

**NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL:
INTERIM EVALUATION REPORT 2005**

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INTRODUCTION

Neighbourhood Renewal is a whole-of-government initiative that brings together the resources and ideas of residents, governments, local businesses and community groups to tackle disadvantage in areas with concentrations of public housing. Neighbourhood Renewal aims to reduce inequality, build more cohesive communities and make government services more responsive to the needs of communities.¹

This evaluation report provides an interim assessment of the extent Neighbourhood Renewal is achieving measurable progress in narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Victoria and the rest of the State. It has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Renewal Branch using data provided by government departments and community surveys results prepared by independent tertiary institutions.

The report is interim because it presents data gathered in the early stages of the initiative, namely the first or second year of what is an eight-year intervention. Additionally, some neighbourhood level data (eg some service utilisation data) were not available at the time of this report. A more comprehensive report will be prepared as projects are further advanced. A final independent evaluation will be commissioned when a definitive assessment of the initiative can be made.

The report compiles existing data in three categories:

- community survey data that measures baseline conditions
- community survey data that measures initial perceived changes over the first 12 months of renewal activities
- administrative data measuring change in key indicators of disadvantage.

The report is presented in four parts:

- overview of key findings
- aims of the evaluation and a methodology for measuring success
- presentation and analysis of key baseline data
- presentation and analysis of key change data.

Aims of the evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal

The evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal aims to:

- assess whether the initiative has narrowed the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the rest of the State
- provide information to government, service providers, local communities and other stakeholders about what works and what doesn't in Neighbourhood Renewal
- contribute to community building by empowering local communities to take greater control of their neighbourhood and influence government decision-making

¹ For a more detailed description of the initiative see *Creating a Fairer Victoria: Minister for Housing's Statement on Neighbourhood Renewal*, Department of Human Services, 2004, at www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au.

- strengthen and support Growing Victoria Together (GVT) and the overall evaluation of community building.²

Measuring success

The success of Neighbourhood Renewal is measured by the extent it achieves the six key objectives of the reform:

- increasing people's pride and participation in the community
- lifting employment, training and education opportunities and expanding local economic activity
- enhancing housing and the physical environment
- improving personal safety and reducing crime
- promoting health and wellbeing
- increasing access to services and improving government responsiveness.

Location of Neighbourhood Renewal

There are fifteen Neighbourhood Renewal project areas in metropolitan and regional Victoria. These are relatively small clearly defined geographic areas, characterised by a concentration of public housing and selected on the basis of multiple indicators of disadvantage.³



Two pilot projects – Wendouree West and Latrobe Valley - began in early 2002; the next eight – Fitzroy, Collingwood, Shepparton, Seymour, Eaglehawk, Long Gully, Maidstone-Braybrook, and Corio-Norlane – in 2002-03; the remaining five – Broadmeadows, Colac, Werribee, Ashburton-Ashwood-Chadstone, and Doveton-Eumemmerring – in 2003-04. Seven sites are in metropolitan Melbourne and eight in provincial cities or country towns.

² The evaluation framework is set out in *Neighbourhood Renewal: Evaluation Framework*, Office of Housing, 2002, at www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au.

³ For information on size see Explanatory Note 1 in Appendix 1.

1. OVERVIEW OF KEY FINDINGS

Five key findings emerge from the first round evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal.

1. Confirmation that Neighbourhood Renewal areas are significantly more disadvantaged than other parts of Victoria.
2. As a whole-of-government place-based strategy, Neighbourhood Renewal is yielding positive results and improving conditions in disadvantaged communities.
3. Progress across all indicators of renewal is uneven.
4. Levels of resourcing and sustained action appear to be factors influencing the extent of neighbourhood improvement.
5. Resident support for Neighbourhood Renewal, for new models of community governance and for changes to the way government works is strong.

1. Confirmation that Neighbourhood Renewal areas are significantly more disadvantaged than other parts of Victoria.

Community surveys show significantly more residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas judged local conditions and opportunities as poor compared to residents in surrounding communities and Victoria overall. On average two-thirds of residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas felt local conditions as a whole were poor or average and only one third thought local conditions were good. In the surrounding communities half the residents felt conditions were good.

Perceptions of health, community safety and social connectedness were all substantially poorer in Neighbourhood Renewal areas than state averages:

- 61% of residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas reported good personal health compared to 85% of Victorians
- 56% of residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas feel unsafe in their street after dark compared to 22% of Victorians
- 16% of residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas could raise \$2000 in two days in an emergency compared to 80% of Victorians.

Community survey results reinforce the administrative data used to select priority locations for renewal. Together they provide evidence that people of low socio-economic status, disadvantaged across all indicators, are clustered geographically in particular neighbourhoods in Victoria.

In addition, data in this report reinforces the notion that where people of low-socio-economic status are geographically concentrated, there is a 'neighbourhood effect' that multiplies the impact of disadvantage.

2. Neighbourhood Renewal as a whole-of-government place-based strategy is yielding positive results and improving conditions in disadvantaged communities.

Across key indicators of disadvantage residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas reported improved conditions after 12 months of renewal. Important early gains were perceived by residents in:

- housing (43% said it got better compared to 7% who said it got worse)
- physical environment (31% said it got better, 12% worse)
- community pride (23% said it got better, 10% worse)
- local learning & training opportunities (22% said it got better, 7% worse)
- performance of government (19% said it got better, 14% worse)
- community participation (18% said it got better, 12% worse)
- health & welfare services (17% said it got better, 9% worse).

Administrative data also suggests progress in improving local conditions in Neighbourhood Renewal communities:

- residents comprise 40-50% of participants in the local governance structures of most projects in 2005
- over 1000 community job places have been created since 2002-03 with 60% of participants going into ongoing employment, education or training
- crimes against property were down in 70% of Neighbourhood Renewal areas, crimes against persons down in 50%, and recorded offences down in 60% of areas between 2002-03 and 2003-04
- up to 40% reduction in crime and violence in 'hotspots' between 2002-03 and 2003-04
- for public housing in the 10 initial Neighbourhood Renewal areas, from 2002-03 to 2003-04:
 - vacancies down in 80% of areas (down overall from 6% to 2% compared to a state-wide decline from 3% to 1%)
 - average arrears down in 80% of areas (down overall by 16% compared to a state-wide decline of 5%)
 - offer acceptances up in 50% of areas (up overall from 63% in 02 to 84% in 2004 in parallel with a state-wide rise from 61% to 84%)
 - turnover down in 80% of areas (down overall from 21% in 2002 to 17% in 2004 compared to a state-wide decline from 15% to 12%).

3. Progress across all indicators of renewal is uneven.

The two measures in the community survey for which slightly more residents felt conditions had worsened rather than improved were personal health (by a margin of 3%) and the local economy (by a margin of 4%).

Given the levels of disadvantage experienced by communities selected for Neighbourhood Renewal and the complex causal determinants of health status, it is difficult to effect rapid change in these indicators.

Better targeted and sustained investment in health interventions and support for local enterprise development may be necessary to achieve improved outcomes comparable to those in housing, the physical environment and social inclusion.

4. Levels of resourcing and sustained action appear to be factors influencing the extent of neighbourhood improvement.

Evaluation results show that many of the initiatives brought together under Neighbourhood Renewal are beginning to make a real difference in disadvantaged communities. The data also shows that there is some way to go before these changes are fully embedded and sustainable.

For example, despite the success of measures like the Community Jobs Program the scale of such initiatives was insufficient to impact on entrenched exclusion from the labour market: for public housing tenants in Neighbourhood Renewal areas, the workforce participation rate remained unchanged at 30% from 2002 to 2003 then deteriorated slightly to 29% from 2003 to 2004.

The evidence also indicates that the longest-standing projects have achieved the greatest progress. Sustained action appears to be significant in achieving tangible outcomes.

5. Resident support for Neighbourhood Renewal, for new models of community governance, and for changes to the way government works is strong.

High levels of community participation in the governance of projects and improving perceptions about the performance of government in Neighbourhood Renewal areas indicate strong resident support for place-based changes to the way government works. On average 19% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents felt government performance had improved in the first 12 months of renewal; in Fitzroy this figure was doubled to 38%.

Where government programs and relevant statutory bodies and non-government agencies have joined up, especially in housing, employment and training, environmental and crime prevention initiatives, community survey and administrative data demonstrate significantly improved outcomes for the community.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Evaluation Framework

Thirty-two core indicators have been developed to measure progress in Neighbourhood Renewal (Appendix 2). Indicators and data sources have been chosen on the basis of their:

- relevance to the objectives of Neighbourhood Renewal
- validity and usefulness for local action planning
- utility in further refining Neighbourhood Renewal policy
- capacity to be reasonably influenced by Neighbourhood Renewal.

The evaluation uses data derived from administrative sources and community surveys collected between 2002-03 and 2003-04 to provide information about the 32 progress indicators. The administrative data is largely sourced from government departments, while the survey data is collected via a biennial community survey conducted by each Neighbourhood Renewal community in conjunction with an independent tertiary institution. The survey has been designed to be conducted by local residents and to give them power over information so as to build a sense of community.

Together these two sources of data cover 28 of the indicators; data for the remaining four is sourced from business reports and other surveys.

Community Survey

The biennial community survey of 300 local residents aged 18 and over generates statistically valid information specific to the project area (unlike much of the available administrative data). It was designed by Professor Mike Salvaris, then at the Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University, in conjunction with the residents of Wendouree West and Latrobe Valley and members of the Neighbourhood Renewal team. The survey is informed by the Institute's 'Healthy Community' model for measuring progress and wellbeing.

The survey provides measures and insights at five levels:

- perceptions of self (eg assessment of the person's own health)
- perceptions of the community (eg assessment of the health of the community)
- reasons behind each assessment
- ideas for what might be done to improve the situation
- a retrospective assessment of change during the previous 12 months.

The survey uses nearly 90 questions with some key questions common to the Victorian Population Health Survey and the Local Safety Survey in order to allow wider comparisons to be made. Where available, internationally validated questions have been used. All questions have been trialled. The format of the survey allows for cross-checking of key issues using related questions and for cross tabulations using demographic data.

The survey generates demographic data and data on resident perceptions of current conditions and change. Since there is limited quantitative administrative data available at a Neighbourhood Renewal area level, the community survey

data are the most accurate available. They also highlight the importance of ensuring that changes achieved by the initiative are tangible and manifest to residents. It is important, for example, not only to reduce crime rates but also to enable residents to feel safer.

An abbreviated form of the face-to-face survey is administered by telephone to 150 residents selected randomly from ten census collection districts proximate to the Neighbourhood Renewal area. Together these 150 persons comprise the Control Group. Comparisons can thus be made between the Neighbourhood Renewal community and their local counterparts (the control group). This comparative measure is called the ***Relative Disadvantage Index***.⁴

The ten collection districts for the telephone survey are ranked in deciles based on the Socio-Economic Indexes For Areas (SEIFA), with 15 residents interviewed from each. This segmentation enables comparisons to be made between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and particular parts of the control group. Comparing the data from the Neighbourhood Renewal population with data from the bottom three deciles of the control group (i.e. the lowest 30% on the SEIFA scale) allows conclusions to be drawn about place-related conditions affecting disadvantage. This particular comparison generates the ***Neighbourhood Effect Index***.⁵

The survey is carried out in each project area by a partnership between Neighbourhood Renewal and a tertiary institute that undertakes an initial analysis of the data.⁶ Survey data is jointly owned by the local residents and the Department of Human Services. Information from the community survey is augmented by bimonthly reports, a residents' walk-around survey of physical conditions and an environmental sustainability checklist.

The survey also functions as a valuable engagement and communication tool. The face-to-face interviews of 300 residents in each project area are conducted by other local residents who have volunteered and been specially trained for this task. This builds the skills of individuals as well as empowering the whole community with significant information about itself.

Administrative Data

The other major source of evaluation information is administrative data collected from across government. However only limited data are available specific to Neighbourhood Renewal areas, these being comparatively small in relation to local government and even postcode areas. The principal forms of administrative data pertinent to this evaluation are:

- rates of resident participation in governance
- housing turnover, vacancy, arrears, and acceptance rates
- rates for crime against property and persons
- service utilisation rates
- literacy, numeracy, school retention and lifelong learning rates.

⁴ See Explanatory Note 3 in Appendix 1.

⁵ See Explanatory Note 4 in Appendix 1.

⁶ For a list of the tertiary institutes see Appendix 5.

Typology of data: baseline and change

Two types of data are presented in this report: baseline data and change data.

The *baseline data* from the survey capture residents' perceptions of current conditions in their neighbourhood. When complemented by administrative data, the survey data enable comparisons to be made between Neighbourhood Renewal communities and other populations such as the surrounding community or the State. Baseline data can also be used to make comparisons between individual project areas.

The *change data* are also drawn from the community survey and from administrative sources. The survey contains retrospective questions asking residents to assess change that has occurred in a number of conditions in the neighbourhood during the previous 12 months. Perception of change data from the first survey provide an initial indication of the impact of Neighbourhood Renewal prior to subsequent surveys being undertaken every two years. The administrative data generally measure change from one financial year to the next, and sometimes over a two-year period. In this context therefore, 'change' refers to progress achieved in the short-term.

Stronger measures of long-term change will become available once successive community surveys are completed and the body of administrative data is built up. Figures from the first survey measuring residents' perceptions of current conditions function initially as baseline data. When the second survey is conducted two years later, comparison between the two sets of figures will allow initial baseline data to generate change data across all indicators. Perception of change data from later surveys will of their nature give a clearer indication of the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Renewal strategy in the longer term. At that point the combination of survey and other data will constitute a more substantial resource to assess the progress of the initiative.

3. BASELINE DATA

Selected baseline data are presented below to provide information about:

- current conditions (aggregate current conditions in Neighbourhood Renewal areas)
- cross-project comparisons (comparison of conditions between Neighbourhood Renewal projects)
- the Relative Disadvantage Index (comparison between Neighbourhood Renewal projects and surrounding area control groups and state-wide benchmarks)
- the Neighbourhood Effect Index (comparison between Neighbourhood Renewal projects and low socio-economic status control group).

In the community survey, residents are asked how they rate a number of current conditions in the neighbourhood, all pertaining to the six objectives of Neighbourhood Renewal.⁷

Current Conditions

Current conditions in Neighbourhood Renewal areas are evaluated by assessing the percentage of residents who rated each of the indicators of local conditions as 'good', 'average' or 'poor' (see Table 1).⁸

Table 1: % residents rating current conditions

	% Good	% Average	% Poor
Neighbourhood generally	44	42	14
Pride in neighbourhood	13	45	37
Participation in local activities	10	36	47
Sense of belonging	61	14	22
Education & training opportunities	41	36	19
Job opportunities	16	35	45
Local employment services	25	38	30
Own household income	19	46	35
Local economy	15	42	36
Own housing	74	17	14
Physical environment	22	52	26
Crime and personal safety	16	42	40
Feel safe in street after dark	36	7	56
General health	20	51	27
Own health	61	26	14
Community services	45	37	16
Public Transport	48	29	19

⁷ See Appendix 3 for a list of the questions.

⁸ For variations on these categories see Explanatory Note 5 in Appendix 1.

