


GoWell is a collaborative partnership between the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, and Urban Studies and the MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit at the University of Glasgow, sponsored by Glasgow Housing Association, the Scottish Government, NHS Health Scotland and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

A large graphic of a stylized human figure. The head is a teal circle containing the title. The torso is a teal shape on the left and a grey shape on the right. The date 'January 2017' is located in the bottom right of the grey torso area.

**The benefits of
new build housing
provided through
regeneration in
Glasgow**

January 2017

GoWell is a planned ten-year research and learning programme that aims to investigate the impact of investment in housing, regeneration and neighbourhood renewal on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. It commenced in February 2006 and has several research components. This paper is part of a series of Briefing Papers which the GoWell team has developed in order to summarise key findings and policy and practice recommendations from the research. Further information on the GoWell Programme and the full series of Briefing Papers is available from the GoWell website at: www.gowellonline.com

Key findings

- New build occupants were more likely than occupants of improved housing to be satisfied with their home and to rate different elements of their home as being of good or very good quality. Nine out of ten new build occupants had no problems heating their home.
- New build occupants were more likely than occupants of improved housing to derive feelings of status from their home. There was no difference between the two groups in terms of the likelihood of feeling safe at home.
- New build occupants were more likely than occupants of improved housing to be coping well financially and were less likely to have difficulties affording a range of household budget items, including rent and fuel costs.
- New build occupants were more likely than the occupants of improved housing to rate their local neighbourhood as attractive and to enjoy living in the area. Many neighbourhood services and amenities were also more likely to be rated of good quality by new build occupants, though this was not true for schools, shops, street cleaning and public transport.
- New build occupants were more likely than occupants of improved housing to feel trust and reliance in their neighbours, but they were no more likely than occupants of improved housing to report knowing or interacting with their neighbours.
- New build occupants were more likely than occupants of improved housing to identify their neighbourhood as ethnically mixed, but they were also more likely to report that their close social connections were mostly with renters rather than with owners or a mix of the two.
- New build occupants were more likely than occupants of improved housing to report not smoking inside the home, and less likely to report eating main meals from take-away outlets. But there were no differences between the two groups in terms of rates of neighbourhood walking, intention to quit smoking, and drinking alcohol mainly at home.



BACKGROUND

For the past ten years, GoWell has been studying the effects of housing-led regeneration underway in Glasgow since the council housing stock transfer of 80,500 dwellings in 2003 to Glasgow Housing Association (now part of Wheatley Group). It was always intended that at least half this stock be improved to meet the requirements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by 2015¹, in line with the expectations placed upon all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). An initial estimate that, in addition, 14,000 units would be demolished was in due course increased to a demolition programme of 19,085 units², much of it located in 15 Transformational and Local Regeneration Areas around the city³.

Newly built social housing formed part of this regeneration programme in two respects. Glasgow Housing Association (GHA) would itself build new housing as part of the redevelopment of the regeneration areas, alongside private sector new build also. In addition, other RSLs around the city would build new housing as part of a reprovisioning programme to help accommodate those people relocated as part of the clearance of housing to be demolished, much of it comprising high-rise blocks. Over a ten-year period from 2004/5 to 2015/16, GHA would build 3,000 new dwellings and other RSLs 10,555 units⁴. Glasgow City Council's housing strategy made clear that new build housing in the city was intended to contribute to the 'regeneration of the city' by helping to retain working-age households and families within the city by providing attractive, low-rise, housing in mixed tenure neighbourhoods, provided to environmentally sustainable standards; and also to contribute to 'meeting changing needs' by being designed to be barrier-free (i.e. accessible to people with physical or other disabilities) or to lifetime homes standards (i.e. adaptable to changing needs at different stages of the life-course) and by endeavouring to meet particular needs (such as for the homeless or those with lifestyle support needs)⁵.

Regeneration would therefore provide a mixture of housing options for residents, both improved and newly built housing, with more of the former than the latter over the 12-year period from 2003 to 2015. As part of GoWell's assessment of the impacts of regeneration, it is important that we consider the different benefits that may accrue to occupants of these two types of dwelling provided through the regeneration programme.



AIMS

Our aim was to investigate whether the provision of new build dwellings by social landlords offered greater benefits to the occupants, or supported more positive outcomes, than the provision of improved dwellings, taking into account differences in occupant characteristics between the two dwelling types.

