. In 2005 these long-standing concerns were incorporated into a formal social regeneration plan, Eight Great Expectations (Whyte, 2005), detailing 37 actions for social regeneration under eight headings. Examples of these actions include:

- to build a safe and sustainable community
- to address educational disadvantage
- to promote health and well-being
- to create new employment opportunities
- to promote arts and culture.

The social regeneration plan covers the period from 2005 to 2008, to run in conjunction with the physical regeneration masterplan for the area.

To date the project is progressing on schedule, and the PPP approach used to finance the regeneration is considered by many of the local authority officials interviewed for this discussion paper to be a good model for future regeneration projects. There are ongoing concerns, however, about the full realisation of the social regeneration programme for the area. Some residents and other actors are concerned that market concerns, which are an inherent part of the PPP approach, may dominate the project to the detriment of other aspects of the plan. There are also questions about the proposed mix of housing tenures/types in the area, and who would be eligible for housing in the regenerated estate. Specifically, some residents and community workers felt that there was too great an emphasis on private housing as part of the rebuilding of Fatima Mansions, at the expense of social and affordable housing. They also felt that what social housing was being provided, was segregated away from the rest of the redeveloped neighbourhood, and that the 'affordable' housing would still prove to be unaffordable for many current residents.

However, these last two concerns appear to have mitigated somewhat. Advice from the Fatima Groups United advisory team demonstrated the high quality and good location of social housing

units being provided in the first phase of the project. Residents were also offered 'super affordable' housing in the first phase of the regeneration project, which has generated considerable interest in and uptake of these types of schemes (Donohue *et al*, 2006).

The formal social regeneration plan, 8 Great Expectations (Whyte, 2005) was launched after the fieldwork phase of the research described in this paper. However, it appears to be an overall response to expressed concerns about the mix of social and physical regeneration, particularly in light of the potentially market-dominated PPP approach. Taken together, the masterplan and the formal social regeneration plan appear to provide a framework for ensuring that both the social and the physical regeneration of Fatima Mansions proceed according to residents' needs and concerns. Broadly speaking, therefore, there appears to be a high commitment to the project on the part of both Dublin City Council and residents, and a general sense that this project can offer a means of creating lasting success for the regeneration of Fatima Mansions.

### **4.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Case Studies**

The case studies set out above raise a number of issues related to the different approaches, interventions, funding mechanisms and project management and delivery structures each employ in order to regenerate the target estates. In relation to these issues, each case study project has particular strengths and weaknesses. These are now discussed and are also summarised in Table 2.

#### **Strengths**

In relation to the Knocknaheeny project, by devising a Master Plan through three phases (survey, analysis and set of proposals), there was a clear identification and analysis of the historical and current problems facing the estate, which provided a strong evidential basis for designing different proposals for regeneration. After extensive consultation a single proposal was decided upon, from

which a clear set of interventions flow that will address three of the four potential categories of interventions outlined in Section 2.2 above (physical, economic, social). Furthermore, there is some recognition of the fourth category of potential interventions – management interventions – through the provision of premises for local housing management staff and a neighbourhood town hall in the area.

The master planning process also led to the re-definition of the target area for regeneration, expanding from just Knocknaheeny estate to a wider area in order to promote sustainable density and hence ensure greater possibilities for successful regeneration. The Master Plan approach in Knocknaheeny is a robust framework to support both the strategic and day-to-day management and implementation of the project. It also provides a detailed breakdown of costs and budgets required.

The multi-agency approach undertaken in Moyross also has many strengths. First, this approach developed incrementally over time. Such an emergent process has allowed for a great deal of flexibility and responsiveness, building relationships, networks and skills over time to the point where many within the area feel that these are now self-sustaining. The degree of interactions and connections both inside and outside Moyross, focused through Limerick City Council officials, the Moyross Residents' Forum as well as through the community premises of and activities based in the Moyross Community Enterprise Centre, also has positive outcomes. Firstly, it has meant that a broad range of interventions has been employed to address the multiplicity of problems in the area. Secondly, a number of different funding mechanisms can be tapped into. The multitude of networks and relationships also means that many projects and activities can be supported across different community groups, residents' associations, and other bodies, facilitating better co-ordinated and more effective outcomes.