The current conditions which the highest percentage of residents saw as 'good' were:

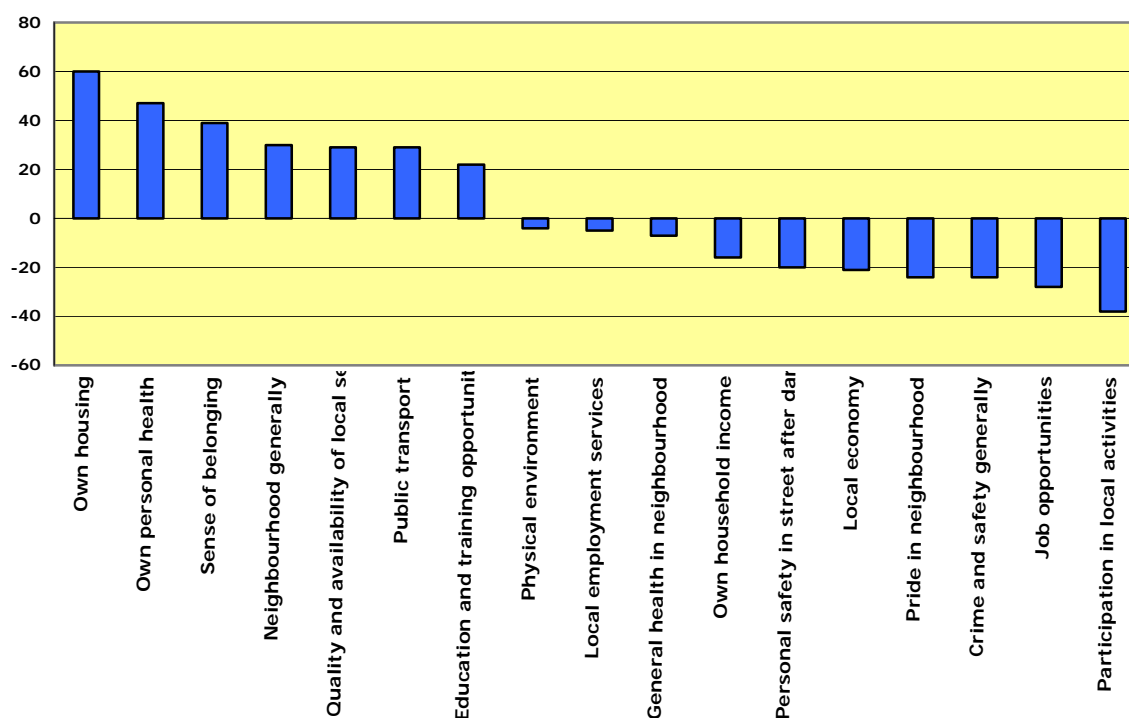
- own housing (74%)
- sense of belonging and own health (both 61%)
- public transport (48%)
- community services (45%)
- neighbourhood generally (44%).

On the other hand the current conditions which the highest percentage of residents saw as 'poor' were:

- feeling safe in the street after dark (56%)
- participation in local activities (47%)
- job opportunities (45%)
- pride in the neighbourhood (37%)
- local economy (36%)
- own household income (35%).

Graph 1 illustrates net perceptions about current conditions averaged across all Neighbourhood Renewal projects, arranged from best to worst. The net figure is the percentage of residents who viewed a condition as 'good' over and above those who saw it as 'poor'.⁹

Graph 1: Average net % current conditions



These net figures provide important pointers to the priority areas for action to address disadvantage in Neighbourhood Renewal locations. Table 2 presents the figures on which Graph 1 is based. For example, 60% more residents thought housing was good than thought it was poor.

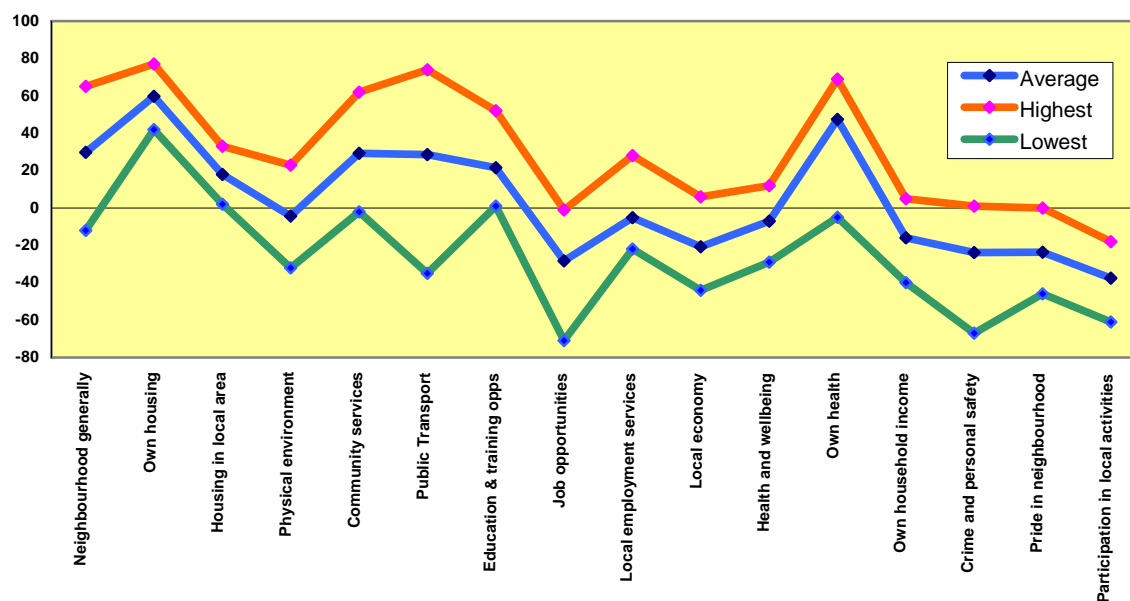
⁹ See Appendix 1 Explanation of Terms.

Table 2: Average net % current conditions

Current Condition	Average net %
Own housing	+60
Own personal health	+47
Sense of belonging	+39
Neighbourhood generally	+30
Quality and availability of local services	+29
Public transport	+29
Education and training opportunities	+22
Physical environment	-4
Local employment services	-5
General health in neighbourhood	-7
Own household income	-16
Personal safety in street after dark	-20
Local economy	-21
Pride in neighbourhood	-24
Crime and safety generally	-24
Job opportunities	-28
Participation in local activities	-38

Cross-project comparisons

There are notable similarities in the perceptions of current conditions across most Neighbourhood Renewal projects. Graph 2 displays the highest and lowest figure in relation to the average for each of the current conditions. It shows that on the basis of net figures, the pattern of perceptions is generally similar across all project areas, with close coincidence in several cases but a degree of divergence in others.

Graph 2: Net % current conditions

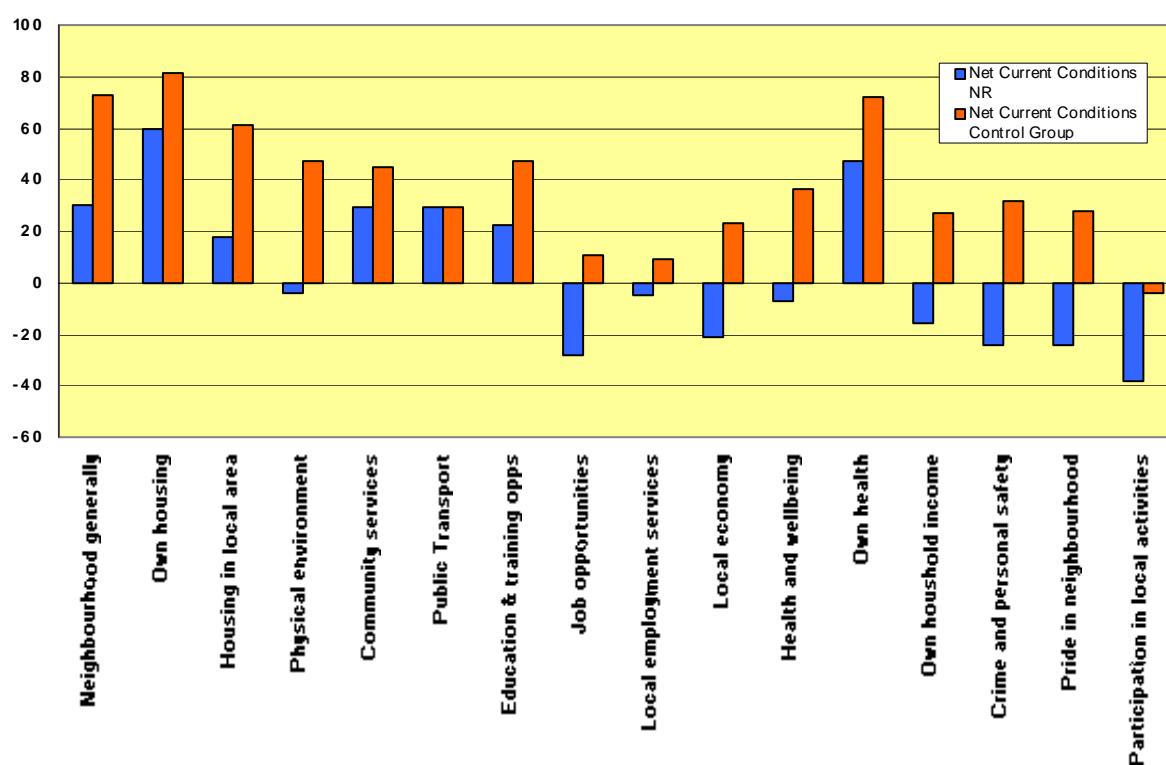
In spite of common trends, the degree of divergence in some instances is quite striking. For example, against an overall average of 48%, 75% of Fitzroy residents rated public transport as 'good' compared with only 19% of Colac residents; this is readily understandable in view of the inner-urban versus rural location of the two sites.

When it comes to the 'poor' rating, similarly large individual differences emerge. While an average 45% rated job opportunities as 'poor', 73% of Seymour residents did so, compared with only 25% of Fitzroy residents. As above, figures significantly different from the average warrant further investigation; local factors such as Fitzroy's proximity to and Seymour's distance from commerce and industry offer ready first-level explanations for individual difference.

Relative Disadvantage Index

The perceptions of current conditions by Neighbourhood Renewal residents are best interpreted by comparison with those of control group residents. On every measure, even the positive housing, personal health and sense of belonging indicators, the perceptions of Neighbourhood Renewal residents were significantly less positive than those of control group residents. When the net figures for Neighbourhood Renewal residents are compared with the net figures for the control group, a measure is generated called the *Relative Disadvantage Index*.¹⁰ Graph 3 prepares the way for the Relative Disadvantage Index by juxtaposing the net figures for Neighbourhood Renewal residents and for the control group in relation to current conditions.

Graph 3: Net current conditions: NR residents vs control group



¹⁰ See Explanatory Note 3 in Appendix 1.

The numerical difference between the two sets of figures on each indicator is the Relative Disadvantage Index (Table 3). The index clearly illustrates the gap between the two groups in regard to their perception of current conditions. For example there is a 56 point difference in the average net perceptions of crime and safety between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the control groups.

Table 3: Relative Disadvantage Index

Crime and personal safety	-56
Physical environment	-53
Pride in neighbourhood	-51
Local economy	-44
Health and wellbeing	-43
Housing in local area	-43
Neighbourhood generally	-43
Own household income	-43
Job opportunities	-40
Participation in local activities	-32
Education & training opportunities	-26
Own health	-24
Own housing	-21
Community services	-16
Local employment services	-14
Public Transport	-1
Average	-34

Together the graph and table reveal a striking difference in perception of current conditions between residents of the Neighbourhood Renewal area and those of the surrounding area. Neighbourhood Renewal residents' net perceptions of the 16 current conditions were on average 34 points more negative than those of the control group.

In three cases the difference was over 50 points: crime and safety (-56), the local environment (-54), and neighbourhood pride (-51). On only one condition – public transport - were the net perceptions almost equivalent. Taken together the figures provide further evidence for the identification of the Neighbourhood Renewal areas as comprehensively disadvantaged in relation to their surrounding communities.

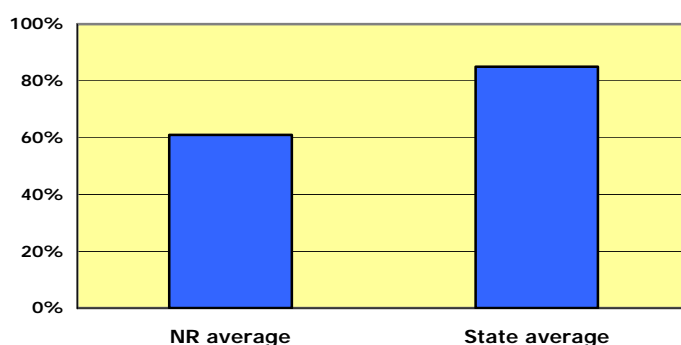
Statewide comparisons

A number of questions in the community survey were designed to correlate with questions in statewide Victorian surveys. This allows comparisons to be made between the perceptions of residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the perceptions of Victorians as a whole. Perceptions of health, community safety and social connectedness were all substantially poorer in Neighbourhood Renewal areas than state averages. Only in the area of housing standards were the views of people who lived in Neighbourhood Renewal areas more positive than the benchmark public housing figure.

Self-rated health

Self-rated health data are acknowledged in the international epidemiology literature to correlate closely with morbidity and mortality data in the population.¹¹ In Neighbourhood Renewal areas, 61% of residents expressed a positive view of their own personal health. However, the response is relatively poor when compared to Victorians as a whole. The Victorian Population Health Survey indicates that 85% of Victorians reported their health to be good or even better (Graph 4).¹²

Graph 4: Good personal health: NR (Community Survey Q 44) vs Victoria (VPHS)



Personal safety

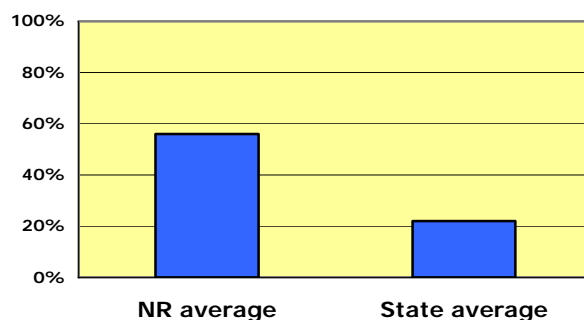
In Neighbourhood Renewal areas, 56% of residents indicated that they did not feel safe walking alone down their street after dark. This compares poorly against the state-wide average of only 22% of Victorians who do not feel safe in their street after dark (Graph 5).¹³

¹¹ Victorian Population Health Survey 2003.

¹² Victorian Population Health Survey 2003.

¹³ Ibid.

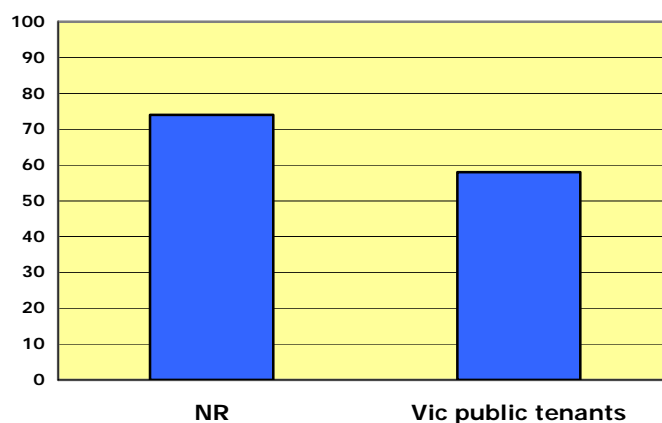
Graph 5: Feeling unsafe in street after dark - Community Survey Q 52



Social housing

In the area of social housing, a remarkably high 74% of residents rated their own housing positively, more than the state-wide average of 58% of public housing tenants satisfied with the overall condition of their home (National Social Housing Survey 2003). Some caution needs to be exercised in making this comparison, as in contrast to the National Social Housing Survey, the survey of Neighbourhood Renewal residents included both private and public housing residents. Another factor to be considered is the fact that housing works were being undertaken in a number of project areas before the survey was commenced. Actual or expected improvements may possibly have contributed to the high Neighbourhood Renewal figure.

Graph 6: % residents satisfied with own housing – Community Survey Q 10

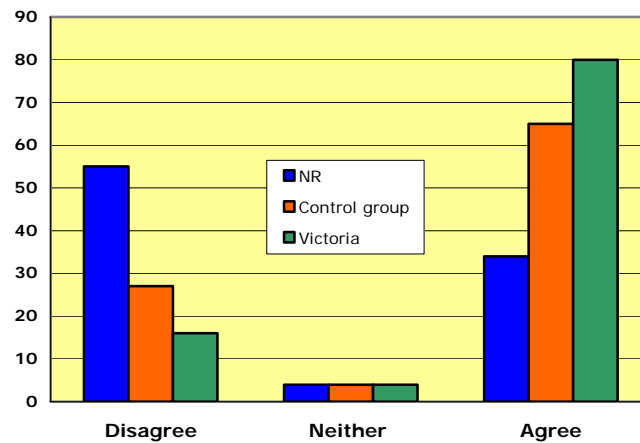


Community connectedness

Two other sets of figures relating to community pride and participation are instructive by way of contrast. Residents were asked in one survey question whether many family members and friends lived in the neighbourhood or close by (leaving residents free to interpret 'close by' as they wished). 57% agreed that this was so while 34% disagreed, indicating that a clear majority of residents were socially connected to the neighbourhood.

