



what works wellbeing

this briefing outlines current evidence; where the evidence gaps are; and what the focus will be for our upcoming systematic review on the relationship between housing and wellbeing.



What does the scoping review and this briefing cover?

This is a broad overview of all published reviews on the links between housing and housing interventions and both individual and community wellbeing*.

We asked you what was important for your wellbeing and a resounding reply was housing. The physical and social place where we live has impacts on our personal wellbeing. It also impacts other factors which influence our wellbeing: our health, our relationships, even educational outcomes.

There can be a number of complex interconnections between these, which can intensify issues. Those with poor health may also have poor social connections and lack the opportunities for better housing.

What do we already know about the links between housing and wellbeing? Many reviews have already gathered the evidence

under specific themes. This scoping review pulls together what already exists. It summarises findings from 50 published reviews. The aim is to understand where there are still gaps in our understanding.

The scoping review is based on a broad view of wellbeing that encompasses the following dimensions, as defined by the Office of National Statistics:

- Personal (subjective) wellbeing
- Our relationships
- Health
- What we do
- Where we live
- Personal finance
- Education and skills
- Governance
- The economy

“A lot of people are living in awful housing. That has a knock-on effect on everything else, their mental health and within the community.”

- participant in the communities public dialogue, 2015



*The scoping review does not include evidence that has not been included in a published journal.



For clarity, we use the following key:



We have **low confidence** in the majority of evidence in this review. Many studies are low quality where there is a risk that the results are not a true reflection. Others come from the US, which may not be relevant to the UK.

There is better quality evidence on whether a home is warm enough, safe to use or free from mould or allergens, has an impact on different aspects of wellbeing.

However, this scoping review gives an indication of where initial review level evidence is, and where the priorities are for a future focus.

physical infrastructure

Whether our home is warm enough, safe to use or free from mould or allergens, has an impact on different aspects of wellbeing.

Tackling fuel poverty



Home safety interventions



Reducing mould & respiratory health



Mental health
Physical health

Safety of home and ability to live at home (where we live)

Health

Physical infrastructure

This is the only area of the scoping review with higher quality evidence.

gaps

Understanding how the benefits compare to the costs over the long term, including interconnections, reduced sick days and any negative impacts of e.g. energy efficiency and health.

Wellbeing, in particular subjective wellbeing, should be included in future research in the areas of fuel poverty and reducing falls in the elderly.

what we have in our home

Large exercise equipment



Physical activity (health / what we do)

Television limiting devices



Physical activity (health / what we do)

gaps

There is very little review-level evidence. Understanding in this area would be improved with: a systematic review to gather, synthesise and appraise existing evidence (much of which is grey literature); high quality evaluations (including subjective wellbeing) to add to the evidence base; and modelling of costs and benefits.



housing for vulnerable groups

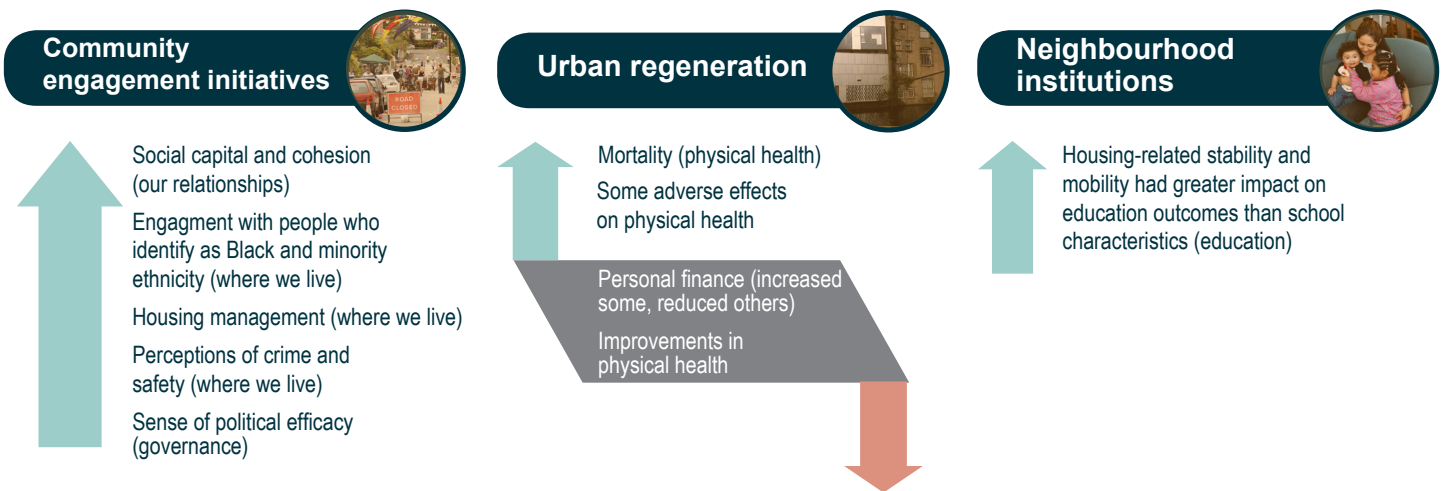


Reviews suggest that housing is particularly important for vulnerable groups, yet there is a lack of high quality review evidence of the links with wellbeing. As such, this will be the focus of our upcoming systematic review in late 2017.

