

Evidence on placemaking in public housing

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RANGAHAU / RESEARCH

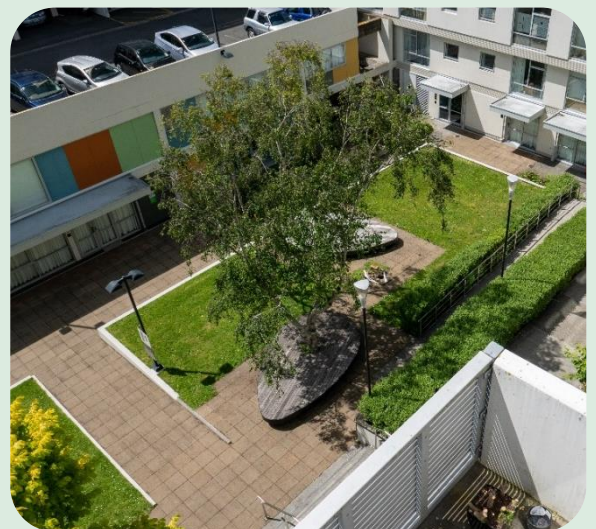
- This research reviewed the international evidence on placemaking in the context of public housing.
- Placemaking is defined as the practices, and interventions, through which people form a sense of place.
- Experiencing a sense of place or belonging in your neighbourhood is associated with a greater sense of wellbeing.
- Placemaking is likely to be particularly important to public housing tenants given that, due to overall lower incomes and poorer health status than the general population, they are more likely to spend time in their neighbourhoods.
- Reflecting this, placemaking is a key priority for public housing providers in many countries.

NGĀ HUA MATUA / KEY FINDINGS

- Public housing tenants often have a strong sense of place, in particular, those who had lived in their homes a long time.
- Tenants with a wealth of knowledge report little involvement in design around regeneration; in mixed-tenure communities, their preferences often come second to those of private residents.
- People with a sense of place have strong social networks, facilitated through proximity, familial relationships, and mutual assistance.
- Community involvement, included that facilitated by staff, connect people to place.
- Public spaces including streets and shared spaces such as hallways are important for placemaking, yet could be the setting for conflict between different tenure or age groups due to different understandings of appropriate use.
- Amenities, such as libraries, parks, shops, social services and recreational facilities, are highly valued by tenants as places to be with others outside the home and to provide for their needs. Proximity facilitated their use.
- Tenants were distressed by changes made to landscapes or placenames during the process of regeneration. Relocation can be experienced as a loss of sense of place. Retaining placenames, activities to celebrate and collect memories, and reunions and celebrations on sites affected by regeneration, can help.

WHAIKUPU / RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Housing providers:** Plan community spaces within developments; facilitate tenant input into regeneration and placemaking processes (keeping in mind mixed-tenure equity); build convenient to amenities; fund community development staff and events; connect tenants to placemaking activities; provide stable tenancies; support those disrupted by redevelopment.
- **Local government:** Fund amenities and events in neighbourhoods where public housing tenants live or where public housing may be built; encourage developers and housing providers to consider the placement of amenities in relation to housing.
- **Central government:** Fund and support local government and housing providers in the above.



Community spaces at Central Park Apartments, housing provided by Wellington City Housing / Te Toi Mahana (photo by Crystal Olin)