To do this we examined differences in reported circumstances and opinions between the two groups of occupants in respect of the following residential and personal outcomes:

- Employment status.
- Dwelling condition and satisfaction.
- Psychosocial benefits from the home.
- Housing and household financial circumstances.
- Neighbourhood condition and satisfaction.
- Neighbourhood services and amenities.
- Community cohesion and the local social environment.
- Health behaviours.



METHODS

We compared the responses given in the GoWell wave 4 (2015) community survey by two groups of housing occupants:

- Social renters living in new build housing constructed since 2003.
- Social renters living in other dwellings which the respondent reported to have received improvement works since 2003, or during their period of occupancy (if shorter).

We excluded any high-rise flats from the latter group, since none of the new build properties were high-rise. This gave us unweighted sample sizes of 509 new build occupants and 787 improved dwelling occupants.

There were two stages to the analysis. First, we compared the percentage of respondents in each of the two groups who gave selected responses to the survey questions of interest here. Second, we conducted logistic regression to identify the likelihood, or odds ratio, of the selected response being given by the new build group compared with the improved-dwelling group, controlling for three things: respondent age; respondent gender; the location of the dwelling with respect to each of the five intervention area types within the GoWell study areas.

In all analyses, we considered a value of $p < 0.05$ to indicate a statistically significant difference between the two occupant groups.

Employment status

It is often expected that occupants of new build social housing will be more likely to be employed, or on slightly higher incomes, than occupants of other social housing in order to be able to pay higher rents. This, however, was not the case in Glasgow.

- Occupants of new build dwellings were as likely to be in full- or part-time employment as the occupants of improved dwellings (around three-in-ten in both cases).
- However, there were significantly more non-working occupants of working age (8 percentage points higher), and consequently almost 10 percentage points fewer retired people, in the new build homes than in the improved properties.

Table 1. Employment status.

Employment status	New build	Improved	Difference	p	OR*	p
Working	31.1%	29.4%	1.7		0.87	0.350
Not working	55.5%	47.7%	7.8	<0.001		
Retired	13.3%	22.9%	-9.6			

* Odds ratio calculated for working respondents relative to those not working or retired (combined group). Statistically significant differences are shown in bold.

Dwelling satisfaction and condition

New build dwellings should in theory be of higher quality than other dwellings if building standards have improved over time (with the possible exception of space standards) and this should be reflected in occupant satisfaction rates. This was indeed the case here and we found no instances where satisfaction on a particular item was higher among occupants of improved dwellings.

- Occupants of new build dwellings were more likely to be satisfied with their home and less likely to have an intention to move home than the occupants of improved dwellings: 8% of new build occupants had an intention to move home, compared with 12% of occupants of improved dwellings.
- For 17 out of 18 items, occupants of new build dwellings were more likely than occupants of improved dwellings to give a positive rating to the quality of their home, after controlling for age, gender and location. The one exception was with regard to the 'overall space' of the home.
- The difference in number of occupants giving a positive rating to the quality of their dwellings was more than 10 percentage points in favour of new build, in respect of four items: damp and condensation; insulation; windows; and noise within the home or building.
- After controlling for age, gender and location, occupants of new build dwellings were more than twice as likely as occupants of improved dwellings to report that they had no difficulties heating their home.

Table 2. Dwelling satisfaction and condition.