The strengths of the Fatima Mansions regeneration project lie particularly with the advantages of the PPP approach as a mechanism for generating funding for the project and enabling its implementation. This mechanism has allowed for regeneration of the estate at no cost to the Exchequer and with the involvement of a single developer. As one developer will undertake the work, uniformity to the design of the refurbished scheme is more likely.



Additionally, problems of co-ordination, often associated with the development of large construction schemes in phases by a number of construction companies, are alleviated. Moreover, this source of funding is considerably more flexible than the central government sources, mentioned above.

In addition, the PPP approach provides a clear framework for the development and implementation of the project, allows to some extent for a 'fast-track' approach insofar as it actively seeks to attract developers to the site, and in conjunction with the Master Plan for the site provides for clear project management and delivery structures.

Community activism and awareness of historical failures of past regeneration attempts also contribute to a strong dedication on the part of Dublin City Council and local residents to ensure that the current project must avoid the problems of the past, and that everything possible should be done to ensure its success. The recent adoption of a formal social regeneration plan appears to provide a complementary framework to the physical regeneration masterplan, which taken together should provide a clear and comprehensive strategy for both the physical and social regeneration of Fatima Mansions.

### **Weaknesses**

In relation to potential problems associated with the Knocknaheeny regeneration project, devising the Master Plan for this estate is only the first step in the actual implementation of the regeneration project. Its implementation framework, costing schedule and suggested phases for completion of the project are succinctly laid out. However, the Master Plan does not specify how or what funding sources should be tapped into. The Plan is based on the assumption that Cork City Council will secure the requisite finance. This may not necessarily be a straightforward process, particularly for interventions that are not concerned with improving the built environment.

In addition, as it is implemented and progressed the project may have to adapt over time to issues and obstacles arising, or to unforeseen circumstances. It is difficult to build these issues into a Master Plan and as such there may be a question over its scope

for flexibility and responsiveness over time. The proposed length of time for completion of the project is another potential difficulty, particularly with regard to maintaining interest and participation in the project on the part of residents.

The multi-agency approach in Moyross has a number of potential difficulties. These relate to differentiating between the roles of the different partners, sustaining and mainstreaming initiatives, and developing an overall strategic framework to sustain the improvements made to the estate. There is no one 'project team' *per se*. Limerick City Council and the Moyross Residents' Forum do provide a focal point for activities. However, the multiplicity and diversity of interventions and initiatives makes it difficult to clearly delineate who has responsibility for what.

Furthermore, while co-ordination of activities is supported by the number of different networks and partnership arrangements within and without Moyross, many of these are dependent on individual efforts and contacts. Some interviewees argued that these networks and partnerships are becoming self-sustaining. Nevertheless, there still is a danger that the loss of, for instance, the community liaison officer or some other key actor(s) could have profound consequences for the sustained success and positive momentum for change within Moyross.

The long-term sustainability of progress is another issue in Moyross. One local community activist interviewed for this discussion paper complained that 'there are too many pilots, and not enough planes'. Many of the activities and initiatives in the estate are pilot projects, so they may not be sustainable over the long term unless they are supported by a proper strategic framework and/or are mainstreamed (McGregor *et al*, 2003). While Limerick City Council can facilitate such mainstreaming, it is unlikely that it will have sufficient resources or scope to act as the mainstreaming or single funding body, given the current variety of funding sources for these projects. Continual and sufficient funding is obviously crucial to ensuring that these activities are sustained.

Continuing to coordinate actions through collective bodies such as the Moyross Residents' Forum is also essential. Given that currently there are fairly well established structures for coordinating actions on the estate, it may now be opportune to generate a plan for future co-operation to sustaining the regeneration of the area.

The residents and other stakeholders involved in the regeneration project should be consulted in depth about the contents of such a plan, and be involved in collaborative efforts to create, design and implement any such plan.

The principal potential difficulties associated with the Fatima Mansions regeneration project relate to ‘getting the balance right’. Although the PPP approach has inherent advantages in terms of funding and in offering ways of progressing, there are also risks related to balancing developer and private market interests and community interests. Constant attention must be paid to the fact that a PPP is primarily a funding mechanism for a regeneration project. As such the project implementation, management and delivery structures within a PPP approach must be carefully thought out, to counterbalance financial concerns that can otherwise become the dominant driving force behind the regeneration of the estate. The nature of a PPP approach tends to favour the commercial and market aspects of a project over social and community aspects, on the basis that unless the market requirements are satisfied no aspects of the project can get off the ground.