Another question (replicated from the Victorian Population Health Survey) asked Neighbourhood Renewal residents whether in an emergency they would be able to raise \$2000 in two days from relatives or friends.

Graph 7: Can raise \$2000 in 2 days in emergency – Community Survey Q 60

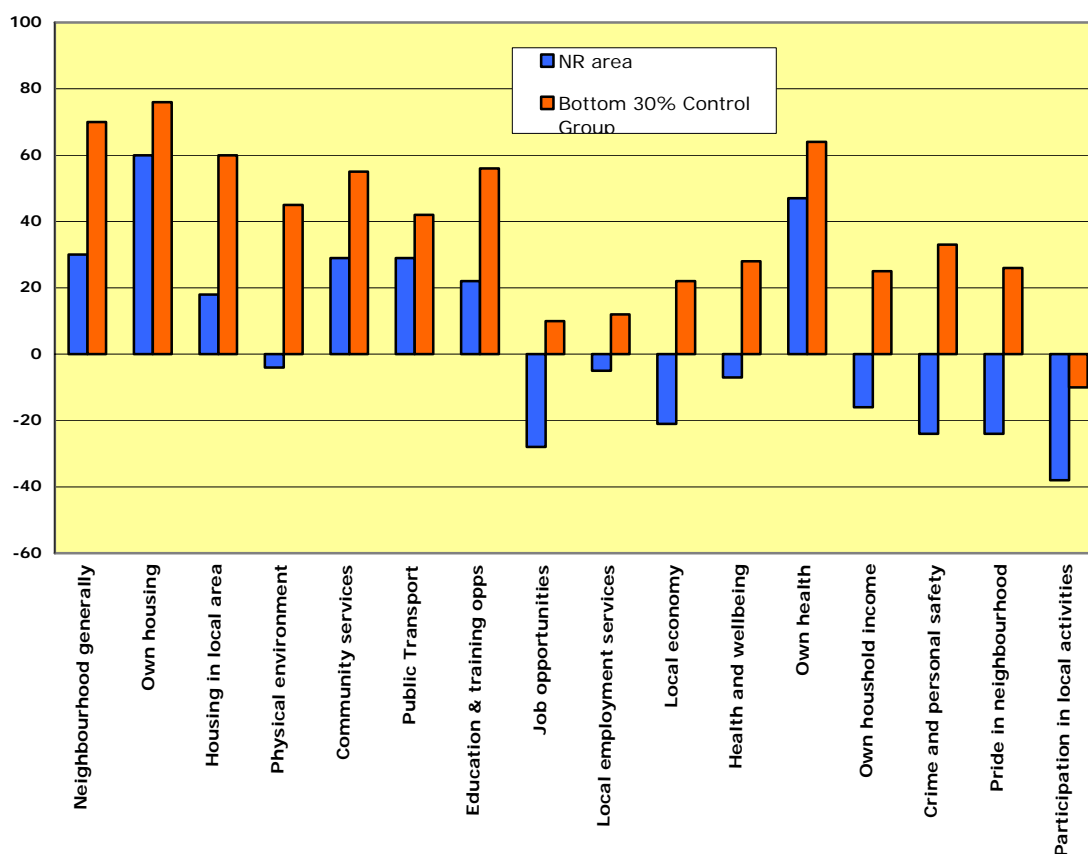


Reversing the previous figures, 55% of residents, a clear majority, asserted that they could not do so while 34% claimed they could. In other words, in spite of having a local social network the majority of residents were still struggling financially. Furthermore, this contrasts with the general population, 80% of whom say they could raise the \$2000 in two days and only 16% said they could not (Victorian Population Health Survey 2003).

Neighbourhood Effect Index

A further comparison can be made between the perceptions of Neighbourhood Renewal residents and those of their lower socio-economic counterparts in the surrounding local government area, ie. residents in the bottom 30% of the SEIFA index.

Graph 8: Net current conditions – NR residents vs bottom 30% control group



Graph 8 compares the net figures for the Neighbourhood Renewal population with those for the low socio-economic control group. The difference between the two on each indicator is the *Neighbourhood Effect Index*.¹⁴ Table 4 presents the Neighbourhood Effect Index, arranged from the most negative to the least negative.

¹⁴ See Explanatory Note 4 in Appendix 1.

Table 4: Neighbourhood Effect Index (10 projects)

Crime and personal safety	-56
Physical environment	-52
Pride in neighbourhood	-47
Own household income	-42
Housing in local area	-41
Local economy	-39
Neighbourhood generally	-38
Job opportunities	-38
Education & training opportunities	-35
Health and wellbeing	-35
Participation in local activities	-25
Community Services	-21
Own health	-21
Local employment services	-17
Own housing	-15
Public Transport	-11
Average	-34

It might be expected that the difference between the residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas and other low socio-economic groups would be relatively small. In fact, on average the Neighbourhood Effect Index is 34 points, identical to the average figure for the Relative Disadvantage Index.¹⁵

The comparison of the two indices reinforces the assertion that comprehensive disadvantage concentrates in particular neighbourhoods. If there is almost as much difference between the views of Neighbourhood Renewal residents and their low socio-economic counterparts as there is between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the control group as a whole, this fact points to location rather than socio-economic status alone as a determining factor in complex disadvantage. Where there are exceptionally high concentrations of disadvantage in particular places, the complex of disadvantage gives rise to an additional effect on the opportunities, conditions and perceptions of the local population. This evidence further reinforces the necessity for place-based responses to concentrated disadvantage.

¹⁵ It must be noted that most but not all, i.e. 10 out of 14, surveys included the SEIFA categories and allowed the calculation of the Neighbourhood Effect Index.

4. CHANGE DATA

Change data provide information that identifies variation in Neighbourhood Renewal progress indicators over time. Change data are drawn both from specific questions in the community survey and from administrative sources.

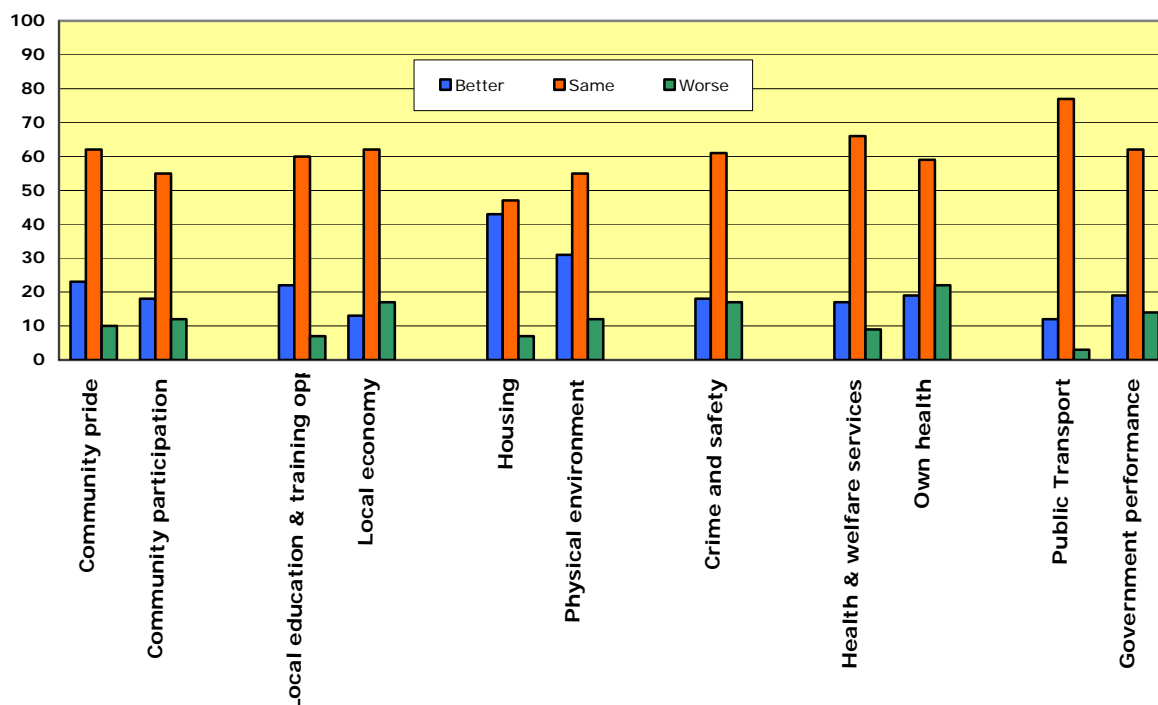
In the survey, as well as giving an assessment of current conditions, residents are questioned about changes they have perceived in key Neighbourhood Renewal goals. They are asked whether certain aspects of life in the neighbourhood improved, stayed the same, or became worse in the previous twelve months.¹⁶

While it is not being claimed that all the change evidenced by this data is necessarily attributable to Neighbourhood Renewal alone, the fact that there is measurable change on indicators specifically formulated for the strategy offers grounds for confidence in the effectiveness of the initiative.

Community Survey change data

Community Survey change data have been utilised from nine of the ten established project areas whereas the administrative data applies to the ten.¹⁷ The five more recent project areas have not been included because their surveys were conducted within the first 12 or even the first few months of the initiative, thus making it less meaningful to ask what change had been achieved in the previous 12 months. Graph 9 indicates the average perceptions of change against key Neighbourhood Renewal indicators in the nine established areas.

Graph 9: Perceived changes in initial 12 months – average % of better, same, worse for 9 older projects



¹⁶ See Appendix 4 for a list of indicators and data sources.

¹⁷ See p. 3 for a list of the longer established and the newer projects. Corio-Norlane belongs in the former group but was not expecting its completed survey report until the end of March 2005, hence this paper's reliance on survey data from the other nine areas.

After only one year of renewal, residents perceived some significant changes. The most positive changes noted were:

- 43% of residents perceived an improvement in housing (cf. 7% who said it got worse)
- 31% an improvement in the physical environment (cf. 12% worse)
- 23% believed community pride was stronger (cf. 10% worse)
- 22% observed that local education and training opportunities had improved (cf. 7% worse).

Calculated as net figures, in every case bar two more residents felt conditions had improved rather than worsened.

Graph 10: Net % perceived changes in initial 12 months – 9 established projects

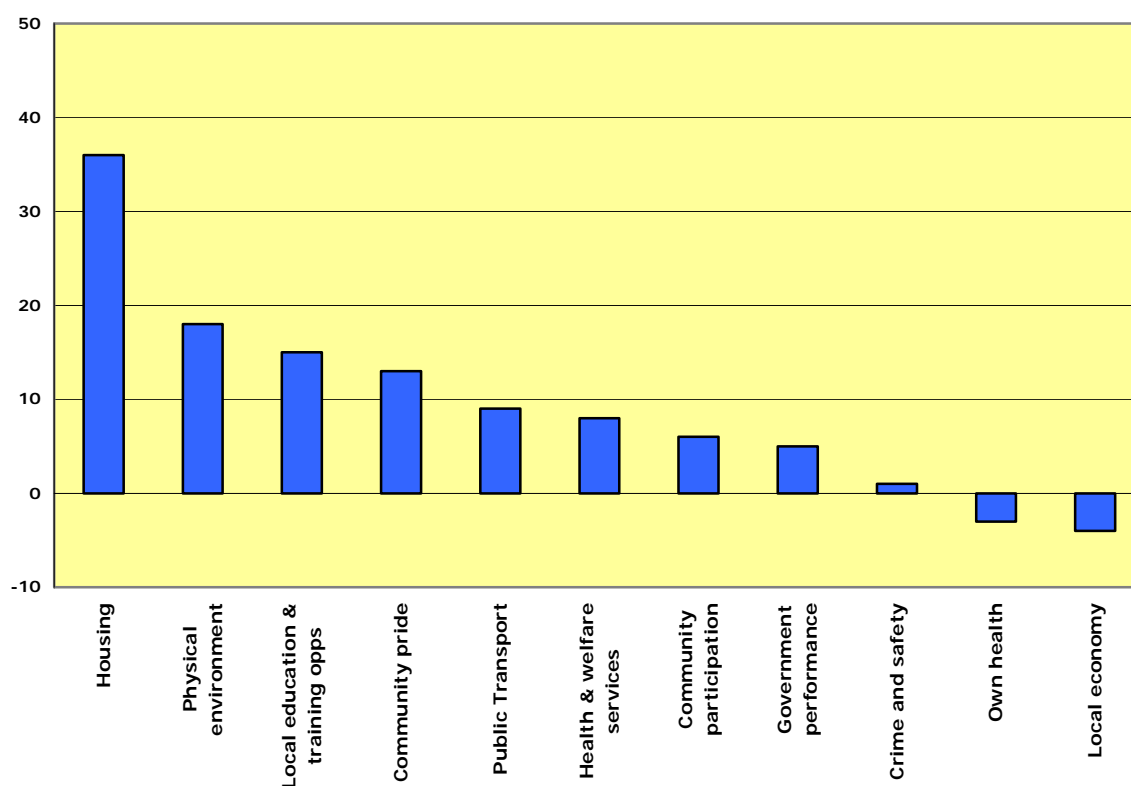


Table 5: Net % perceived changes – 9 established projects

Housing	36
Physical environment	18
Local education & training opportunities	15
Community pride	13
Public transport	9
Health & welfare services	8
Community participation	6
Government performance	5
Crime & safety	1
Own health	-3
Local economy	-4

The best outcomes achieved so far have been in housing and the physical environment, not surprising since a substantial proportion of Neighbourhood Renewal's funding has been invested in capital works, housing upgrades and physical improvements. Housing and the environment scored highest in terms of the average number of residents who saw change for the better (39% and 26% respectively) as well as the average net figure (32% and 24% respectively). The best individual results were achieved in Fitzroy where 65% of residents saw improved housing and 62% an improved environment.

Given the focus on local learning and training, community pride and participation, early perceived improvements on these measures are also significant:

- an average 23% of residents saw improvement in community pride (net 13%), the highest single figure being 36% in Long Gully
- 22% saw improvement in local education and training opportunities (net 15%), with a high of 37% in Fitzroy
- 19% saw change for the better in community participation (net 6%), with a high of 27% in Wendouree West.