Item	Category	Dwelling type		Difference	p	OR:NB	p
		New build (%)	Improved (%)				
Overall satisfaction with home	Very/fairly satisfied	93.2	84.4	8.8	<0.001	2.67	<0.001
Intention to move home in next 12 months	Yes	7.7	12.0	-4.3	0.021	0.53	0.006
Rate current home:							
- Overall condition of home	Very/fairly good	95.3	85.1	10.2	<0.001	4.07	<0.001
- Damp and condensation	Very/fairly good	93.6	76.5	17.1	<0.001	4.38	<0.001
- Overall space	Very/fairly good	88.6	84.7	3.9	0.065	1.31	0.163
- Storage space	Very/fairly good	78.3	72.2	6.0	0.022	1.38	0.029
- Quality or condition of bathroom/shower	Very/fairly good	91.3	85.0	6.4	0.002	2.16	<0.001
- Quality or condition of kitchen	Very/fairly good	93.7	85.2	8.5	<0.001	2.38	<0.001
- Heating system	Very/fairly good	95.1	86.8	8.3	<0.001	3.73	<0.001
- Insulation	Very/fairly good	93.9	80.9	13.1	<0.001	4.62	<0.001
- Internal state of repair	Very/fairly good	93.2	84.6	8.6	<0.001	3.11	<0.001
- Internal decoration	Very/fairly good	94.6	85.8	8.8	<0.001	3.44	<0.001
- External state of repair	Very/fairly good	93.0	84.1	8.9	<0.001	2.73	<0.001
- External appearance	Very/fairly good	92.7	86.1	6.6	0.001	2.76	<0.001
- Front door	Very/fairly good	92.0	86.2	5.9	0.003	2.07	<0.001
- Security	Very/fairly good	94.6	91.3	3.3	0.037	1.83	0.018
- Internal layout	Very/fairly good	95.6	89.2	6.3	<0.001	2.20	0.002
- Windows	Very/fairly good	89.7	76.8	13.0	<0.001	2.67	<0.001
- Electrical wiring	Very/fairly good	93.2	87.3	5.9	0.001	2.50	<0.001
- Noise from within the home or building	Very/fairly good	90.7	78.8	11.8	<0.001	2.39	<0.001
Heating the home	No difficulties	89.5	77.9	11.6	<0.001	2.41	<0.001

OR:NB = The ratio of odds for each outcome, comparing responses from occupants of new build housing with the responses from occupants of improved housing. An odds ratio above 1.00 indicates that the outcome is more likely among new build occupants and a ratio below 1.00 indicates that the outcome is less likely among new build occupants. Statistically significant differences are shown in bold.

Psychosocial benefits from the home

Feelings of status and control are important contributors to mental wellbeing and are often derived from the home as an important site of personal identity. We found some, but not all, of these psychosocial benefits to be more commonly derived by occupants of new build housing.

- Occupants of new build dwellings were more likely than occupants of improved dwellings to derive feelings of personal progress and of relative status from their homes. Around 9% more new build occupants than occupants of improved dwellings agreed that their “home makes me feel I’m doing well in my life”. In addition, around 13% more new build occupants than occupants of improved dwellings agreed that “most people would like a home like mine”. After controlling for age, gender and location, occupants of new build dwellings were around twice as likely to derive these benefits (odds ratios of 1.8 and 2.7, respectively).
- Controlling for age, gender and location, occupants of new build dwellings were around one-and-a-half times more likely than occupants of improved dwellings to declare that they had privacy at home and that their home expressed their personality and values (odds ratios of 1.74 and 1.54, respectively), though the absolute differences in the percentages were smaller than for progress and status.
- After controlling for age, gender and location, occupants of new build housing were no more likely than occupants of improved housing to feel safe or a sense of refuge in their home, nor to have a sense of freedom or control at home.

Table 3. Psychosocial benefits from the home.

Item	Category	Dwelling type		Difference	p	OR:NB	p
		New build (%)	Improved (%)				
I feel I have privacy in my home	Strongly agree/agree	94.1	92.7	1.5	0.335	1.74	0.029
I feel in control of my home	Strongly agree/agree	94.1	92.0	2.1	0.173	1.28	0.330
My home makes me feel that I'm doing well in life	Strongly agree/agree	87.1	78.3	8.9	<0.001	1.80	0.001
I feel safe in my home	Strongly agree/agree	94.9	91.7	3.1	0.046	1.42	0.146
I can get away from it all in my home	Strongly agree/agree	94.2	90.8	3.3	0.041	1.50	0.096
I can do what I want in my home	Strongly agree/agree	92.8	89.5	3.3	0.063	1.30	0.227
Most people would like a home like mine	Strongly agree/agree	87.6	74.7	12.9	<0.001	2.70	<0.001
My home expresses my personality and values	Strongly agree/agree	84.8	79.1	5.7	0.017	1.54	0.009
I worry about losing my home	Strongly agree/agree	22.8	21.0	1.8	0.475	1.19	0.239

OR:NB = The ratio of odds for each outcome, comparing responses from occupants of new build housing with the responses from occupants of improved housing. An odds ratio above 1.00 indicates that the outcome is more likely among new build occupants and a ratio below 1.00 indicates that the outcome is less likely among new build occupants. Statistically significant differences are shown in bold.

