
A synthesis of GoWell Research Findings About the Links Between Regeneration and Health: Findings M Egan and the GoWell Team



What have we looked at?

Questions

- **Healthy lifestyles**
 - 1) Who tends to have one, and who tends not.
- **Is residents' health associated with....**
 - 2) The quality of their home?
 - 3) The quality of their neighbourhood?
 - 4) The type and quality of local amenities?
- **Impacts of regeneration on health**
 - 5) Housing improvement
 - 6) Living through clearance/demolition
 - 7) Relocation

What have we looked at? Health

- **Health behaviours**
- **Mental (ill)Health**
- **Positive mental wellbeing**
- **Physical Health**

What have we looked at?

Environment

Home, Neighbourhoods and Communities

- **Physical environment**
- **Social environment**
- **How the environment makes people feel**
e.g. sense of control, privacy, security, progress
(sometimes called the **psychosocial environment**)

1) Who has the least healthy behaviours?

(useful for targeting health improvement efforts)

	SMOKING	DIET	ALCHOL	PHSYCAL ACTIVITY
GENDER	men	men	men	women
AGE	middle age	working age	middle age	retired
COUNTRY OF BIRTH	UK	UK	UK	UK
EMPLOYMENT	unemployed	unemployed	unemployed	retired, sick, unemployed
TENURE	renters	renters	owners	renters
BUILDING TYPE	low rise flats	high rise flats	house & low rise	low and high rise

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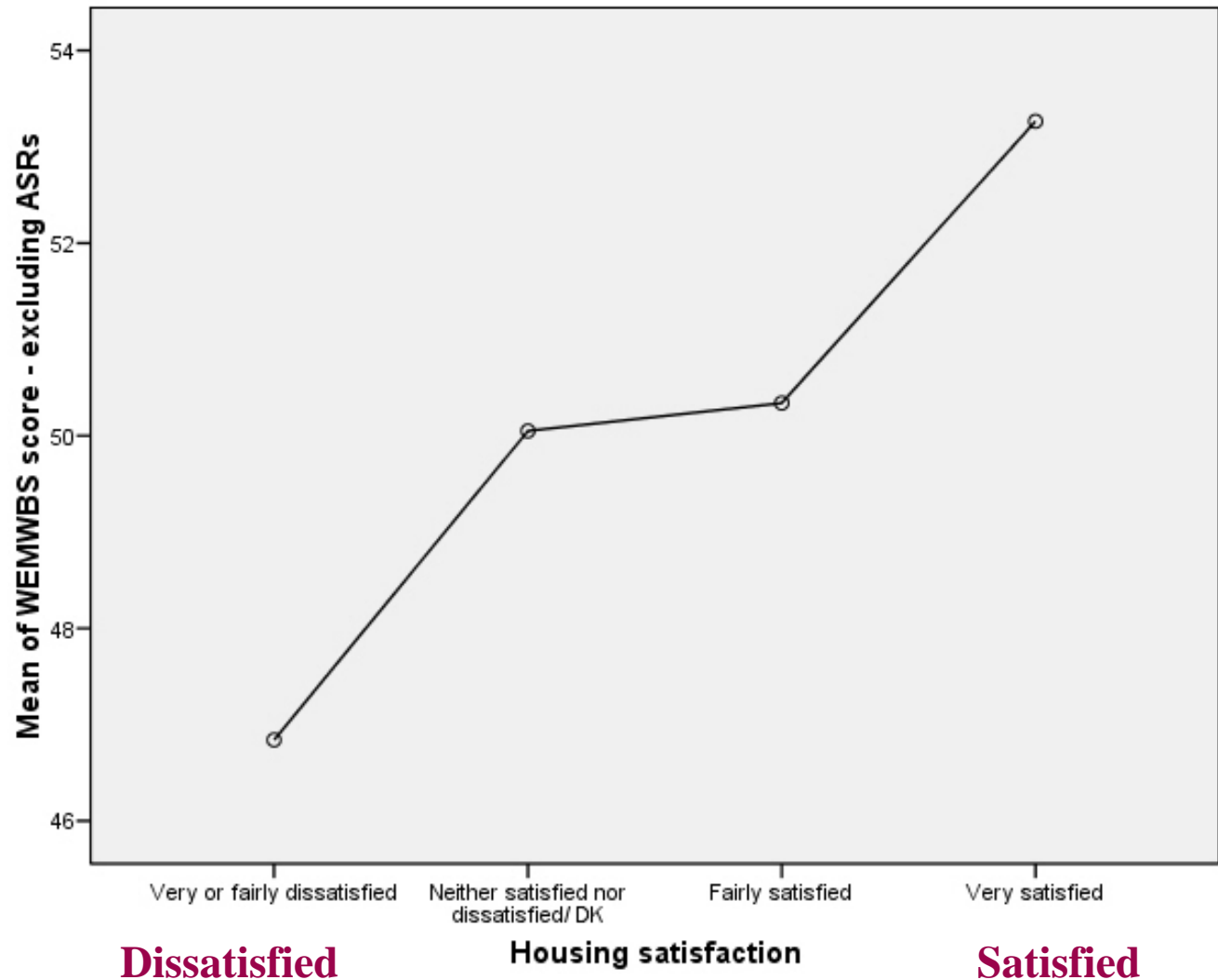
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2) Is Residents' health/wellbeing associated with the home environment?