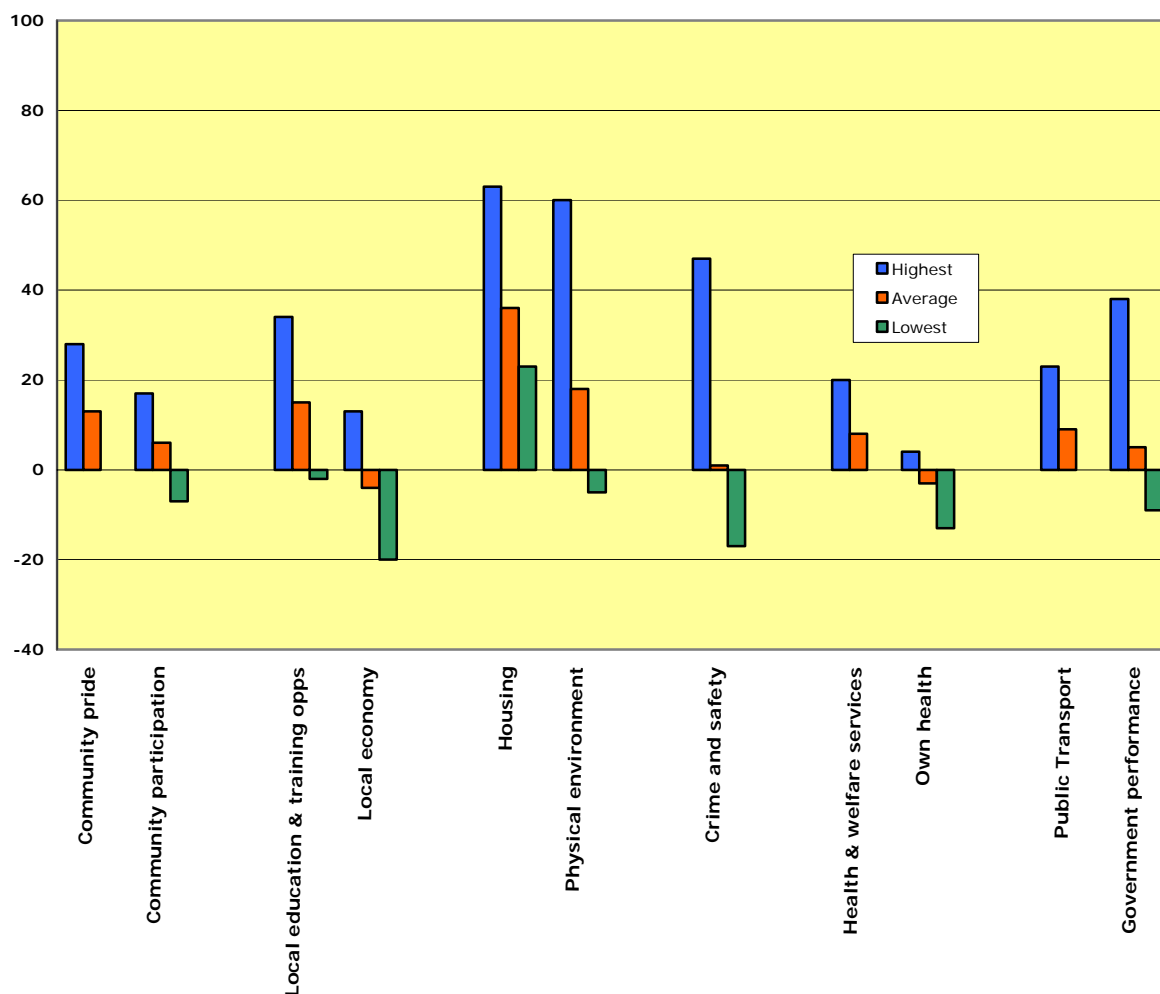
Residents also identified a small improvement in the performance of government within 12 months. In Fitzroy the net percentage of residents who perceived improvement in government service was 38%. These outcomes would appear to endorse the whole-of-government place-based approach adopted by Neighbourhood Renewal.

Residents were almost evenly divided as to whether there had been improvement in crime and safety. These figures support the reasonable presumption that entrenched factors of disadvantage such as a depressed local economy or a culture of crime can only be modified by sustained and concentrated effort and require a longer lead time than 12 months to register positive change. But it should be noted that where crime prevention initiatives had been under way in particular projects for some time residents noted significant improvements (see below).

The two measures for which marginally more residents felt conditions had worsened rather than improved were the local economy and personal health, which recorded net figures of -4% and -3% respectively. Each of these warrants further investigation. The perceived worsening of economic conditions parallels the view of the 36% of residents who perceived the local economy as poor in spite of the positive state of economic conditions in the nation at large. The perceived worsening in personal health echoes Neighbourhood Renewal residents' less positive view of their personal health in comparison with the state average (Graph 5). These figures suggest a need for further measures that impact on employment opportunities and local economic activity and on personal health.

The average figures described above mask variations between projects. Graph 11 compares the average net perceived changes with the highest and lowest changes in any specific project. The purpose of the graph is to show the range of values rather than to identify the individual projects which scored highest or lowest.

Graph 11: Net perceived changes in initial 12 months – highest, average, lowest for 9 older projects



It is noteworthy that some project areas have effected significant improvement on particular measures when an issue has been identified and targeted for concentrated effort and pertinent partnerships have been established – in other words, where ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ processes intersect. This is most obviously the case with crime and safety. In Fitzroy, for example, where there have been comprehensive efforts to tackle crime in collaboration with Victoria Police, a net 47% of residents perceived an improvement in conditions. Local strategies targeted to crime ‘hot spots’ led to three Neighbourhood Renewal projects winning Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards in 2004:

- the Latrobe Valley for its work on Glendonald Park
- Collingwood-Fitzroy for its community engagement achievements
- Shepparton for the work of its health and safety working group.

Given that a net 47% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents in Fitzroy saw improvement in crime and safety, it is worth noting that other indicators for Fitzroy were also strongly positive: a net 63% saw improvement in housing, 60% in the physical environment, and 38% in government performance.

Administrative change data

This section presents administrative data about changes that have occurred in the ten Neighbourhood Renewal projects operating since 2002 or earlier.

Pride And Participation

Indicator: increased resident involvement in NR decision-making.

Data source: Bi-monthly Neighbourhood Renewal regional reports

In mid-2004 the requirement that all Neighbourhood Renewal projects have at least 40% resident membership of their Steering Committee was upgraded to 50%. This change is still in the process of being implemented. At the time of this report, of the 10 established projects two have more than 50% resident membership, five have approximately 40%, one has 20% and two are in the process of reconfiguring their governance structures.

Employment And Learning Opportunities

Indicator: successful transition of Community Jobs Program participants to employment or training.

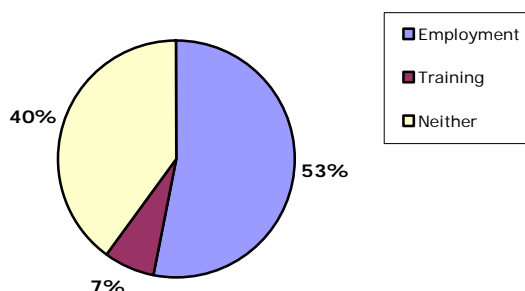
Data source: Neighbourhood Renewal

The Community Jobs Program (CJP) is an element of the state government's *Jobs for Victoria* initiative administered by the Employment Programs Division of the Department for Victorian Communities. It consists of two components (CJP – Jobs and Training, and CJP – Employment Initiatives) targeted at the most disadvantaged job seekers in the labour market. Priority is given to Neighbourhood Renewal areas and partnerships.

CJP – Jobs and Training projects normally employ a minimum of 12 job seekers for up to 15 weeks. Participants are provided with an opportunity to experience paid work situations, develop skills, be involved in projects that benefit the local community and improve their prospects of finding on-going employment and/or further education within their local communities.

Since 2002-03 over 1,000 community job places have been created. A sample survey of 12 Neighbourhood Renewal-related CJP projects found that of 55 respondents, 29 had gone on to employment and four into training, resulting in a total of 60% achieving post-CJP employment or training.

Graph 12: Post-CJP employment and training



While the sample is very small these figures indicate the effectiveness of the Community Jobs Program in enabling unemployed residents to become participants in the workforce. However the challenge to make this kind of difference on a sufficiently large scale remains to be met.

Indicator: increased workforce participation.

Data source: Office of Housing

Baseline data from the community surveys indicate that on average 42% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents participate in the workforce, participation being defined as in employment, on a youth or study allowance, or on unemployment benefits, and non-participation as receiving the age pension or a disability, sole parent or other benefit. This figure refers to the whole survey sample of residents, for whom there was a minimum age of 18 and no maximum age.

The Neighbourhood Renewal population at large includes home-owners and private renters along with public housing tenants. Data specific to the latter presents a different picture. The workforce participation rate of public housing tenants – that is, the principal income earner in each household - is not only much lower but has also changed very little. From 2002 to 2003 the workforce participation rate for public housing tenants in the initial ten project areas remained unchanged at 30%, then from 2003 to 2004 deteriorated marginally to 29% (Table 6).

Table 6: Public housing tenants' workforce participation rates

	30 June 2002	30 June 2003	30 June 2004
Participating	30%	30%	29%
Not participating	70%	70%	71%

These figures suggest that in spite of the success of a range of interventions including the Community Jobs Program – Jobs & Training, enterprise development, public tenant employment clauses and targeting of employment and training services, the scale of these initiatives is currently too small to impact on entrenched exclusion from the labour market. The data indicate that ongoing investment may be required in the targeting and integration of labour market programs such as the Community Jobs Program, apprenticeships and traineeships, pre-vocational training and improved resident access to employment services.

Indicator: increased literacy and numeracy of primary-school-aged children.

Data source: Department of Education & Training

Indicator: increased retention in secondary school.

Data source: Department of Education & Training

Indicator: increased participation of adults in lifelong learning.

Data source: Department of Education & Training

Current neighbourhood level data for these three indicators were not available at the time of this report.

Housing And The Physical Environment

Indicator: reduction in graffiti, vandalism, car bodies, broken glass and windows.

Several project areas have conducted Walk-Around Surveys to audit the condition of the neighbourhood, sometimes including photographs. At this point it is not yet possible to develop any reliable change data for this indicator.

Indicator: improved energy efficiency of public housing.

Data source: Sustainable Energy Authority of Victoria

The Energy Task Force project is a joint initiative of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Victoria and Neighbourhood Renewal. It targets disadvantaged communities with the aim of saving energy and reducing household energy bills. A survey of participants in the three areas chosen to pilot the project (Bendigo, Geelong and Broadmeadows) showed that:

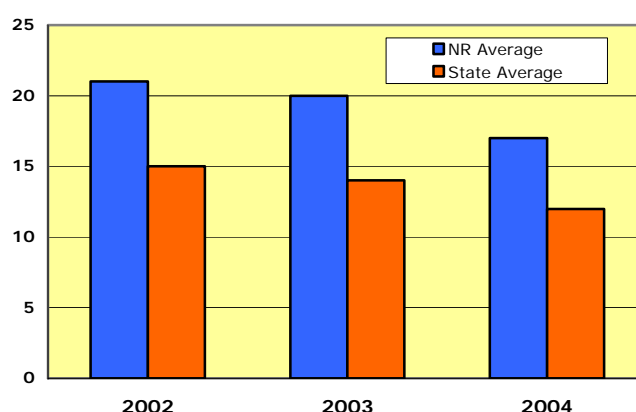
- for 89%, the project met or exceeded their expectations
- for approximately 15%, energy bill savings were higher than expected
- less than 10% expected greater savings
- for 85%, home comfort had improved.

Indicator: decrease in turnover of public housing tenants.

Data source: Office of Housing

Office of Housing data for 30 June 2002, 2003 and 2004 shown in Graph 13 reveals that the average turnover of public housing tenants in Neighbourhood Renewal areas decreased from 21% to 17%. From 2003 to 2004 average turnover in Neighbourhood Renewal areas dropped by 3% (from 20% to 17%) in comparison with a 2% drop state-wide (from 14% to 12%). While turnover is still relatively high in Neighbourhood Renewal areas greater progress is being made in reducing the rate in these areas than in the state as whole. Between 2003 and 2004 turnover rates came down in 70% of project areas.

Graph 13: % turnover rates – average across 10 established projects



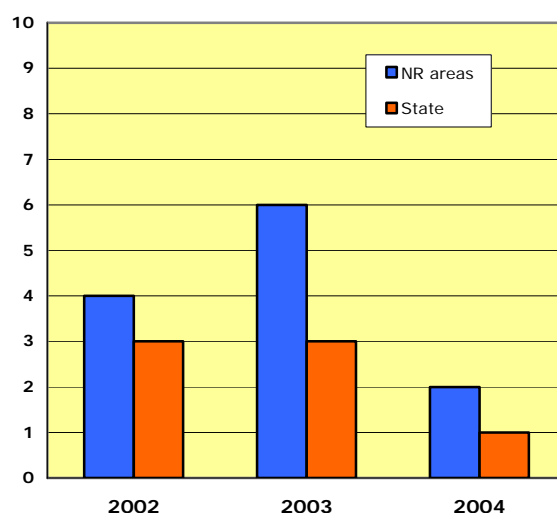
Indicator: reduced vacancy rates.

Data source: Office of Housing

Office of Housing figures show that from 2003 to 2004 vacancy rates came down in 80% of established Neighbourhood Renewal project areas. Data from 30 June

2002, 2003 and 2004 show that average vacancy rates across all these areas rose from 4% to 6% then dropped back significantly to 2%. State-wide the movement was from 3% to 3% to 1%, as illustrated in Graph 14. Vacancy rate data needs to be interpreted in the light of general increased demand but it is noteworthy that the 4% drop between 02-03 and 03-04 for Neighbourhood Renewal is double the 2% reduction for the state as a whole. From 02-03 to 03-04 vacancies in Neighbourhood Renewal areas were reduced to close to the state average.

Graph 14: % vacancies in public housing properties – NR areas vs State

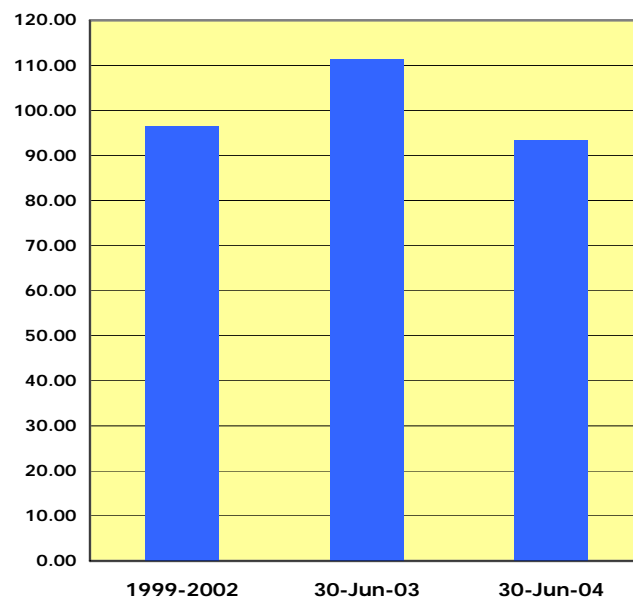


Indicator: reduced level of arrears.

Data source: Office of Housing

From 2003 to 2004 average arrears were down in 80% of established Neighbourhood Renewal project areas by margins ranging from 40% to 5%. Across the areas as a whole average arrears rose from \$96.50 at the end of 2001-02 to a high of \$111.27 at the end of 2002-03, but as the initiative took greater effect they dropped to a low of \$93.29 by the end of 2003-04.

Graph 15: Arrears averaged across 10 established projects

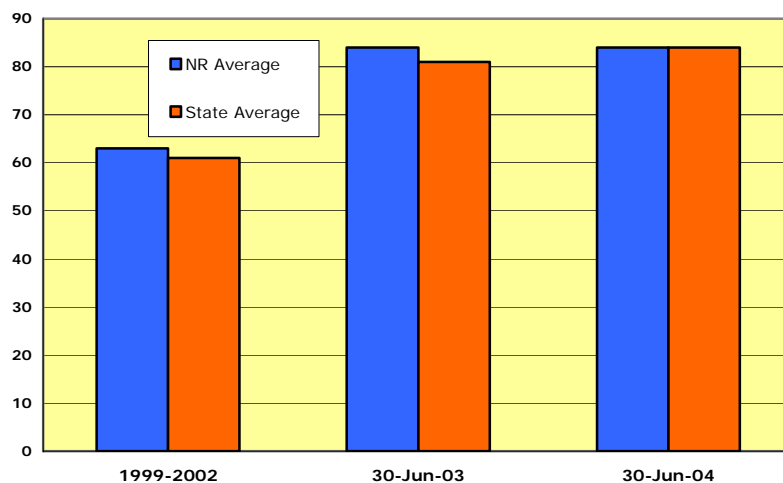


Indicator: increased offer acceptance rates.

Data source: Office of Housing

From 2003 to 2004 offer acceptance rates were up in 50% of established Neighbourhood Renewal areas. The average offer acceptance rate for all these areas rose from a baseline level of 63% for the years 1999-2002 to a high of 84% in 2002-03, a level which was sustained in 2003-04. This compares with state-wide figures of 61%, 81% and 84% as shown in Graph 16.

Graph 16: % offers accepted – average 10 established projects



Health And Wellbeing

Indicator: attendance at preschool increases to State average.

Data source: Office for Children, Department of Human Services.

Analysis of data for enrolments at preschools utilised by Neighbourhood Renewal residents was not complete at the time of this report.

Indicator: utilisation of Maternal and Child Health service rises to State average.

Data source: Office for Children, Department of Human Services.

Current neighbourhood level data for this indicator were not available at the time of this report.

Crime And Safety

Indicator: child protection notifications and substantiations are reduced.

Source: Child Protection Branch, Department of Human Services

Current neighbourhood level data for this indicator were not available at the time of this report.