Housing and household costs

Whether or not the occupants of new build dwellings would find household costs easier to manage is hard to predict. On the one hand, a newer more energy-efficient home should result in lower fuel costs which would be of great benefit to low-income households. But, on the other hand, newer dwellings might have higher rents and council tax charges which would be detrimental to household budgets. In fact, we found more positive reporting of finances among the occupants of new build housing.

- Occupants of new build housing were more likely to be coping financially than those in improved housing: respectively, 44% compared with 35% said they were 'managing financially' 'quite' or 'very well'.
- For eight out of nine household budget items, fewer occupants of new build housing reported an affordability difficulty than did the occupants of improved housing, with the difference in each case being between 4 and 7 percentage points (the exception being credit card bills, where the difference was only 1%).
- After controlling for age, gender and location, occupants of new build housing were less likely (by 30-60%) than the occupants of improved housing to report experiencing difficulties affording seven of nine housing and household costs including: rent; maintenance costs; fuel bills; food, clothes and shoes; accessing the internet; and paying for white goods for the home. Controlling additionally for the occupants' employment status gave almost identical results.
- Around 7% of new build occupants reported some difficulty paying their rent, which is around half the number of occupants of improved housing who reported rental difficulties.
- Occupants of new build housing were no more or less likely than occupants of improved homes to report difficulties paying their council tax or credit card bills.

Table 4. Ability to cope financially and household affordability difficulties.

Item	Category	Dwelling type		Difference	p	OR:NB	p
		New build (%)	Improved (%)				
Ability to cope financially	Managing quite or very well	43.7	35.0	8.7	0.004	1.34	0.020
Household affordability difficulty:							
- Rent or mortgage	Very often / quite often / occasionally	7.5	14.2	-6.7	0.001	0.57	0.008
- Repairs, maintenance or factor charges	Very often / quite often / occasionally	3.1	7.6	-4.5	0.002	0.38	0.002
- Gas, electricity or other fuel bills	Very often / quite often / occasionally	16.7	24.3	-7.6	0.002	0.64	0.005
- Food	Very often / quite often / occasionally	12.7	18.3	-5.6	0.013	0.56	0.002
- Council tax	Very often / quite often / occasionally	13.8	18.1	-4.3	0.062	0.71	0.055
- Clothes and shoes	Very often / quite often / occasionally	21.1	25.9	-4.8	0.061	0.68	0.012
- Accessing the internet	Very often / quite often / occasionally	6.3	13.1	-6.8	<0.001	0.50	0.002
- Credit card or store card bills	Very often / quite often / occasionally	3.5	4.9	-1.4	0.264	0.80	0.473
- Purchase arrangements for white goods	Very often / quite often / occasionally	5.2	9.6	-4.4	0.007	0.39	<0.001

OR:NB = The ratio of odds for each outcome, comparing responses from occupants of new build housing with the responses from occupants of improved housing. An odds ratio above 1.00 indicates that the outcome is more likely among new build occupants and a ratio below 1.00 indicates that the outcome is less likely among new build occupants. Statistically significant differences are shown in bold.

Neighbourhood satisfaction and condition

Although we would expect dwelling satisfaction to be higher among new build occupants, reflecting improvements over time in dwelling standards, there is less certainty about neighbourhood satisfaction. This is because new housing may be developed on brownfield land and sometimes lack associated improvements to the surrounding environment and amenities. Nonetheless, we found that in some respects, though not all, appreciation of the local neighbourhood was higher among new build occupants than among occupants of improved housing.

- There was no difference in rates of neighbourhood satisfaction between new build occupants and occupants of improved dwellings, although new build occupants were nearly twice as likely to say that they ‘enjoyed’ living in the neighbourhood once other factors were controlled for.
- Furthermore, after controlling for age, gender and location, occupants of new build housing were more than twice as likely as occupants of improved dwellings to say that their neighbourhood was attractive, in respect of both the buildings and the environment.
- The attainment of a sense of personal progress from the neighbourhood was much lower than the rate at which people derived a sense of progress from their home itself, for both study groups, and there was no difference between them in this respect.

Table 5. Neighbourhood satisfaction and condition.