If you would like to receive the review of housing for vulnerable groups when it becomes available in 2017, please send an email to info@whatworkswellbeing.org.

housing and neighbourhood regeneration

Regenerating neighbourhoods, gathering communities together and changing neighborhood intuitions: what impact do they have on wellbeing? A lot of the evidence comes from the United States, which may not be directly relevant for the UK. In all of these, it is difficult to separate out what is due to changes in housing and what is related to wider actions in the community, or changes taking place at the same time.



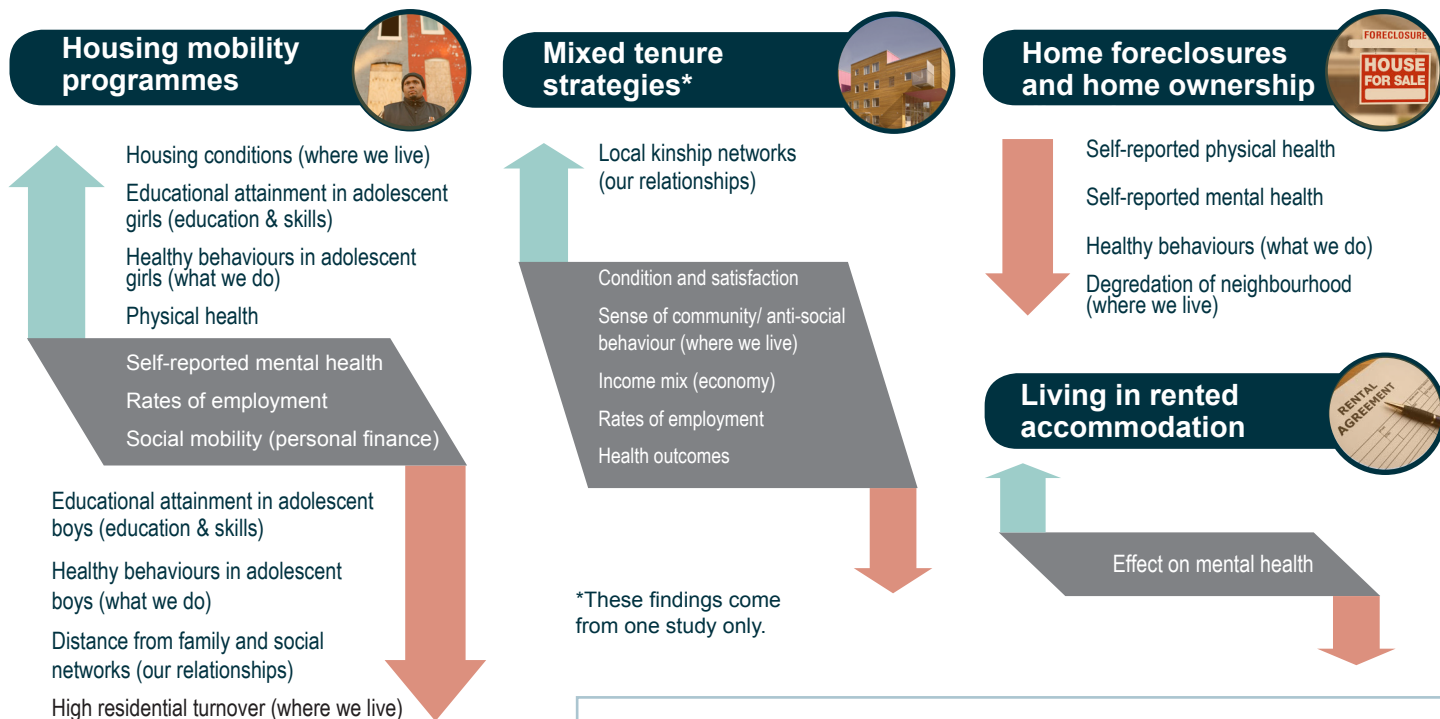
Future research should include measures of individual and community wellbeing, including subjective wellbeing




economic housing situation

How does the economic situation of tenants and homeowners change their wellbeing? Does it make a difference if a family is moved from a poorer to a richer neighbourhood, or poorer and more affluent households live together in a community, known as mixed tenure?

The evidence is mixed and not strong enough to draw any direct conclusions. Unsurprisingly, reviews have shown the negative health and neighbourhood effects of home foreclosures, but again without strong evidence.



For both mixed tenure and housing mobility, we identify evidence on the way a move is *made into* a mixed area (or how that mixed area comes about) along with the *longer term* impact of living in a mixed area.



Future research should include measures of individual and community wellbeing, including subjective wellbeing.

A systematic review would usefully assess the impact of the lack of affordable housing and the performance of affordability initiatives, both in the UK and internationally.

Recently published evidence means there is a case to update the 2012 (Sautkina et al) review on mixed tenure.