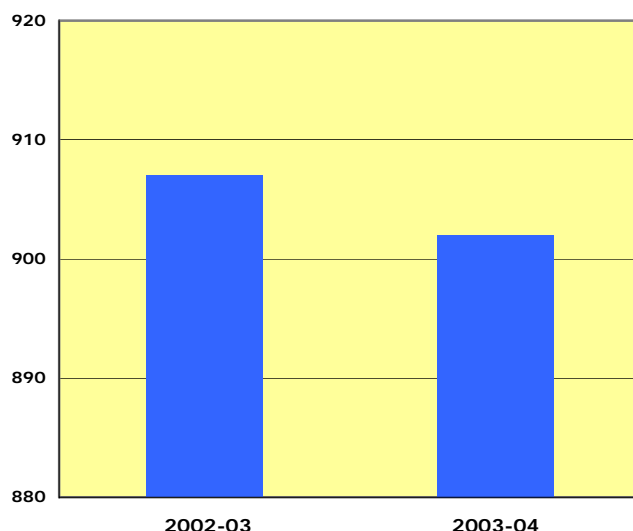
Indicator: crime against property and persons is reduced.

Data source: Victoria Police

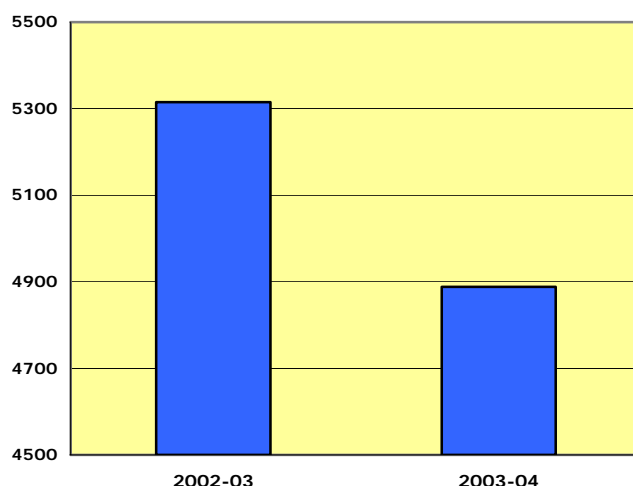
Police data show that from 2002-03 to 2003-04 the number of recorded offences (i.e. for all types of crime) fell in 100% of local government areas and in 80% of postcode areas where there were Neighbourhood Renewal projects.

Recent neighbourhood level data released by Victoria Police provides more area-specific information than the local government area figures cited in *Creating a fairer Victoria*. Between 2002-03 and 2003-04 crimes against property were down in 70% of Neighbourhood Renewal areas, crimes against persons were down in 50% of areas, and recorded offences down in 60%. Graph 17 plots the number of crimes against the person in the 10 established Neighbourhood Renewal areas for 2002-03 and 2003-04. Graph 18 does the same for crimes against property. Overall there was a 1% reduction in crimes against the person across project areas. There was a more notable 8% reduction in crimes against property.

Graph 17: Crimes against the person – totals across 10 established projects



Graph 18: Crimes against property – totals across 10 established projects



General crime statistics are open to diverse interpretation. Changes may reflect many things including more intense police operations, greater confidence by residents in reporting crime and actual changes in the rate of criminal activity. However data at this early stage of renewal is interpreted, what is clear is that effective crime reduction and prevention remains a significant issue in disadvantaged communities selected for renewal.

In view of the difficulty of interpreting crime statistics in isolation, it is useful to have other sorts of data to combine with them to provide a fuller picture of what is happening in project areas. What is evident is that where there has been targeted action to address crime in Neighbourhood Renewal areas, some remarkable results have been achieved. The consistent reduction in crime related incidents recorded by the Office of Housing at the Fitzroy (Atherton Gardens) and Collingwood high-rise estates reinforces residents' perceptions reported in the community survey results noted earlier: 55% of Fitzroy residents and 28% of

Collingwood residents felt that crime had been reduced and personal safety improved in the course of 2003. Office of Housing figures indicate that at Atherton Gardens from December 2001 to December 2003 there was:

- an 88% drop in drug use incidents
- a 79% drop in loitering incidents
- a 55% drop in crimes against property.

On the Collingwood estate from 2002 to 2003 there was a 29% drop in vandalism incidents. Similar noteworthy figures have emerged from the Glendonald Estate in Churchill in the Latrobe Valley. From 2002-03 to 2003-04 the estate recorded an overall drop in crime of 42% with crimes against the person dropping by 39% and against property by 28%.

Apparent differences between residents' perceptions and data from the Office of Housing and Victoria Police warrant further investigation. While there is a strong sense that over time engaging residents and joining up government is making a difference, further research may be necessary to get behind the data to understand what is actually happening.

APPENDIX 1

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Size of Neighbourhood Renewal areas

With one exception, the population of each area ranges from about 1,000 to 10,000, the number of housing units from about 300 to 4,000, and the proportion of public housing from 10% to 100%. Corio-Norlane is the exception, with a population of about 20,000 and a housing total of nearly 10,000 of which 18% is public housing.

2. Net figure

Two sets of figures are quoted in this report. One set is the primary percentages, ie the percentages of residents surveyed who expressed a certain view, eg 48% of residents on average stating that public transport was good or 35% of residents on average stating that their household income was poor. The other set is that of the net figures. In this report the term 'net figure' refers to the difference between the percentage of residents who chose the positive response and the percentage of residents who chose the negative response. For example, if on average 48% of residents saw the current condition of public transport in their area as 'good' and 19% saw it as 'poor', the resultant net figure is 29%. In other words, on average 29% of residents saw public transport as 'good' over and above those who saw it as 'poor'. The net figure may often be negative, as in the case of the current condition of own household income, where an average of 19% of residents saw it as 'good' while 35% saw it as 'poor', yielding a net figure of -16%. In this instance, on average the difference in percentage between residents who saw their household income as 'good' and those who saw it as 'poor' was -16.

3. Relative Disadvantage Index

The *Relative Disadvantage Index* is a comparative measure derived from the net figures yielded by the Neighbourhood Renewal population and the control group as a whole. It is the difference between these two net figures. For example, if on average the net figure for residents' view of the current condition of their own household income was -16% for Neighbourhood Renewal residents and +27% for the control group, the Relative Disadvantage Index for own household income is 43 (ie there is a 43% difference between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the control group).

4. Neighbourhood Effect Index

The *Neighbourhood Effect Index* is a variation of the Relative Disadvantage Index. The Neighbourhood Effect Index is a comparative measure derived from the net figures yielded by the Neighbourhood Renewal population and the bottom 30% of the control group on the SEIFA scale, ie the difference between these two net figures. The comparison is therefore between the Neighbourhood Renewal area and the lowest socio-economic segment of the surrounding population.

5. Multiple choice questions

A substantial number of questions in the community survey allowed for three alternative responses which might be labelled positive, neutral and negative, eg:

- Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree
- Good, Average, Poor
- Better, Same, Worse.

In a few instances multiple categories have been collapsed to maintain the tripartite structure. These are:

- Q 10 (own housing) where the positive categories of 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied' have been amalgamated, as have the negative categories of 'dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied'
- Q 33 (participation in the workforce) where the categories of 'employed full-time', 'employed part-time', 'unemployed and looking for work' and 'studying or training' have been merged into the single category of 'participating in the workforce'; the categories of 'in voluntary work', 'full-time parenting not in paid work', 'disability pension' and 'retired' have been integrated as 'not participating in the workforce'
- Q 44 (own health) where the three positive categories of 'excellent', 'very good' and 'good' have been collapsed into one (there was only one negative option)
- Q 52 (safety after dark) where the positive categories of 'agree strongly' and 'agree' have been amalgamated, as have the negative categories of 'disagree' and 'disagree strongly'.

APPENDIX 2

NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Revised February 2005

[BD = Baseline Data, CD = Change Data]

Objective	Indicator	Data Source
To increase people's pride and participation in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More residents see it as a good place to live. More residents feel a sense of belonging. More residents feel pride in the neighbourhood More resident interaction and participation in the community. Turnover of public housing tenants decreases. Increased Resident involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal decision- making. 	<p>Community survey <i>BD Q 4</i></p> <p>Community survey <i>BD Q 60 (2)</i></p> <p>Community Survey <i>BD Q 56</i> <i>CD Q 64</i></p> <p>Community survey <i>BD 57, 69</i> <i>CD Q 65</i></p> <p>Office of Housing</p> <p>NR Bi-Monthly Reports</p>
To lift employment, training and education and expand local economic activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased workforce participation. Residents perceive there to be more education and training opportunities. Residents perceive there to be more job opportunities. Residents perceive better economic conditions Increased literacy and numeracy of primary school aged children. 	<p>Office of Housing. Public housing data NR CJP follow-up data Community survey <i>BD Q 33</i></p> <p>Community survey <i>BD Q 27</i> <i>CD Q 30</i></p> <p>Community survey <i>BD Q 31, 32</i></p> <p>Community survey <i>BD Q 36, 46</i> <i>CD Q 38</i></p> <p>DET: Office of School Education</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased retention in secondary school. Increased participation of adults in lifelong learning. 	DET: Office of School Education DET: Adult, Continuing and Further Education
To enhance housing and the physical environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction in graffiti, vandalism, car bodies, broken glass and windows. Increased resident satisfaction with their house or flat. A more positive view of the physical environment by residents. Reduced vacancy rates Reduced level of arrears Increased offer acceptance rates [Increased property values] Improved energy efficiency of public housing 	NR Residents' Walk-around Survey Community survey <i>BD Q 10</i> <i>CD Q 13</i> Community survey <i>BD Q 14</i> <i>CD Q 17</i> Office of Housing Office of Housing Office of Housing [Office of Housing/Valuer General] Environmental Sustainability Audit
To improve personal safety and reduce crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents feel the neighbourhood is a safer place to live. Crime against property and persons is reduced. Child protection notifications and substantiations are reduced. 	Community survey <i>BD Qq 49, 52 (1)</i> <i>CD Q 55</i> VicPolice DHS: Child Protection Branch
To promote health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' perceive improved quality and availability of health and welfare services. Residents' assessment of their own health shows improvement. 	Community survey <i>CD Q 43</i> Community survey <i>BD Q 39, 44</i> <i>CD Q 48</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' assessment of personal and family relationships shows improvement. Utilisation of Maternal and Child Health service rises to State average. Attendance at pre-school increases to State average. 	<p>Community survey <i>BD Q 60 (3, 6)</i></p> <p>DHS: Family and Community Support</p> <p>DHS: Family and Community Support</p>
To increase access to transport and other key services and improve government responsiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved local transport options. Improved quality and availability of services. Improved whole-of-government planning and allocation of resources. 	<p>Community survey <i>BD Q 20</i> <i>CD Q 22</i></p> <p>Community Survey <i>BD Q 18</i> <i>CD Q 25</i></p> <p>NR Bi-monthly Reports</p>

APPENDIX 3

COMMUNITY SURVEY: CURRENT CONDITIONS QUESTIONS

Pride and participation

- Neighbourhood generally
(Q 4: Overall, how would you rate your neighbourhood as a place to live? Would you say it was good, average or poor?)
- Pride in neighbourhood
(Q 56: How much pride do most local people have in this neighbourhood? Would you say they have a lot, a moderate amount or very little?)
- Participation in local activities
(Q 57: How much do most people in this neighbourhood participate in local activities [examples given]? Would you say they participate a lot, a moderate amount or very little?)
- Sense of belonging
(Q 60: Can you tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:
(2) I feel a sense of belonging to this community
(3) Many of my family and friends live in this neighbourhood or close by
(6) In an emergency I could raise \$2000 within two days from my relatives and friends?)

Employment and learning opportunities

- Education and training opportunities
(Q 27: How would you rate the opportunities and facilities for people in your neighbourhood to get education and training? Would you say they are good, average or poor?)
- Job opportunities
(Q 31: How would you rate the general opportunities for people in your neighbourhood to get satisfactory jobs, either in this neighbourhood or nearby? Would you say they are good, average or poor?)
- Local employment services
(Q 32: How would you rate the quality and availability of local services and agencies to help people find work: are they good, average or poor?

Q 33: Describe your present employment situation: employed full-time, employed part-time, in voluntary work, full-time parenting not in paid work, unemployed and looking for work, studying or training, disability pension, retired, other)
- Own household income
(Q 46: Thinking about your total household take-home pay over the past 12 months, how have you been managing on that income: living comfortably, coping or finding it difficult?)
- Local economy
(Q 36: [preamble] How would you rate the state of the local economy in your neighbourhood: is it good, average or poor?)

Housing and environment

- Own housing
(Q 10: How satisfied are you with your own housing: very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, not satisfied, very dissatisfied?)
- Physical environment
(Q 14: [preamble] Generally, how would you rate the physical environment in your neighbourhood? Would you say it was good, average or poor?)

Crime and safety

- Crime and safety generally
(Q 49: How would you rate conditions in your neighbourhood in relation to crime and personal safety generally? Would you say they were good, average or poor?)
- Personal safety in street after dark
(Q 52: Could you say if you agree or disagree, and how strongly, with the following statement about crime and safety issues: I feel safe walking alone down my street after dark?)

Health and wellbeing

- General health in neighbourhood
(Q 39: How would you rate the general health and wellbeing in your neighbourhood: would you say it is generally good, poor or average?)
- Own personal health
(Q 44: In general would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?)

Services and Government

- Quality and availability of local services
(Q 18: How would you generally rate the quality and accessibility of services for people living in your neighbourhood? Are they good, poor or average?)
- Public transport
(Q 20: How would you generally rate public transport services for people in your neighbourhood? Are they good, poor or average?).

APPENDIX 4

CHANGE DATA: INDICATORS AND DATA SOURCE

Pride and participation

Survey data

- community pride
(Q 64 Looking back, would you say that in general there is more or less pride in the community than there was 6 to 12 months ago or has it stayed about the same?)
- community participation
(Q 65 ...people in the neighbourhood are participating more or less in local community activities, or about the same?)

Administrative data

- increased resident involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal decision-making

Education and training opportunities

Survey data

- local education and training opportunities
(Q 30 ...the opportunities for education and training for people in your neighbourhood have got better or worse or stayed the same?)
- local economy
(Q 38 ...the local economy in your neighbourhood...?)

Administrative data

- decrease in turnover of public housing tenants
- increased workforce participation
- successful transition of Community Jobs Program participants to employment or training
- increased literacy and numeracy of primary-school-aged children
- increased retention in secondary school
- increased participation of adults in lifelong learning

Housing and environment

Survey data

- housing
(Q 13 ...the standard of housing in your neighbourhood...?)
- physical environment
(Q 17 ...the condition of the physical environment in your neighbourhood ...?)

Administrative data

- reduction in graffiti, vandalism, car bodies, broken glass and windows
- improved energy efficiency of public housing
- reduced vacancy rates
- reduced level of arrears
- increased offer acceptance rates

Crime and safety

Survey data

- crime and safety
(Q 55...conditions in your neighbourhood in relation to crime and personal safety...?)

Administrative data

- crime against property and persons is reduced
- child protection notifications and substantiations are reduced

Health and wellbeing

Survey data

- health and welfare services
(Q 43 ...health and welfare services in your neighbourhood...?)
- own health
(Q 48 ...your own personal health and wellbeing...?)

Administrative data

- utilisation of Maternal and Child Health service rises to State average
- attendance at pre-school increases to State average

Services and Government

Survey data

- public transport
(Q 22 ...transport services for people in your neighbourhood...?)
- government performance
(Q 25 ...the performance of government in your neighbourhood...?)

Administrative data

- improved whole-of-government planning and allocation of resources.