Item	Category	Dwelling type		Difference	p	OR:NB	p
		New build (%)	Improved (%)				
Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live	Very/fairly satisfied	89.0	85.2	3.8	0.066	1.24	0.251
Living in this neighbourhood helps make me feel that I'm doing well in my life	Strongly agree/agree	69.8	65.9	3.9	0.173	1.30	0.053
Respondent enjoys living here	A great deal/a fair amount	93.9	88.0	5.9	0.001	1.88	0.007
Respondent feels they belong to neighbourhood	A great deal/a fair amount	87.7	86.1	1.6	0.446	1.19	0.373
Attractive buildings	Very/fairly good	84.8	72.8	12.0	<0.001	2.60	<0.001
Attractive environment	Very/fairly good	84.3	73.4	11.0	<0.001	2.54	<0.001
Quiet & peaceful environment	Very/fairly good	86.2	82.7	3.5	0.113	1.57	0.014

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Neighbourhood services and amenities

Where new build housing is developed on gap sites in existing neighbourhoods and communities, the same local amenities should be available to new build occupants as to other residents. However, where new build housing is developed on greenfield or brownfield sites, this may not be the case. In the event we found that in respect of most neighbourhood amenities, new build occupants were more positive in their assessments than the occupants of improved housing.

- In the case of nine out of 13 items, occupants of new build housing were more likely to rate their local services and amenities as good than the occupants of improved housing, after controlling for age, gender and location.
- In the case of eight items, the absolute difference in the proportion of occupants rating the item as good was between 6 and 13 percentage points and statistically significant, the items being: childcare or nurseries; community and social venues; youth and leisure services; policing; rubbish collection services; street lighting; paths and pavements; and the availability of good quality fruit and vegetables.
- New build occupants were no more likely than occupants of improved housing to rate some local services and amenities as good; this was the case for schools, shops, street cleaning and public transport.
- There were four items where less than seven-out-of-ten new build occupants rated the amenity or service as good: childcare or nurseries; community and social venues; policing; and youth and leisure services, the last of these having a particularly low rating (only slightly more than half new build occupants rating this as good).

Table 6. Neighbourhood services and amenities.

Item	Category	Dwelling type		Difference	p	OR:NB	p
		New build (%)	Improved (%)				
Schools	Very/fairly good	76.5	74.0	2.5	0.344	1.10	0.497
Childcare or nurseries	Very/fairly good	66.9	54.4	12.5	<0.001	1.40	0.010
Shops	Very/fairly good	78.0	77.7	0.3	0.908	1.26	0.125
Community and social venues	Very/fairly good	65.2	52.0	13.2	<0.001	1.71	<0.001
Youth and leisure service	Very/fairly good	52.1	40.4	11.7	<0.001	1.63	<0.001
Policing	Very/fairly good	67.8	56.9	10.9	<0.001	1.46	0.004
Street cleaning	Very/fairly good	76.9	73.1	3.8	0.150	1.27	0.097
Public transport	Very/fairly good	80.5	78.3	2.2	0.378	0.98	0.919
Rubbish collection	Very/fairly good	87.4	81.4	6.0	0.008	1.54	0.013
Street lighting	Very/fairly good	89.5	83.2	6.3	0.003	1.83	0.001
Paths and pavements	Very/fairly good	87.4	74.1	13.3	<0.001	2.23	<0.001
Health centre/GP	Very/fairly good	84.8	80.3	4.5	0.053	1.77	0.001
Availability of good quality fruit and vegetables	Very/fairly good	80.9	74.3	6.6	0.010	1.54	0.004

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Community cohesion and the social environment

Often, when people move into a new housing development at around the same time, they can develop a sense of collective endeavour, so that despite not living there very long and coming from different locations a relatively strong sense of cohesion may be evident at an early stage. We found this to be the case for new build occupants with regard to how they trusted and relied upon one another, but not necessarily in respect of how they interacted.

- There was a stronger sense of neighbourly consideration among occupants of new build housing; they were one-and-a-half times more likely to consider that they lived in an area where ‘neighbours look out for each other’ than occupants of improved housing, after controlling for age, gender and location. Seven percentage points more new build occupants than improved dwelling occupants said this.
- More new build occupants than occupants of improved dwellings (by 14 percentage points) thought that their neighbours would exercise informal social control in the area to stop a disturbance.
- The differences in neighbourly social contact between new build occupants and occupants of improved housing were small (<6%). With the exception of exchanging favours, none of the differences was statistically significant across the four other items, either before or after controlling for other factors: neighbourly visiting, talking with immediate or local neighbours, and acquaintance with people in the neighbourhood.
- Occupants of new build housing were more likely than occupants of improved housing to say that their neighbourhood was very ethnically mixed, but no more likely than the occupants of improved housing to say that their neighbourhood was mixed in social class terms.
- Occupants of new build housing were more likely than the occupants of improved housing to report that their close friends and family were all or mostly renters (rather than mostly owners or a mixture of the two).

