



UNIVERSITY
of
GLASGOW

Conference: Housing and Social Justice

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**Workshop Session 2 (g): Nick Bailey, Scottish Centre for Research
on Social Justice/University of Glasgow**

Housing and Area Deprivation



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Scottish Centre for Research on
SOCIAL JUSTICE

Workshop: Housing and Area Deprivation

Conference on “Housing and
Social Justice”

Glasgow, 1 October 2004

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Housing and area deprivation

- Spatial segregation – just or unjust?
- Policy responses - what roles should housing play?

Spatial segregation – just or unjust?

- Segregation as justice
 - Reflect different choices of equals
 - Reflect just inequalities (e.g. based on effort)
- Segregation incidental
 - Spatial differences reflect unjust inequalities
 - BUT not important in themselves
- Segregation as injustice
 - Some places disadvantage their residents
 - And it is disadvantaged individuals who tend to end up in disadvantaged areas and are further disadvantaged as a result

Government view (Scottish Executive, 2002)

- Segregation may be seen as a source of injustice ...
 - “We are committed to building a better Scotland, where a child’s potential, and not their ... postcode, will decide their future.”
- ... but also segregation appears incidental or position is just unclear.
 - “[some areas] continue to be badly affected by poor health, low educational achievements, and poverty.”
 - “Children in the most deprived areas are less than half as likely to be breast-fed as children in the wealthiest areas, and are twice as likely to have a low birth weight.”

Place as a source of disadvantage

- Place selection - housing system sorts disadvantaged people into disadvantaging areas
 - Housing markets and needs-based allocations
- Place creation - concentration/feedback effects
 - Worsening social and physical environment; instability and high turnover; overstretched or inadequate services - private and public; image, reputation, stigma
- Feedback - vicious circles

Neighbourhood policy responses

- Commitment to tackle some of the negative impacts of segregation (“place creation”)
 - Improve public services, including resource allocation
 - Including neighbourhood management
 - Foster individual social capital or community capacity
 - Develop local authority-level strategy or overview

Neighbourhood policy responses

- BUT possible role of housing neglected
 - Physical quality of housing as key characteristic of areas
 - Housing management - only a “secondary service”
 - Potential to build on housing and estate management services for neighbourhood management
 - Existing stake of housing organisations in deprived areas makes them ideal agents
 - Long history of locally-based housing organisations developing community capacity

Neighbourhood policy responses

- AND no commitment to reduce the extent of segregation itself (“place selection”)
- Housing plays a central role
 - Social housing allocations systems
 - social housing re-investment decisions and tenure diversification
 - planning policy and private housing investment decisions

Questions

- To what extent is spatial segregation just, incidental or unjust?
 - Why, when, where is segregation a cause of injustice?
 - How much segregation is acceptable?
- What roles could housing play in reducing the impacts of segregation or reducing segregation itself?
 - Has housing been neglected and why?