APPENDIX 5

LIST OF TERTIARY INSTITUTES FOR COMMUNITY SURVEY

Project	Tertiary Institute
Wendouree West Latrobe Valley	Institute for Social Research Faculty of Arts Swinburne University of Technology
Maidstone-Braybrook	Work & Economic Policy Research Unit Social Diversity & Community Wellbeing Key Research Area Victoria University
Corio-Norlane	School of Health and Social Development Faculty of Health and Behavioural Science Deakin University (Waterfront Campus) Geelong
Seymour Shepparton	Department of Rural Health University of Melbourne Shepparton
Long Gully Eaglehawk	Faculty of Regional Development Bendigo Campus La Trobe University
Fitzroy	Program Evaluation Unit School of Population Health Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences University of Melbourne
Collingwood	PVC Design & Social Context International & Community Studies RMIT University
Ashburton-Ashwood-Chadstone	Centre for Health Human and Community Services Holmesglen Institute of TAFE
Broadmeadows	Centre for the Study of Health & Society School of Population Health University of Melbourne
Doveton-Eumemmering	Brotherhood of St Laurence
Werribee	Wellness Promotions Unit School of Psychology Victoria University
Colac	Faculty of Health and Behavioural Science Deakin University (Waterfront Campus) Geelong

Neighbourhood Renewal: Evaluation Report 2008



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Prepared by
Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
Department of Human Services

In partnership with
University of Ballarat
Deakin University
Victoria University
University of Melbourne
Brotherhood of St Laurence
Monash University

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Executive summary

Neighbourhood Renewal was launched in 2002 to narrow the gap between disadvantaged communities with concentrations of public housing, and the rest of the State.

Neighbourhood Renewal is a place-based response to severe locational disadvantage and deep social exclusion. It works across government and in partnership with local residents, the community sector and local businesses to improve social conditions and opportunities for neighbourhoods that have missed out on Victoria's prosperity.

Neighbourhood Renewal combines and connects top-down and bottom-up processes for social investment, service coordination and community involvement in decision-making.

Nineteen projects across Victoria are implementing a six point plan of action to:

1. increase pride and participation
2. enhance housing and the environment
3. lift employment, training and education and expand local economies
4. improve personal safety and reduce crime
5. promote health and well-being
6. increase access to services and improve government responsiveness.

This evaluation report has been produced by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit utilising comparative data sourced from community surveys conducted by independent tertiary institutions and administrative sources such as the ABS Census.

Thirty-eight core indicators are used to measure change in both household or individual-level compositional characteristics of people who live in renewal areas, such as unemployment and income levels, and neighbourhood-level characteristics such as the amenity of local environments, standards of housing and neighbourhood stigma.

Key findings from this second evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal are:

1. Neighbourhood Renewal is having a positive impact in reversing the effects of many years of cumulative disadvantage and is narrowing the gap with the rest of Victoria¹
2. the methodology of place-based and whole-of-government renewal is vindicated by the data
3. a small number of indicators of disadvantage have not been improved
4. to have a long term and sustained effect, Neighbourhood Renewal would need to be mainstreamed and scaled-up.

Each of these key findings is further explained in the following section.

1. Neighbourhood renewal is having a positive impact

This evaluation report demonstrates Neighbourhood Renewal is reducing disadvantage in communities affected by social and economic exclusion. The downward spiral of Neighbourhood Renewal areas has been arrested, and the conditions and opportunities of residents have improved. In a number of areas the gap between renewal locations and the rest of the State has narrowed. Overall:

- 87% of indicators show improvement or arresting of further decline
- 62% of indicators show the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the rest of the State has stopped growing or has been narrowed
- 76% of indicators show the decline has halted or the gap narrowed with similar socio economic groups² in other parts of Victoria
- 64% of indicators in the community survey showed net³ improvements in the previous 12 months.

1 The gap is the difference between Neighbourhood Renewal communities and the rest of the State or surrounding neighbourhoods on indicators used to measure disadvantage.

2 The Neighbourhood Renewal community survey provides a comparison between residents living in Neighbourhood Renewal areas and their socio-economic counterparts from surrounding neighbourhoods. This finding only relates to the core indicators from the community survey and does not include any comparisons of the administrative data.

3 More people thought conditions had improved compared to getting worse.

Neighbourhood Renewal is improving social conditions, life opportunities and neighbourhood amenity

Change in Neighbourhood Renewal areas is measured by assessing changes in administrative data over time and change in resident perceptions between round 1 and round 2 community surveys. The evaluation shows that on 87 per cent of indicators the decline of previous years has been halted or reversed. At a glance, this report shows improvement in 69 per cent of indicators, 18 per cent remained steady (arresting previous years of decline) and 13 per cent continued to decline.

Graph 1: Changes in administrative data and community perceptions	Unimproved	Arrested decline	Changed for the better
Residents see the neighbourhood as a good place to live			
Residents feel pride in the neighbourhood			
Resident interaction and participation in the community			
Turnover of public housing tenants			
Residents feel sense of belonging			
Residents involved in decision making			
Employment			
Unemployment			
Decreased worklessness			
Residents perceive better local employment services			
Residents perceive better local economic conditions			
Household income			
Further education qualifications			
Absenteeism in primary school			
Absenteeism in secondary school			
Literacy and numeracy for primary and secondary students			
Residents perceive there to be more education and training opportunities			
Residents perceive there to be more job opportunities			
Number of residents completing Year 12 or its equivalent			
Resident satisfaction with their house or flat			
Public housing vacancy rates			
Public housing offer acceptance rates			
A more positive view of the physical environment by residents			
Energy efficiency for households			
Mixed communities—decreased public housing density			
Mixed communities—more diverse households			
Residents feel the neighbourhood is a safer place to live			
Residents feel safe walking in their street			
Overall crime			
Crime against property			
Crime against person			
Child protection substantiations			
Residents' assessment of their own health			
Residents' perceive improvement in the health of the neighbourhood			
Residents perceive better local transport options			
Whole of Government investment			
Residents perceive Neighbourhood Renewal has improved government responsiveness			
Residents perceive improved availability of services			

The greatest improvements between the 1st (2005) and 2nd (2008) evaluations were:

- 4% reduction in unemployment from 17% to 13%, double the rate of reduction in unemployment for Victoria
- 12% increase in further education qualifications
- reduction in average secondary school absenteeism by 3.5 days per year
- 4% increase in perceived levels of community participation
- 12% reduction in overall crime
- 27% decrease in property crimes
- 22% increase in acceptance rates for public housing
- 8% decrease in public housing turnover
- 6% reduction in child protection substantiations
- 14% increase in resident perceptions that Neighbourhood Renewal had improved government performance.

As well as data measuring changes in residents' perceptions between the 1st and 2nd round of the community survey, the survey also measures change experienced by residents in the 12 months prior to the survey being completed. Graph 2 shows how residents perceived changes in a number of conditions in round two.

Across all indicators residents perceived an improvement in the last 12 months of between 12 and 33 per cent. The most positive changes noted were:

- 33% of residents felt there was better housing (61% in Wendouree West), compared to 9% who thought it had got worse
- 23% of residents noted improvement in the physical environment (54% in Atherton Gardens, Fitzroy), compared to 13% who thought it had got worse
- 18% of residents saw an improvement in local education & training opportunities, (25% in Wendouree West) compared to 7% who thought it had got worse
- 17% of residents believed community pride was stronger (40% in Wendouree West), compared to 13% who thought it had got worse.

Neighbourhood Renewal is narrowing the gap

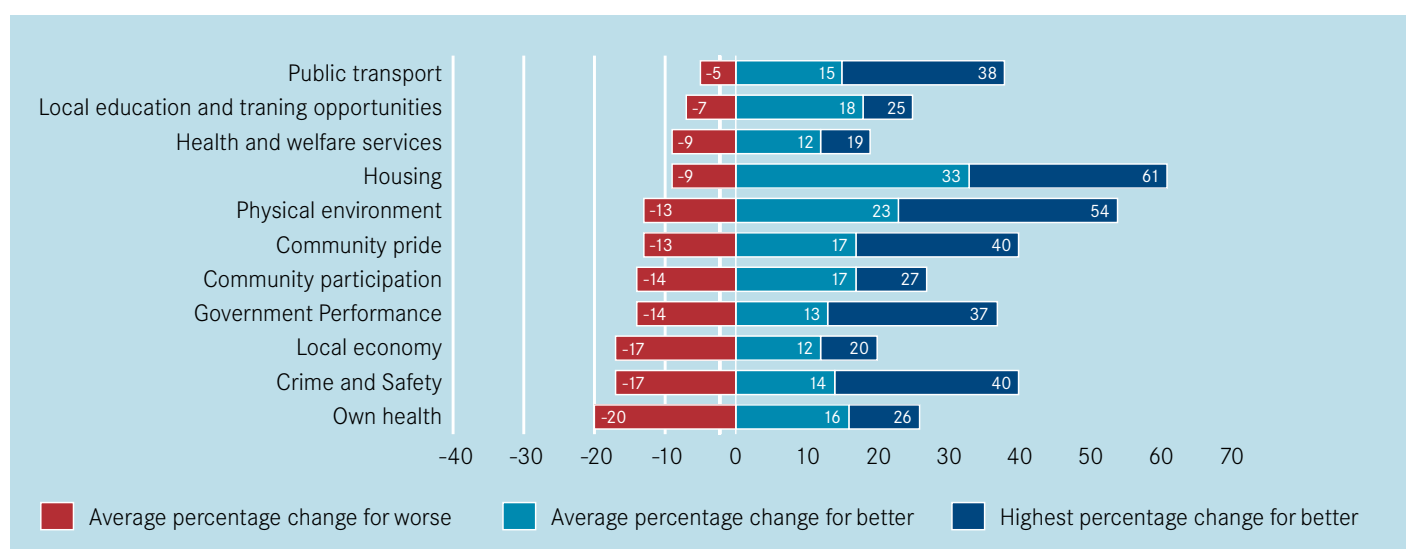
Positive changes in the Relative Disadvantage Index

This evaluation report shows that not only are conditions improving overall, but the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the rest of the State has stopped growing or begun to narrow for 62 per cent of the indicators; 41 per cent of indicators narrowed and decline was stopped in 21 per cent of indicators while 38 per cent showed a growing gap.

Indicators demonstrating a narrowing of the gap with Victorian averages were:

- unemployment by 2%
- secondary school absenteeism by 2.8 days per year
- further education qualifications by 6%
- public housing turnover by 4%
- public housing offer acceptance rates improved to 5% above the State average
- crime by 2.3%
- perception of public transport by 2%

Graph 2: Residents' perceptions of change in the previous 12 months



- perception of levels of participation in local activities by 2%
- perception of availability of job opportunities by 2%.

Positive changes in the Neighbourhood Effect Index

This evaluation report also measures changes in the disadvantage experienced by people living in Neighbourhood Renewal areas compared with other people of comparative low socio-economic status living in less disadvantaged neighbourhoods. On this comparison, Neighbourhood Renewal projects have demonstrated much more substantial narrowing of the gap. Compared to socio-economic counterparts in surrounding neighbourhoods, the gap has stopped growing or narrowed on 76 per cent of the indicators. This demonstrates that Neighbourhood Renewal has been effective in reducing many of the locality or neighbourhood level drivers of disadvantage and exclusion:

- perceptions of public transport narrowed by 9%
- pride in the neighbourhood narrowed by 7%
- resident's view of the quality and accessibility of community services narrowed by 6%
- the gap in perceptions of health and wellbeing of the neighbourhood, job opportunities, participation in local activities and feelings of safety alone in the street after dark all narrowed by 5%
- the gap in perceptions of education and training opportunities and the state of the local economy narrowed by 3%.

2. The methodology of place-based renewal works

The progress demonstrated in this report on core performance indicators vindicates the methodology of a whole-of-government and place-based approach to the renewal of disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

The three key elements of the methodology of renewal—(1) joined-up government investment, (2) place management and (3) community governance—all correlated with positive evaluation outcomes.

Joined-up government investment

refers to the combination of resources from all parts of government to deliver services in a collaborative and co-ordinated way responsive to local needs. The strongest evaluation outcomes were achieved when significant government investment was combined with active community deliberation. For example:

- 7000 housing works providing public housing tenants with a say in the improvement of their own homes contributing to a 33% perceived improvement in housing conditions.
- coordinated investment in workforce participation programs and the establishment of 33 community enterprises assisted in creating over 5000 jobs and contributed to a four per cent reduction in unemployment (from 17% to 13%, double the rate of reduction in unemployment for Victoria)

- over 100 community infrastructure and urban design projects responding to resident priorities identified in local action plans contributed to a 23% perceived improvement in the physical environment
- targeted community policing, increased patrols in 'hot-spots' and urban form initiatives to 'design-out crime' all contributed to a 27% reduction in crime against property.

In contrast where government programs operated in the mode of 'business as usual' there was limited or no demonstrated progress against renewal indicators.

Place management refers to an approach where neighbourhood teams foster empowerment of local citizens, coordinate area planning with local governments, broker partnerships, allocate resources and bring new resources into deprived areas.

Providing renewal projects with flexible resources has allowed government to respond in a timely way to community priorities and enabled projects to strategically leverage significant additional resources. For example, for every million dollars allocated by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit to community infrastructure projects, an additional seven million has been leveraged across governments, business and community organisation sources to revitalise the amenity of communities. Some of the key outputs from this investment include:

- 21 parks and reserves upgraded
- 30 community hubs developed
- 8 community gardens
- 15 ICT community facilities
- 19 community kitchens developed.

Community governance refers to the enhancement of local democracy by involving residents, government officers, community organisations, Schools, Police and local businesses in key neighbourhood decisions. Some of the key outcomes include:

- at least 50% of positions on all Neighbourhood Renewal decision making bodies were occupied by local residents
- 50 new community groups established
- improved perceptions of community participation.

When residents were asked directly about the impact of Neighbourhood Renewal on government performance in the round 2 survey, 29 per cent reported improved performance compared to only seven per cent who said it had got worse. Between rounds 1 and 2 of the survey this represented a 15 per cent improvement in government performance.

3. A small number of indicators of disadvantage have got worse

Domains where conditions have deteriorated

Positive progress has not been recorded on all indicators. Areas where communities in Neighbourhood Renewal locations experienced a further decline were:

- 7.4% increase in crimes against the person
- a significant reduction in the diversity of tenant/household composition (involving a 7.7% increase in allocation of public housing tenants with complex support needs and 4.5% increase in allocation of single parent public housing tenants to renewal areas)
- a small 1% negative change was recorded in the 2nd round community survey in the perceived quality and availability of local employment services, local transport options and the quality and availability of services.

In part, the significant increase in recorded crimes against the person can be attributed to a changed culture by Victoria Police and the community regarding the reporting of domestic/family violence. For instance, in 2005 there was a 73 per cent rise in the charges laid by Police in domestic violence cases, while intervention orders increased by 72 per cent.⁴ The increase in crime against the person was marginally less in Neighbourhood Renewal areas compared to Victoria. This nonetheless remains a serious issue requiring focused effort into the future.

Two key indicators of renewal that have not improved are the mix of public and private housing and changes in public housing allocations to reduce the concentration of disadvantaged residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

Public housing density has only decreased marginally by 1.2 per cent across all Neighbourhood Renewal locations. In nine renewal project areas, public housing continues to make up more than 30 per cent of all properties.

Findings in this evaluation show that the higher the density of public housing the lower the level of improvement recorded across most indicators. For example the renewal project with the lowest proportion of public housing (11%) recorded a narrowing of the gap with the rest of the State on 14 of 18 survey indicators. This compares to the project with the highest percentage of public housing (100%) recording a narrowing of the gap on only three of 18 indicators.

These results are not surprising given public housing tenants are more likely to be unemployed, one parent families or in receipt of disability pensions with high support needs and multiple barriers to workforce participation. This is well demonstrated in Fitzroy and Collingwood (100% public housing estates) where 87 per cent of the working age community is workless and one parent households make up between 33 and 36 per cent of the total population compared to the State average of eight per cent.

Not only did Neighbourhood Renewal areas with lower proportions of public housing make greater progress than those with high concentrations, but public housing tenants in the three renewal areas with the lowest concentrations of public housing

4 'Violent crime up in Victoria, The Age, August 10, 2005.

showed the strongest levels of improvement between rounds one and two of the survey.

Concentrations of disadvantage have increased in renewal areas over recent years as a result of targeted public housing allocations. There has been an increase in allocations to people with complex support needs (segments 1–3) by 7.7 per cent to 79.8 per cent of all new allocations, compared to the state average which was down one per cent to 66.8 per cent between 2002 and 2008.

Similarly allocations of housing to single parents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas increased by 4.5 per cent to a total of 48.5 per cent of all new allocations (whereas these allocations decreased by 2.9% state-wide to 35.8%).

In contrast, allocations to tenants that are simply low income but do not require significant social support (wait turn) reduced in Neighbourhood Renewal areas by 6.4 per cent to only 19.3 per cent (whereas they increased state-wide by 1.1% to 31.1%).