Table 7. Community cohesion and the social environment.

Item	Category	Dwelling type		Difference	p	OR:NB	p
		New build (%)	Improved (%)				
Respondent feels part of community	Great deal/fair amount	84.4	80.6	3.8	0.108	1.32	0.110
Feel safe walking alone after dark	Very/fairly safe	72.9	69.2	6.9	0.015	1.18	0.207
Perceived social class mix of neighbourhood	Very mixed	16.0	18.2	-2.2	0.346	1.27	0.176
Perceived ethnic mix of neighbourhood	Very mixed	18.0	14.9	3.1	0.178	1.52	0.020
Respondent visits neighbours in their home	Great deal/fair amount	40.9	37.0	3.9	0.184	1.23	0.097
Borrows/exchanges favours with neighbours	Great deal/fair amount	34.4	28.8	5.7	0.044	1.29	0.051
Stops and talks to people in neighbourhood	Great deal/fair amount	81.5	80.0	1.5	0.545	1.28	0.136
Neighbours look out for each other	Great deal/fair amount	87.0	80.1	6.9	0.003	1.58	0.010
Acquaintance with people in neighbourhood	Most/many people	53.6	52.3	1.3	0.668	1.15	0.257
Social contact: speaking to neighbours	Once a week or more	83.7	79.2	4.5	0.058	1.24	0.179
Tenure of friends and family	All/mostly renters	62.7	47.7	15.0	<0.001	1.61	<0.001
Informal social control by neighbours	Strongly agree/agree	66.7	53.1	13.6	<0.001	1.28	0.048
Honesty of neighbours	Strongly agree/agree	29.4	30.1	0.7	0.795	0.93	0.580

OR:NB = The ratio of odds for each outcome, comparing responses from occupants of new build housing with the responses from occupants of improved housing. An odds ratio above 1.00 indicates that the outcome is more likely among new build occupants and a ratio below 1.00 indicates that the outcome is less likely among new build occupants. Statistically significant differences are shown in bold.

Health behaviours

The move to a newly built home could form a critical moment when people decide to make changes to their lifestyles in the new environment of their home and neighbourhood. We did not find consistent evidence of better health behaviours among new build occupants, although there was some evidence of beneficial differences between new build occupants and occupants of improved housing with regard to diet and passive smoking.

- No differences were found between the occupants of new build housing and the occupants of improved housing with regard to the frequency with which people walked in their neighbourhood. We examined neighbourhood walking on any day in the past week and neighbourhood walking on most days.
- After controlling for age, gender and location, current smokers in new build housing were no more likely than those in improved housing to intend to give up smoking within the following 12 months, or at any time in the future.
- Occupants of new build housing were slightly less likely than occupants of improved housing to report that anyone in the household smoked inside the home, a difference of around 6 percentage points.
- Among those people who said they drank alcohol, around the same proportion, more than two-in-five, of those in both new build and improved housing did most of their drinking at home.
- After controlling for age, gender and location, occupants of new build housing were half as likely as occupants of improved housing to get two or more main meals per week from a take-away or fast food outlet.

Table 8. Health behaviours.

Item	Category	Dwelling type		Difference	p	OR:NB	p
		New build (%)	Improved (%)				
Walked in neighbourhood for at least 20 mins at a time in last week	Yes	72.7	69.2	3.5	0.210	0.92	0.517
Intention to give up smoking at any within the next 12 months	Yes	21.0	24.4	-3.4	0.389	0.65	0.078
Smoking inside the home by any household member	No	75.2	69.0	6.2	0.024	1.32	0.048
Places where drink most: home versus elsewhere	Home	43.2	46.5	-3.3	0.415	1.01	0.974
Number of main meals from takeaway/fast-food seller in last 7 days	2+ times	13.4	17.8	-4.4	0.049	0.52	0.001

OR:NB = The ratio of odds for each outcome, comparing responses from occupants of new build housing with the responses from occupants of improved housing. An odds ratio above 1.00 indicates that the outcome is more likely among new build occupants and a ratio below 1.00 indicates that the outcome is less likely among new build occupants. Statistically significant differences are shown in bold.