This tendency may be reinforced by the fact that the private developers and architects who are actively involved in a project by virtue of the PPP approach may not be accustomed to working in partnership with local communities in the same way as local authorities. Allowing market interests to predominate and affect whether and which regeneration objectives are implemented can jeopardise the social sustainability of the project. Balancing these two sets of interests will require considerable attention, skill and dedication to the regeneration programme, something that Fatima Groups United stresses in its suggestions to other groups where the PPP approach for regeneration may be adopted (Donohue *et al*, 2006). However, the fact that a formal programme for social regeneration has recently been put in place in Fatima Mansions suggests an awareness of these potential difficulties (Whyte, 2005).

Another potential difficulty with the PPP is that arrangements for the procurement, tendering and implementation of these type of projects differ significantly from traditional methods of delivering estate regeneration. Therefore, the effective management of PPPs requires new skills from local authority officials, which in turn requires guidance and training.

**Table 2** Summary of the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Case Studies

Approach	Strengths
<p>MASTER PLAN <b>Knocknaheeny</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» strong evidential basis for designing different proposals from each of the three phases (survey, analysis, proposals)</li> <li>» re-definition of the target area for regeneration</li> <li>» supports strategic management and implementation</li> <li>» provides a detailed breakdown of costs and the budget</li> </ul>
<p>MULTI-AGENCY <b>Moyross</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» incremental development allows for better flexibility, responsiveness, building relationships and networks</li> <li>» increased funding options/sources</li> <li>» better project and activity coordination can be supported across different community groups and residents</li> </ul>
<p>PPP APPROACH <b>Fatima Mansions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» improved generation of funds</li> <li>» single developer creates design uniformity</li> <li>» alleviates problems of coordination</li> <li>» more flexible than central government sources for funding</li> <li>» 'fast track' approach: allows for formally (i.e. legally) delineated project management and delivery structures</li> </ul>

## Weaknesses

- » does not specify how or what funding sources should be used
  - » may not offer flexibility and responsiveness
  - » difficult to keep residents interested and involved until completion of the project
- 
- » difficulties in differentiating between the roles of the different partners
  - » the danger of the loss of a key actor for the sustained success of the project
  - » concerns regarding the long-term sustainability of progress as many of the initiatives are pilot projects
- 
- » 'getting the balance right' between developer and private market interests and community interests
  - » danger of market interests dominating which may jeopardise the social sustainability of the project
  - » the effective management of PPPs requires new skills from local authority officials which in turn requires guidance and training

## SECTION FIVE



## Issues Arising

This discussion paper has highlighted some of the successful outcomes of estate regeneration, but it has also identified a number of problems relating to policy, practice and funding in this area. This closing section brings together the key issues arising from the study and makes suggestions on how the problems identified can be addressed.

Section 3 highlighted a number of problems related to the relatively fragmented and centralised nature of current arrangements for funding estate regeneration projects. A key lesson from the literature in this area is that multi-dimensional regeneration projects are often required to address the multi-faceted problems of estates requiring regeneration. The current funding structures, however, do not sufficiently support this approach as:

- funding is dispersed across many central government departments and agencies
- not all funding programmes are open to applications from local authorities
- local-level funding is limited
- local authorities' relative ease of access to funding for refurbishment measures, compared to social, economic or housing management interventions, encourages a concentration on improving the built environment of the target estate, whether interventions of this type are appropriate or not.

Until recently, arrangements for funding estate regeneration in England were similar to those that pertain in Ireland, and created similar problems. The solution that they put forward may hold some valuable lessons for us. Many of the funding streams in England were amalgamated in 1994 into a single fund called the Single Regeneration Budget (Rhodes *et al*, 2003). This scheme funds regeneration initiatives of all types, and allocates funding competitively on the basis of proposals submitted by local authorities and other eligible organisations.

Section 3 also identified a number of problems associated with the lack of an explicit social housing estate regeneration policy. In addition, there are currently no guidelines on designing and implementing estate regeneration projects (see Section 4). Devising an estate regeneration policy falls within the remit of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, while estate regeneration guidelines could form part of the good practice in housing management series produced by the Centre for Housing Research. Such guidelines have now been completed.