The growing concentration of severely disadvantaged people in Neighbourhood Renewal areas makes the positive results achieved across the six renewal objectives all the more remarkable. This is especially the case for social housing indicators such as the eight per cent decreased rate of public housing turnover and 22 per cent increase in acceptance rates for public housing.

Domains where the gap increased

The gap between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and other Victorians grew on 38 per cent of indicators.

In some cases the gap worsened despite recorded real improvement in conditions in Neighbourhood Renewal locations. This is because improvements in conditions across the State (or control groups) outstripped the rate of progress in the Neighbourhood Renewal area. For example:

- although child protection substantiations reduced by 6% in renewal areas, the gap with the rest of Victoria increased by 1%
- significant measures in the community survey where residents in renewal areas noted local improvements that did not keep pace perceived improvements outside renewal areas were: feelings of crime and safety (-4%); and housing (-2%).

Areas where both local conditions either stayed static or worsened and where a growing gap with Victoria emerged were:

- employment services -3%
- sense of belonging -4%
- self-rated health -2%.

Possible explanations of these data:

- whilst there have been significant improvements in the provision of targeted employment support initiatives driven by renewal projects, these successful approaches have not been mainstreamed into the federal employment service system which continues to have limited impact on chronically workless communities
- a poorer sense of belonging to the community in some renewal areas could be accounted for because public housing residents do not necessarily choose to live in the neighbourhood where they are allocated housing and in a number of instances may be relatively new to the area
- changes in health status are the subject of complex factors that impact on health status over a longer time frame than four years. Interestingly, the self-rated health status of all residents in renewal areas contrasts sharply with residents participating in renewal activities who recorded a remarkable 14 per cent health improvement.⁵

5 Warr D, Kelaher M, Tacitos T, Feldman P *Why place matters: insights into associations between neighbourhoods and health*, VicHealth Conference 14 April 2008.

4. To have a long-term and sustained impact Neighbourhood Renewal would need to be ‘mainstreamed’ and ‘scaled-up’

The positive results during the fourth and fifth years of the eight year renewal program are encouraging given international research shows reversing years of decline and entrenched social exclusion can take 10–20 years.⁶

However, despite the significant progress documented in this report, on most indicators, large gaps remain between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the rest of the State. Indeed, the only indicator to be within ten per cent of the State average is perceptions about the quality of community services. The only indicator that returned a more positive assessment than the Victorian average was perceptions about the availability of public transport.

Even in areas where there have been big improvements such as employment generation, (leading to a reduction of unemployment from 17% to 13%) overall unemployment rates are still nearly three times more than the State average of five per cent.

Similarly, although crime rates have been reduced by an average of 12 per cent and property crimes by 27 per cent, there are still 50 per cent more crimes against property in Neighbourhood Renewal areas compared to the Victorian average.

This data shows that while the Neighbourhood Renewal approach is working, more needs to be done to systemically turn around deep social exclusion in these neighbourhoods. Two main conclusions can be derived from this data, one relating to the timeframe of renewal activities and the other to the scale of renewal.

Mainstreaming renewal

On current data projections, after eight years of renewal, not all social indicators are likely to have reached Victorian benchmarks. Research into renewal exit strategies refers to the importance of developing an approach to ‘consolidate or build upon the achievements after a housing regeneration funding program has formally expired’.⁷

It has been agreed by the Victorian Government that the key features of Neighbourhood Renewal should be mainstreamed into core government business to ensure improvements rendered are durable and that Neighbourhood Renewal locations continue to experience an upward trajectory over the longer term. State government departments have agreed to renewal targets to continue to focus investment in Neighbourhood Renewal areas into the future, beyond the timeframe of Neighbourhood Renewal. Similarly, most local governments in renewal areas are building successful aspects of community governance and place management into the way they do business.

Scaling-up renewal

Another important conclusion that can be drawn from the evaluation data is that investment in key elements of renewal would need to be ‘scaled-up’ to achieve long term systemic change. This report shows that the major constraint on the efficacy of current place-based approaches is related to the dose of the intervention. While Neighbourhood Renewal is demonstrably making a difference and beginning to narrow the gap between poorer neighbourhoods and the rest of Victoria, a number of initiatives in the program are not at a dose or scale that is likely to cure locational disadvantage within eight years.

To substantially bridge the gap between communities further investment is required, especially in the critical areas of employment, training, educational engagement, the early years—and in areas with higher concentrations of public housing—urban redevelopment leading to more diverse, mixed communities.

6 Social Exclusion Unit (2001). *A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: A National Strategy Plan*. UK Cabinet Office.

7 Jacobs K, Arthurson K & Randolph B, 2004, ‘Developing Appropriate Exit Strategies for Housing Regeneration Programmes’ AHURI paper.

1. Introduction

Neighbourhood Renewal brings together the resources and ideas of residents, governments, local businesses and community groups to tackle disadvantage in areas with concentrations of public housing. Neighbourhood Renewal reduces inequality, builds more cohesive communities and makes government services more responsive to the needs of communities.⁸

This evaluation report provides a midpoint assessment of the extent to which Neighbourhood Renewal is achieving measurable progress in narrowing the gap between the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Victoria and the rest of the State. It has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit using data provided by government departments and community survey results and analysis undertaken by independent tertiary institutions (Appendix 5).

1.1 Aims of the evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal

The evaluation of Neighbourhood Renewal aims to assess whether:

- the initiative has narrowed the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the rest of the State
- these neighbourhoods have changed for the better
- the improvements made have been sustained
- there is a common pattern across all areas and Neighbourhood Renewal objectives.

The evaluation also aims to:

- provide information to government, service providers, local communities and other stakeholders about what works and what does not in Neighbourhood Renewal
- contribute to community building by empowering local communities to use the findings to take greater control of their neighbourhood agenda and influence government priorities and decision-making
- strengthen and support A Fairer Victoria (AFV) and the overall evaluation of community building⁹
- reflect the combined effect of a whole-of-government approach that is more than the sum of the parts, i.e. individual programs and departmental contributions to Neighbourhood Renewal.

1.2 Neighbourhood Renewal Theory of Change

Evidence shows that disadvantage has become increasingly concentrated in neighbourhood pockets. These neighbourhoods are under-resourced and under-served compared to the wider population and are significantly below State averages on all socio-economic indicators. Living in these pockets compounds the level of disadvantage experienced by residents; there is a negative neighbourhood effect. The causes of disadvantage in these pockets are multidimensional and interrelated. As a result interventions that address single issues have been shown to have limited success. This is more the case when interventions are short term.

Disadvantage or misfortune in one area of a person's life can trigger a downward spiral leading to negative consequences across many other facets of their life. Unemployment, for example, may lead to poorer health, loss of income, housing problems and interrupted education for children. A sense of powerlessness, isolation, lack of opportunity and loss of personal confidence and pride add to the entrenched nature of the problems and make reversing the downward spiral a difficult long term process.

Reversing the downward spiral and closing the gap between these neighbourhoods and the rest of the State requires an approach that combines government investment and engages residents to give them greater control over decisions and actions to address the circumstances they face. A greater sense of belonging, pride and control is the starting point for building a community response.

By establishing local governance structures that enable collective decision making and provide a vehicle for planning, advocacy and action, residents are able to create a local point of connection for policy makers and service providers. This increases the relevance and effectiveness of new initiatives and existing services and creates a connection between top-down resource allocation and bottom-up decision making.

Service providers are also able to participate in local decision making and priority setting through the community governance structures, bringing central funding and service provision bodies closer to the residents, resulting in better use of resources and better outcomes.

⁸ For a more detailed description of the initiative see *Creating a Fairer Victoria: Minister for Housing's Statement on Neighbourhood Renewal*, Department of Human Services, 2004, at www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au

⁹ The evaluation framework is set out in *Neighbourhood Renewal: Evaluation Framework*, Office of Housing, 2002, at www.neighbourhoodrenewal.vic.gov.au

Change occurs in terms of resources allocated to the neighbourhood, residents' access to services and residents' perception of the community and their own circumstances. Crime rates reduce, maternal and child health, preschool and school attendance improves and new employment and economic opportunities open up.

In summary, the theory upon which Neighbourhood Renewal is based is that change will be achieved by

- creating and supporting local governance structures that engage residents and provide for the participation of service providers and policy makers alongside local residents
- prioritising these neighbourhoods in the allocation of resources, improving access to services and creating new opportunities
- getting government agencies to be more responsive to local needs, to take a longer term view of their investment in these communities, to work collaboratively with other government departments, other levels of government and other sectors and to set targets for outcomes that are meaningful to the local community and which close the gap with the rest of the State.

The model has been described as one that “combines and connects top-down and bottom-up processes for social investment, service co-ordination and community involvement in decision making”. The three key elements of this model are:

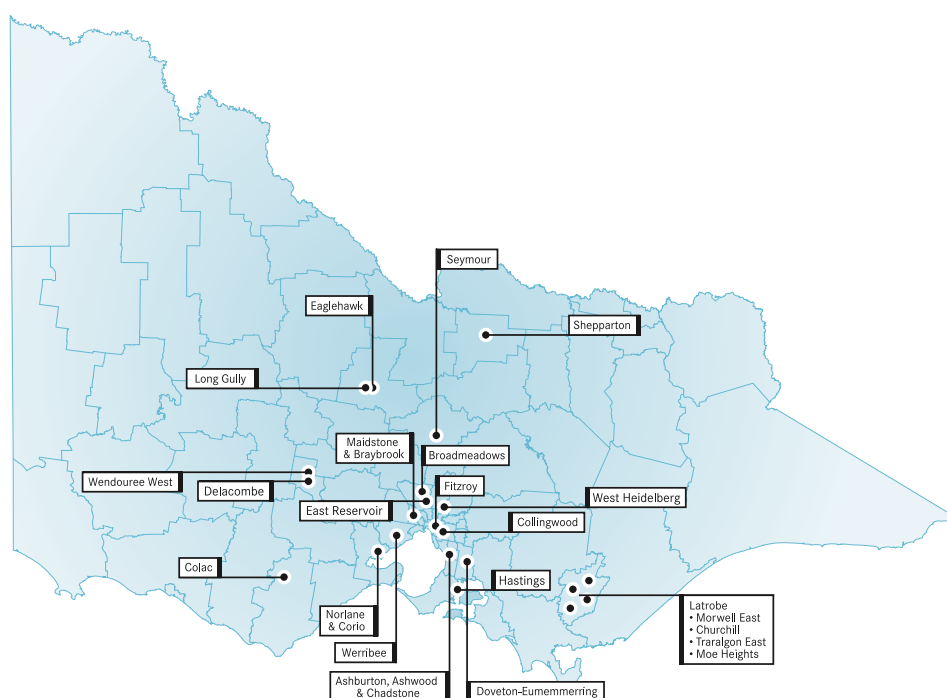
- place management and area based planning (connection)
- community governance and empowerment (bottom-up)
- joined-up government responsive to local needs (top-down).

1.3 Location of Neighbourhood Renewal Projects

There are nineteen Neighbourhood Renewal project areas in metropolitan and regional Victoria. These are relatively small clearly defined geographic areas, characterised by a concentration of public housing and selected on the basis of multiple indicators of disadvantage.¹⁰

Two pilot projects, Wendouree West and Latrobe Valley began in early 2002;

followed by eight; Fitzroy, Collingwood, Shepparton, Seymour, Eaglehawk, Long Gully, Maidstone-Braybrook, and Corio-Norlane in 2002–03; another five sites were included in 2003–04; Broadmeadows, Colac, Werribee, Ashburton Ashwood Chadstone, and Doveton-Eumemmerring. The four most recent projects, Hastings, West Heidelberg, East Reservoir and Delacombe commenced in 2005–06. Nine projects are in metropolitan Melbourne and ten in Victorian provincial cities or country towns.



10 For information on size see Explanatory Note 1 in Appendix 1.

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 Methodology for measuring success

The success of Neighbourhood Renewal is measured by the extent it achieves the six key objectives of the initiative:

1. increasing people's pride and participation in the community
2. lifting employment, training and education opportunities and expanding local economic activity
3. enhancing housing and the physical environment
4. improving personal safety and reducing crime
5. promoting health and wellbeing
6. increasing access to services and improving government responsiveness.

The report compiles data in four categories:

1. community survey data that measures residents perceptions of current local conditions
2. community survey data that compares residents perceptions of current conditions with a control group
3. community survey data that measures change in current conditions between rounds 1 (year 2) and 2 (year 4) of the survey
4. administrative data measuring change in key indicators of disadvantage for each of the six Neighbourhood Renewal objectives.

2.2 The Evaluation Framework

Thirty-eight core indicators have been developed to measure progress in Neighbourhood Renewal (Appendix 2). Indicators and data sources have been chosen on the basis of their:

- relevance to the objectives of Neighbourhood Renewal
- validity and usefulness for local action planning
- utility in further refining Neighbourhood Renewal policy
- capacity to be reasonably influenced by Neighbourhood Renewal initiatives.

The evaluation uses data derived from administrative sources and community surveys collected between 2000–01 and 2006–07 to provide information about the 38 progress indicators. The administrative data is largely sourced from government departments, while the survey data is collected via a biennial community survey conducted by each Neighbourhood Renewal community in conjunction with an independent tertiary institution. The survey has been designed to be conducted by local residents and to give them power over information so as to build a sense of community.

2.3 Community Survey

The community survey of 300 local residents in each Neighbourhood Renewal location (5,700 residents in total) aged 18 and over generates statistically valid information specific to the project area. It was designed by Professor Mike Salvaris, then at the Institute for Social Research at Swinburne University, in conjunction with the residents of Wendouree West and Latrobe Valley and the Neighbourhood Renewal team. The survey is informed by the Institute's 'Healthy Community' model for measuring progress and wellbeing.

The survey provides measures and insights at five levels:

1. perceptions of self (eg assessment of the person's own health)
2. perceptions of the community (eg assessment of the health of the community)
3. reasons behind each assessment
4. ideas for what might be done to improve the situation
5. a retrospective assessment of change during the previous 12 months.

The survey uses nearly 90 questions with some key questions common to the Victorian Population Health Survey, Community Indicators Victoria, Community Strengthening Survey and the Local Safety Survey in order to allow wider comparisons to be made. Where available, internationally validated questions have been used. All questions have been trialled. The format of the survey allows for cross-checking of key issues using related questions and for cross tabulations using demographic data.

The survey generates demographic data and data on resident perceptions of current conditions and change. The survey highlights the importance of ensuring that changes achieved by the initiative are tangible and manifest to residents. It is important, for example, not only to reduce crime rates but also to enable residents to feel safer.

An abbreviated form of the face-to-face survey is administered by telephone to 150 residents per project (n 2850) selected randomly from ten census collection districts proximate to the Neighbourhood Renewal area. Together these 2850 persons comprise the Control Group. Comparisons can thus be made between the Neighbourhood Renewal community and their local counterparts (the control group) in the surrounding community. This comparative measure is called the **Relative Disadvantage Index**.¹¹

The ten collection districts for the telephone survey are ranked in deciles based on the ABS Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), with 15 residents interviewed from each. This segmentation enables comparisons to be made between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and particular parts of the control group. Comparing the data from the Neighbourhood Renewal population with data from the bottom three deciles of the control group (i.e. the lowest 30% on the SEIFA scale) allows conclusions to be drawn about place-related conditions affecting disadvantage. This particular comparison generates the **Neighbourhood Effect Index**.¹²

The survey is carried out in each project area by a partnership between Neighbourhood Renewal place-based teams and a tertiary institute that undertakes an initial project level analysis of the data.¹³ Survey data is jointly owned by the local residents and the Department of Human Services.

The survey also functions as a valuable engagement and communication tool. The face-to-face interviews of 300 residents in each project area are conducted by other local residents who have volunteered and been specially trained for this task. This builds the skills of individuals as well as empowering the whole community with significant information about itself.

Using local residents to conduct interviews

Research undertaken by Melbourne University¹⁴ shows that the individual benefits of participating in the community survey included new skills and experience leading to employment and training opportunities, increased self confidence and mental well being, new community connections and increased awareness. Community benefits through resident led interviewing included increased resident engagement and information sharing and local knowledge informing local action.