...

YES!



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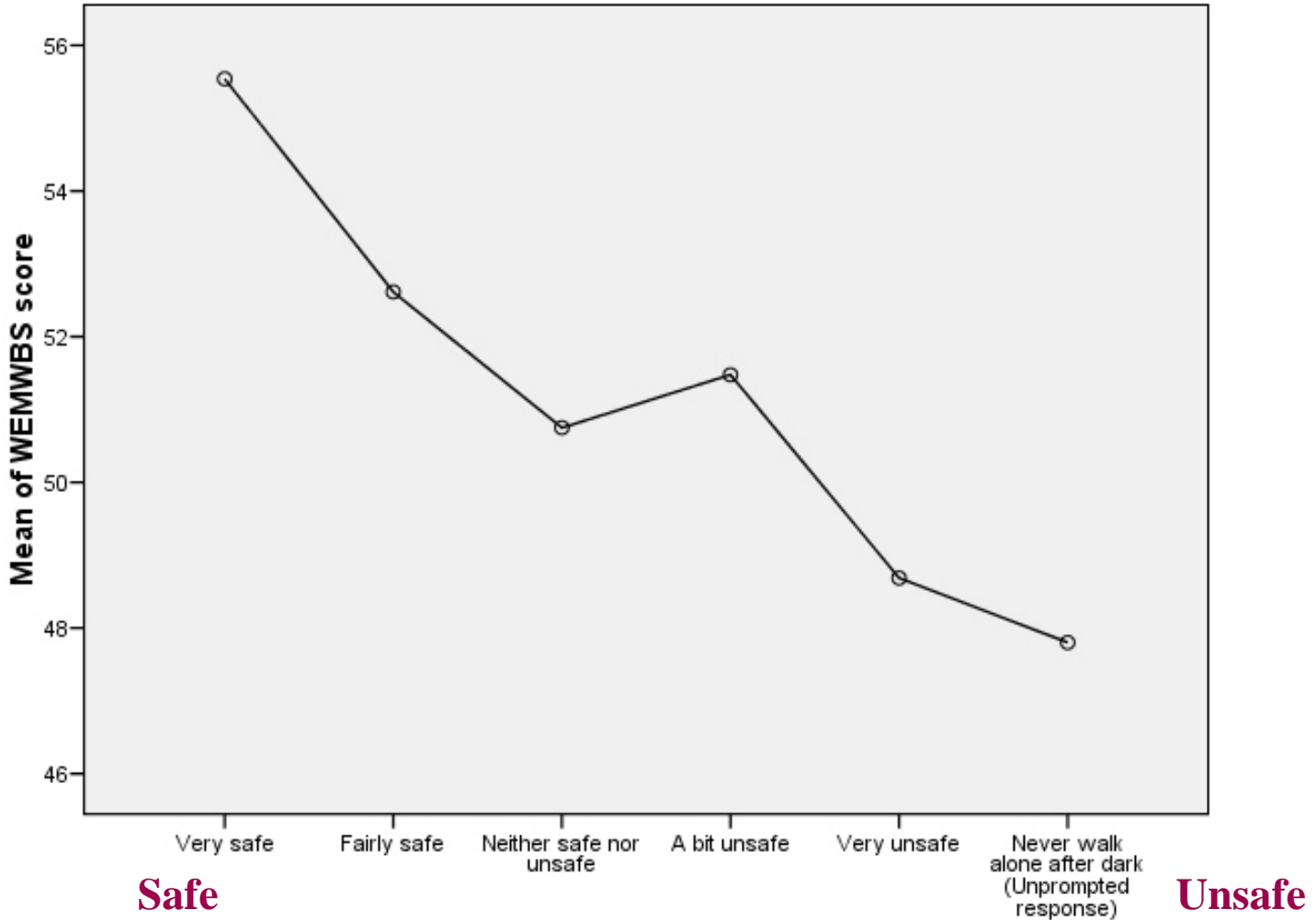
YES!