The evidence presented in this paper indicates that the following issues should be addressed in this policy statement and in the guidelines.

### **1. What is estate regeneration?**

Although there is an abundance of written material on the terms of the various schemes which fund estate regeneration projects, there is little material which explains what estate regeneration is, when regeneration projects should be undertaken and the types of measures that are appropriate for inclusion in a regeneration project. Although there is no single definition of estate regeneration *per se*, it is important to distinguish it from estate refurbishment. Estate refurbishment concentrates upon the built environment and is primarily concerned with outputs, i.e. physical achievements such as number of houses refurbished/rebuilt, number of community facilities provided, changes in open space, etc. In broad terms estate regeneration will generally encompass estate refurbishment (and its outputs) as well as social and economic (and management) interventions that specifically seek to achieve long-term outcomes of e.g. social inclusion, improved quality of life of residents, better educational and employment opportunities, etc.



## **2. What are the reasons for estate decline and/or failure?**

The next step in contemplating an estate regeneration and/or refurbishment project is to identify the reasons for estate decline and/or failure. If a decision is made to pursue a project, identifying these reasons will help to guide appropriate interventions and actions to be undertaken.

## **3. What interventions could address reasons for estate decline and/or failure?**

Evidence suggests that for a number of reasons, including current funding constraints, local authorities might not fully explore or exploit different options for addressing estate decline and/or failure. Projects should proceed only when other options have been considered (see question 4). Regeneration interventions should address the factors that precipitated the decline of the estate and funding mechanisms should enable local authorities to implement the interventions required. The preceding discussion has identified four categories of regeneration interventions: built environment/design, management, social and economic. In all but a few cases, physical interventions (estate refurbishment) alone are insufficient to achieve full estate regeneration. Thus in most cases there will be a need for a combination of some or all of the four types of interventions.

## **4. When should a formal estate regeneration and/or refurbishment project be considered?**

Except in cases where there are significant problems that need to be addressed urgently (e.g. there are concerns about the overall built standards of dwellings that cannot be addressed by routine management and maintenance), a formal estate regeneration project should be established only after other more small-scale options to improve the estate have been pursued for a reasonable period of time. This could include implementing cyclical management and maintenance programmes, establishing estate management or tenant liaison programmes and/or engaging other actors to help. For instance, estate management or tenant liaison programmes may be sufficient to address the problems of many estates, but these may take six months to a year before they have discernible effects. Any decision to undertake a regeneration and/or refurbishment project should also bear in mind overall government

strategies and objectives, which can impact upon the decision to proceed with a project, and the form such a project may take. Finally, tenure profiles on an estate may affect the decision to undertake a project. A regeneration and/or refurbishment project may not be appropriate if the estate in question has a relatively low proportion of local authority rented or other social housing.

#### **5. What is the target area, and who are the target groups?**

When a decision to establish an estate regeneration project has been reached the next step in the project design is to determine the target estate, and the target groups. It is important to ensure that any proposed regeneration project is clear about the boundaries of the target estate or area, to minimise confusion about its aims and objectives and establish relationships vis-à-vis other organisations working in the area, who have their own aims, objectives and interventions. This avoids replication of efforts to address problems of estate decline and/or failure. It is also important to define who the target groups are for the project. Not all residents share the same concerns or have the same characteristics. Therefore some of the residents may have different issues that need to be addressed as part of the consultation on the project and through their involvement with it. Care must also be taken to ensure that those who are consulted and/or who participate in the project are representative of the target estate/area in question.

#### **6. How should the project be implemented?**

Local authorities should have regard to the potential scope, scale and nature of any project. These shape two key issues in relation to project implementation. Firstly, there is a need to consider the overall strategic framework or plan for the project, for example through a Master Plan or through some other document. Secondly, an implementation framework should be established specifically to guide day-to-day project management, progress the project and overcome obstacles arising.

## **7. How should the project be funded?**

Securing funding is obviously vital for the implementation of estate regeneration projects. It is equally important that funding mechanisms do not overly dictate what interventions are undertaken; rather interventions should be determined by the regeneration needs of the estate in question. While there has been some enthusiasm about the possibilities of PPP as a funding mechanism, the analysis here shows a need to balance private and market interests against social and community interests. Efforts should be made to ensure that potential project costs are fully identified and monitored throughout the implementation phase.