CONCLUSION

We set out to consider whether new build social housing, provided as part of a regeneration programme, offered benefits to occupants over and above the refurbishment of existing properties. Generally, we found that new build housing was beneficial to a greater extent than improved housing, though the marginal gains were greater in respect of some outcomes more than others. Moreover, these benefits accrue in particular to those of working age who are without work, since this group makes up a higher proportion of the occupants of new build dwellings than of improved dwellings. Conversely, there is less benefit to retired occupants, who comprise a smaller proportion of the occupants of new build housing compared with improved housing.

The largest gains from new build housing existed in relation to dwelling condition and comfort, particularly the extent to which occupants appreciated a warm, dry home. In general, more than nine-out-of-ten new build occupants rated the condition of their home as good, in respect of a wide range of elements. The potential knock-on effects of higher quality new build dwellings may be reflected in some of the other findings from the study. In respect of home-based health behaviours, we found that new build occupants were less likely to smoke inside the home and less likely to eat main meals from takeaway outlets. The former may reflect a desire to protect the internal décor of the new home, while the latter may reflect the provision of better kitchen and dining facilities.

Higher dwelling quality may also partly explain the greater reported likelihood of being able to manage well financially, and the lower reporting of affordability difficulties among new build occupants, for example in respect of maintenance costs, fuel bills and white goods purchasing. In respect of the Scottish Government's policy aim to reduce fuel poverty, it also appears that new build housing may make a positive contribution since new build occupants have less difficulty heating their home as well as less difficulty paying their fuel bills than those living in improved housing. These and other lower incidences of financial difficulties (e.g. in respect of food and paying for the internet) might have been expected to reflect better employment and income characteristics among new build occupants. However, we found that new build social housing occupants were more likely to be of working age but out of work than occupants of improved properties.

New build dwellings seem to offer the occupants status-related psychosocial benefits to a greater extent than improved dwellings. Such benefits can be important for mental wellbeing, including for self-esteem which can support positive endeavours elsewhere in people's lives. It may be that people-focused support programmes can build upon such status-related benefits to encourage learning and lifestyle changes among new build occupants where desirable.

Although the quality of the surrounding neighbourhood environment was not rated quite so highly as the quality of the dwelling, new build occupants still achieved significant gains over and above the occupants of improved dwellings. Of course, it may be that in the case of the latter, less attention has been paid to the surrounding environment during the course of improvement works. Nonetheless, new build dwellings may themselves add to the aesthetic quality of the environment through their design in ways that existing properties cannot. Further, environmental services around new build housing are also rated more highly than those around improved dwellings. While other neighbourhood services, not integral to the environment and more focused on people themselves (such as social facilities, childcare etc), are also more likely to be positively rated by new build occupants, around a third of new build occupants did not rate such services as good, highlighting a weakness in some areas of new development.

In social terms, new build developments offer some advantages in relation to community cohesion. Thus, more new build occupants than occupants of improved housing reported that their neighbours looked out for each other and exercised informal social control, akin to a guardianship of the new development and its occupants. But with regard to measures of neighbourly interaction, the findings were generally similar for new build and improved housing occupants: levels of casual verbal interaction were quite high, but exchange-type encounters were at modest levels. There is no evidence that new build social housing has provided higher perceived levels of social mixing or housing tenure mixing than is recognised by the occupants of improved housing. Indeed, more new build occupants than improved housing occupants reported that their friends and family were mostly renters. The intention that new build developments that were provided as part of a regeneration programme would contribute to greater social mixing (by resident social class and housing tenure characteristics) does not appear to be the reality experienced by new build occupants so far.

Overall, newly built social sector dwellings were found to offer housing and environmental quality benefits to their occupants, over and above those offered by improved housing (at least within the first few years or decade of the former's existence). Some of these quality gains may also be related to other benefits found for new build occupants in terms of finances and costs, feelings of status, and home-based health behaviours. In community terms, new build developments offered some gains in respect of cohesion, but not in terms of greater social interaction or mixing.

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