- Mental wellbeing also associated with...
 - houses or four-in-a-blocks;
 - Homes with good external appearance, insulation, front doors;
 - Favourable comparisons with other homes in area;
 - Homes that make residents feel they are doing well.
 - High satisfaction with landlords/factors
- A diet study found that feeling the home was secure was associated with healthier snacking

3) Is Residents' health/wellbeing associated with the neighbourhood environment?

...

YES!



Q34. How safe would you feel walking alone in this neighbourhood after dark?

3) Is Residents' health/wellbeing associated with the neighbourhood environment?

YES!

- Mental wellbeing also associated with...
 - Lack of anti-social behaviour/incivilities
 - Attractive, quiet and peaceful neighbourhoods
 - Favourable comparisons with other neighbourhoods;
 - Neighbourhoods that make residents feel they are doing well
- Regular neighbourhood walking related to
 - sense of belonging to local community,
 - feeling safe outside at night,
 - living in a peripheral estate (rather than the inner-city)

4) Are health (and health related) outcomes associated with local amenities?

YES!

- Neighbourhood walking associated with
 - using a range of local amenities (including parks and leisure centres, but also shops and other amenities)
 - High quality local amenities
- The number of local alcohol outlets in a neighbourhood strongly associated with crime (even when you take account of other factors including neighbourhood deprivation).
- Healthy snacking associated with living near shops that sell nutritious food

5) Impacts of regeneration on health: Housing Improvement



5) Impacts of regeneration on health: Housing Improvement

We found evidence of

- Small short term benefits to mental health
- No short term impacts on physical health
- People who are very satisfied with housing improvement tend to have higher (better) mental wellbeing
- Housing improvement prompts people to think about giving up smoking (a 'critical moment')....
- But they don't actually give up (more support needed)

Impacts of regeneration on health: Living through clearance/demolition



6) Impacts of regeneration on health: Living through clearance/demolition

We found evidence of...

- No impacts on physical health
- Short term improvements in 'social functioning'
- No overall impacts on mental health

We expected people's health to be negatively affected by spending 2 years living in a neighbourhood experiencing clearance, demolition and closures. In fact, we found little overall impact on health (although there is still a possibility that some individuals were effected).

7) Impacts of regeneration on health:

Relocation

Cross-sectional comparisons between people who relocated from 'demolition' neighbourhoods and people who 'remained' suggest that...

- The people who relocated reported better **home**, **neighbourhood** and **community** outcomes compared to people who remained.

But paradoxically

- Those who relocated reported **worse health!**

The theory that improved residential environments cause harm is not a plausible one

Overall conclusions

- **Clear associations between the neighbourhood amenities and health related behaviours.**
- **It's not just about the physical environment. The social and psychosocial factors are also crucial.**
- **Quality matters! Health associations are strongest where ratings of home, neighbourhood, amenities and landlords are 'very' high.**
- **Housing improvement benefits mental health in the short term.**
- **Mental health and mental wellbeing appear to be GoWell's most sensitive health indicators.**
- **Hypothesised harms caused by living through clearance and demolition do not appear to have materialised (although we base this on average figures – we have yet to examine effects on specific sub-groups).**

Strengths and Limitations

- Large sample and a wide variety of indicators
- Peer reviewed
- Mixture of cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence
- Self-reported data
- Findings based on overall averages from our sample – so its still possible that individuals and/or subgroups experience things differently
- GoWell response rates between 40-50%