## **8. How can the community, other statutory bodies, employers, developers, architects and others be involved?**

In the last decade there has been an increasing emphasis on consultation and on partnership working especially between local authorities and other actors, including residents and community organisations. While these new ways of working can pose challenges, they also present a number of opportunities for successfully achieving projects that 'fit' with local needs and concerns, increasing a sense of ownership of the regenerated estate and helping to support successful, sustainable outcomes. It is important to recognise that these new ways of working are not simply 'add-ons' to traditional practices, but opportunities to productively use local skills, knowledge and expertise. These partnership approaches provide avenues for decision-making capabilities for these actors e.g. through formal regeneration boards, and can also serve as structures to generate collaborative planning and other mechanisms of actively involving the community in the design and delivery of the regeneration project.

## **9. What obstacles or threats exist that may affect the sustained success of the project?**

Once a project is designed and implemented, there is a need for constant monitoring of the day-to-day management and delivery aspects of the project as well as wider contextual issues that may impact upon the sustainability of the improvements it has brought about. Constant monitoring helps to ensure that obstacles are identified and overcome to avoid undesired, unplanned or unsustainable outcomes. Data should be collected before, during

and at the end of the project design and implementation phases. Data should also be collected regarding performance management during the project. It is important to collate all data at the end of the project, gather any final data e.g. on completion of outputs, and analyse data formally through an evaluation report or similar document. Evaluating data in this way:

- identifies the success of the project by demonstrating that aims and objectives have been met
- aids in identifying recommendations for future practice and, potentially, future policy
- generates lessons learned (specifically for sharing expertise and experiences with others involved in regeneration)
- helps establish a ‘track record’ to secure additional funding or funding for a new project
- helps to initiate ‘exit strategies’ of the regeneration project, marking the transition into long-term thinking and acting for sustaining the successful outcomes of the regeneration project.

**10. What structure and practices can be put in place to ensure that obstacles are overcome and that the project is progressed in a timely fashion according to plan?**

Again this question relates to the robustness of project management and delivery structures for delivering successful outcomes. Wider issues also come into play. For example, there is a need to consider ongoing estate management or cyclical management and maintenance programmes to help support and sustain the regenerated estate. One of the most crucial factors here is that of revenue funding. Evidence suggests that without sufficient revenue funding there is a serious danger to the long-term sustainability and successfulness of any project, no matter how well designed or implemented.

This phase of the project moves from monitoring into evaluating the project, both as it rolls out over time (e.g. by monitoring performance management and interim success markers) and in terms of long-term thinking and acting (e.g. by demonstrating that the aims and objectives of the project have been met, and now need to be sustained). Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of the

project helps to ensure that future regeneration projects benefit from the learning generated as part of the project, helping to avoid costly mistakes or repetitions of elements that did not work in the project.

**11. How can the achievements of the regeneration project be sustained over the long-term?**

This issue has rarely been considered in the design of estate regeneration projects in Ireland but evidence from evaluations of UK projects indicates that it is a key consideration. In part, this is because many of the regeneration projects so far undertaken and completed in Ireland come under the aegis of the RWS. Its focus on built environment interventions whose completions were relatively easy to measure (e.g. in terms of number of houses rebuilt/refurbished) perhaps contributed to a perception that such measures were sufficient to demonstrate the success of the project.

There are two key features that should and need to be considered in the analysis of the potential long-term success and sustainability of regenerated estates. First, a thought-out ‘exit’ strategy is needed as the project nears completion. Second, there is a need for on-going monitoring of the estate to ensure that previous problems do not re-emerge, and that if new problems develop they are dealt with effectively.

Furthermore, in some projects it may be worthwhile to build in mechanisms for generating revenue to sustain and support the outputs and outcomes of the project. This could include, for instance, building commercial units for letting and using the income generated to pay for the maintenance of community facilities.

Identifying strategies for ongoing revenue funding is the responsibility of all actors involved in the regeneration project, insofar as these issues should be identified within the context of the regeneration project design and implementation phases and implemented as part of the ‘exit strategy’ upon completion of the regeneration project. However, given the consistent difficulties identified in this paper with funding mechanisms for regeneration projects and with revenue funding generally, both local authorities and the Department should be aware of the need for, and seek to actively support, sufficient revenue funding streams upon completion of the project.



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