This report includes Round One and Two community survey data from 15 of the 19 Neighbourhood Renewal projects. The four projects that commenced in 2005–2006 are not included as they have not completed a 2nd survey. The community survey has been conducted at years 2 and 4–5 (roughly the half way point of the eight-year intervention for each established project).

Net scores for current conditions

The net score is an overall score for each indicator which allows for comparison between data sets. The net score is a standardised representation of the percentage of residents who viewed a condition as ‘good’, ‘average’ and ‘poor’.

If all respondents surveyed perceived an issue as ‘good’ it would have a standardised score of 100, whereas if all respondents returned an ‘average’ rating the score would be 50 and if all respondents rated an issue as ‘poor’ the score would be 0.¹⁵

Scale	
100	All Good
50	All Average
0	All Poor

Net scores for perceived changes in the previous 12 months

Each question is rated better, the same or worse. The net score is calculated by taking the better score from the minus score. i.e. Own housing scored 33 per cent for better and ten per cent for worse giving an overall net score of 23 per cent.

¹³ For a list of the tertiary institutes see Appendix 5.

¹⁴ Mann R & Warr D, 2009, ‘Something to Take Notice Of: Exploring the value and challenges of peer-interviewing as a participatory research method, Community Report, McCaughey Centre, University of Melbourne.

¹¹ See Explanatory Note 3 in Appendix 1.

¹² See Explanatory Note 4 in Appendix 1.

¹⁵ See Explanatory Note 2 in Appendix 1.

2.4 Administrative Data

A major source of evaluation information is administrative data collected from across government. However, only limited data are available specific to Neighbourhood Renewal areas, these being comparatively small in relation to local government and even postcode areas. The principal forms of administrative data pertinent to this evaluation are:

- public housing turnover, vacancy, and acceptance rates
- crime rates
- child protection notifications and substantiations
- literacy, numeracy, absenteeism and transitions from Year 12
- employment rates and further education qualifications.

2.5 Typology of data

Two types of data are presented in this report: perceptions of current conditions and change data.

The **current conditions data** from the survey capture residents' perceptions of conditions in their neighbourhood at the point in time they completed the survey. When complemented by administrative data, the survey data enables comparisons to be made between Neighbourhood Renewal communities and other populations such as the surrounding community or the State. Current conditions data can also be used to make comparisons between individual project areas.

The **change data** is also drawn from the community survey and from administrative sources. Change is measured in three ways:

1. comparing current conditions data from one survey to the next (including changes in the relative disadvantage index and the neighbourhood effect index)
2. the use of retrospective survey questions asking residents to comment on perceived change over the previous 12 months
3. comparing administrative data from one year to the next.

3. Evaluation of the six action areas

Progress in Neighbourhood Renewal is measured by the extent to which the initiative achieves its six key objectives (action areas) and narrows the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal communities and the rest of the state.

The six key objectives (action areas) of Neighbourhood Renewal are:

1. increasing people's pride and participation in the community
2. enhancing housing and the physical environment
3. lifting employment, training and education opportunities and expanding local economic activity
4. improving personal safety and reducing crime
5. promoting health and wellbeing
6. increasing access to services and improving government responsiveness.

This evaluation report presents a detailed presentation of relevant data on each of the six key action areas. The structure provides:

- the challenge for renewal
- what is Neighbourhood Renewal doing to address the challenge?
- outputs
- evaluation outcomes
- analysis of data
- summary of impact of Neighbourhood Renewal.

Two types of data are used to analyse key indicators that track changes in Neighbourhood Renewal projects: community survey results and administration data.

For each community survey indicator, where applicable, the following information is provided:

- round Two net rating
- net rating change between Rounds One and Two
- change in the gap between the Neighbourhood Renewal areas and socio-economic counterparts from surrounding neighbourhoods (Neighbourhood Effect Index) between Rounds One and Two
- change in the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and surrounding neighbourhoods (Relative Disadvantage Index) between Rounds One and Two
- perceived change in Neighbourhood Renewal in the previous 12 months.

Analysing administration data, changes from year to year are documented, and where possible, comparisons are made with state averages to determine if the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal locations and the rest of Victoria is narrowing.

4. Increasing pride and participation

4.1 The challenge

Overcoming social, political and economic exclusion that negatively affects community participation, belonging and pride.

4.2 What is Neighbourhood Renewal doing to address the challenge?

- establishing local partnerships between residents, government agencies, community groups, businesses, educational institutions and other stakeholders. Each Neighbourhood Renewal project has at least 50 per cent resident representation on steering committees
- supporting projects that build pride in the community
- involving local communities in planning, decision making, implementation and evaluation.

4.3 Outputs

- 19 community governance structures to engage residents in decision-making
- over 50 new community groups established, such as the Turkish Women's Group, men's groups and local working groups for health and safety issues
- local action plans developed and implemented based on local priorities
- community leaders, supporters and local agencies engaged to work together to produce the outcomes in action plans
- residents trained to take up key roles in Neighbourhood Renewal projects and in their community more broadly
- residents are actively involved in making decisions about strategies

- supporting community-run events and volunteering opportunities
- undertaking biennial community surveys and employing local residents to conduct the survey interviews.

4.4 Evaluation outcomes

P&P 1—More residents see the neighbourhood as a good place to live

Q. Overall, how would you rate your neighbourhood as a place to live? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for neighbourhood as a place to live for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 66%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two:

- 1% improvement for neighbourhood as a place to live for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 1% decrease in the gap for neighbourhood as a place to live between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 1% increase in the gap for neighbourhood as a place to live between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

P&P 2—Community pride

Q. How much pride do most local people have in the neighbourhood? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for pride in the neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 40%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two:

- 2% increase in pride in the neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal residents

- 8% decrease in the gap in pride in the neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 1% decrease in the gap in pride in the neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in previous 12 months:

- 17% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived community pride as getting better compared to 13% who thought it had declined.

P&P 3—More residents feel a sense of belonging

Q. Can you tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement:

I feel a sense of belonging to this community (CS)

- Round Two net rating for feeling a sense of belonging for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 68%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two:

- net rating remained the same for feeling a sense of belonging for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- gap remained the same for feeling a sense of belonging for Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 4% increase in the gap for feeling a sense of belonging for Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

P&P 4—More resident interaction and participation in the community

Q. How much do most people in this neighbourhood participate in local activities? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for participation in local activities for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 33%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two:

- 4% improvement in rating for participation in local activities for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 4% decrease in the gap for participation in local activities for Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 2% decrease in the gap for participation in local activities for Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in previous 12 months:

- 17% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived community participation as getting better compared to 14% who thought it had declined.

P&P 5—Increased resident involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal decision-making

- 50% resident participation in all steering committees.

P&P 6—Turnover of public housing residents decreases (DHS)

- 8% decrease in the turnover of Neighbourhood Renewal residents between 2001–02 and 2006–07

- 4% decrease in the gap in the turnover of Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average between 2001–02 and 2006–07.

4.5 Analysis

P&P 1—More residents see the neighbourhood as a good place to live

Residents generally rated their neighbourhood very positively as a place to live, with net averages of 65 per cent and 66 per cent for Rounds One and Two respectively, with four projects recording a high net score of more than 70 per cent in Round Two. There was significant difference in the rating of neighbourhoods across projects, with the highest rating at 79 per cent and the lowest at 53 per cent, a 26 point variance. In all, nine projects improved and five narrowed the gap with surrounding neighbourhoods.

The gap between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the control group increased by one per cent.

Decreased turnover and increased acceptance of offers for public housing tenants also demonstrates that neighbourhood renewal areas are becoming more desirable communities to live in.

P&P 2—Community pride

In Round Two, eight projects recorded increased resident community pride. While it was still relatively low at 40 per cent, it was a two per cent improvement from Round One. Overall, there was a 19 point variance across projects with the highest rating at 47 per cent and the lowest 28 per cent.

The gap with the control group for community pride was narrowed by one per cent. Specifically it narrowed in

six projects, including Broadmeadows by nine per cent and Werribee by eight per cent. In addition, it was closed by a significant eight per cent between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group. There was also a four per cent increase in the net rating of improvement in community pride over the previous 12 months.

Braybrook Big Day Out

The annual Braybrook Big Day Out is a key feature of the local community calendar. In 2007 it celebrated its fifth year, with over 5,000 people enjoying the many free activities on offer. The main objective of the event is to build pride in the local community and bring people together for a day of celebration. It also aims to provide local residents with skills and experience through the organisation and running of the festival, which in turn contributes to capacity building within the community. Thirty volunteers coordinated the event, with activities including free carnival rides, food stalls, information booths, face painting and a large music stage with free concerts. A survey of local people attending the event found a high level of community participation, an increased sense of belonging and community pride, and enhanced collective appreciation of community diversity.

This event contributed to a nine per cent increase in residents' sense of pride in their neighbourhood between Rounds One and Two.

P&P 3—More residents feel a sense of belonging

The residents' net rating for a sense of belonging between Rounds One and Two remained steady at 68 per cent. However, there was significant variation of 25 points across projects, with a high of 82 per cent and a low of 57 per cent. Overall nine of the 15 projects improved with Wendouree West moving from a net rating of 53 per cent in Round One to 73 per cent in Round Two.

Compared to the bottom 30 per cent of the control group the gap remained the same between Rounds One and Two while the sense of belonging increased by four per cent with the control group as a whole. This was a result of the control group rating increasing while the Neighbourhood Renewal rating remained the same.

Again there was a significant variation in the gap between the projects and their local control groups with Broadmeadows increasing their positive score from plus four in Round One to 11 in Round Two. Overall six projects showed a narrowing of the gap with the control group between Rounds One and Two.

P&P 4—More resident interaction and participation in the community

Residents' net rating in Round Two for participation in local activities was 33 per cent with the highest rating at 46 per cent and the lowest at 21 per cent, a significant 25 point variation. Although the net rating was low, resident connection and participation in community activities improved by four per cent. Eleven projects improved their community participation rating including Broadmeadows by 15 per cent.

Between Rounds One and Two, six projects narrowed the gap with the control group with the overall gap closing by two per cent. Significantly four of these projects narrowed the gap by more than ten per cent: Wendouree West by 11 per cent, both Collingwood and Broadmeadows by 13 per cent and Werribee by 18 per cent. The gap between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group closed by four per cent.

The average net rating of resident participation in local community activities over the previous 12 months went up three per cent, including Broadmeadows up from 26 per cent in Round One to 41 per cent in Round Two.

Olsen Oracle

The Broadmeadows newsletter Olsen Oracle is collated and edited by a local resident and overseen by the Neighbourhood Renewal participation worker. It goes to 1,700 households every two months and is increasing the opportunity for residents to participate in community activities.

Participation in church, social or sports clubs increased while volunteering remained steady. In Round One 39 per cent of Neighbourhood Renewal residents reported participating in local groups compared to 53 per cent of the control group. In Round Two it rose to 40 per cent with the control group falling to 51 per cent. Overall, residents' participation increased by one per cent, which closed the gap by three per cent to 11 per cent.

In Rounds One and Two 29 per cent of Neighbourhood Renewal residents reported volunteering in the local

community. In comparison the Victorian Population Health Survey indicated that in Round One 34 per cent and Round Two 33 per cent of respondents regarded themselves as volunteers, closing the gap by one per cent to just four per cent.

P&P 5—Increased resident involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal decision-making

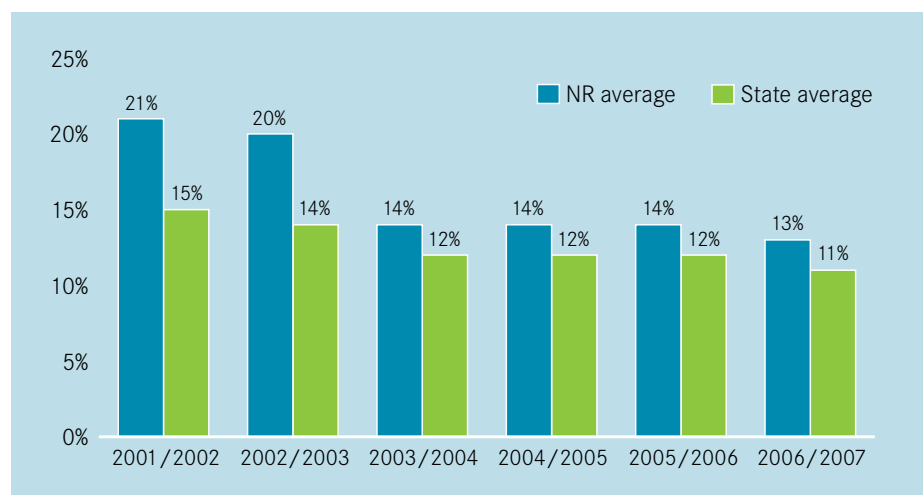
Resident involvement in decision-making has improved with residents reporting more influence and control over neighbourhood decisions.

All Neighbourhood Renewal projects have strong, locally responsive governance structures with 50 per cent of positions held by residents. Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans are developed in collaboration with residents delivering a sense of ownership over outcomes. Over the life of the project residents are participating in a range of training and mentoring opportunities so they can continue to have a key role in their local community into the future.

P&P 6—Turnover of public housing residents decreases (DHS)

Department of Human Services data shown in Graph 3 reveals the average turnover of public housing residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas decreased by eight per cent between 2001–02 and 2006–07, double the decrease over the same period across the state. This reduction in turnover in Neighbourhood Renewal areas closed the gap by four per cent to just two per cent.

Graph 3: Public housing turnover for Neighbourhood Renewal areas vs the State average



(Note: the Neighbourhood Renewal data for 2001–02 relates to only the first 10 sites established.)

4.6 Summary

The results show there have been improvements in pride and participation across all 15 projects, with 11 projects closing the gap with the rest of Victoria. The majority of indicators showed improvement in the net rating and closed the gap with both the control group and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

5. Enhancing housing and the physical environment

5.1 The challenge

Improving run-down housing, degraded physical environments and a lack of good quality accessible community infrastructure.

5.2 What is Neighbourhood Renewal doing to address the challenge?

- enhancing the standard and environmental sustainability of housing and open spaces
- reducing concentrations of disadvantage by increasing home ownership and creating more diverse communities
- improving housing management, including increased tenant participation.

5.3 Outputs

- over \$197 million spent on more than 7,000 upgrades and external improvement works on public housing properties (to the end of June 2008)
- over \$71 million on public housing construction and redevelopment in and around Neighbourhood Renewal areas to increase diversity and address changing needs (to the end of June 2008)
- large-scale redevelopments of degraded housing estates in Maidstone, Braybrook, Long Gully and Shepparton
- 30 community hub redevelopments or the development of new facilities (to the end of June 2008)
- rejuvenation of 22 parks and reserves (to the end of June 2008)
- 8 new community gardens (to the end of June 2008)

- internet wiring of Fitzroy's Atherton Gardens estate and Collingwood's high-rise estates
- 3,908 household energy-efficiency improvements (to the end of June 2008)
- completion of a \$1.3 million water-sensitive urban design project on Atherton Gardens public housing estate
- four-year \$1.25 million allocation to support community-based, innovative and environmentally sustainable projects
- 7 community infrastructure audits.

5.4 Evaluation outcomes

H&PE 1—Increased resident satisfaction with their housing

Q. How satisfied are you with your own housing? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for satisfaction with your own housing for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 81%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 1% improvement in satisfaction with your own housing for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 2% increase in the gap in own housing between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 2% increase in the gap in satisfaction of your own housing between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in previous 12 months

- 33% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived their own housing condition as getting better compared to 9% who thought it had declined.

H&PE 2—Reduced public housing vacancy rates (DHS)

- 1% decrease in vacancy rates in Neighbourhood Renewal areas between 2002 and 2007
- gap remained the same in vacancy rates between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the state between 2001–02 and 2006–07.

H&PE 3—Increased offer acceptance rates for public housing (DHS)

- 22% increase in offer acceptance rate in Neighbourhood Renewal areas between 1999–2002 and 2006–2007
- 3% increase in positive rating in offer acceptance rate between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the state between 1999–2002 and 2006–07.

H&PE 4—A more positive view of the physical environment by residents

Q. Generally, how would you rate the physical environment in your neighbourhood? (CS)

- Round Two rating for physical environment of neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 49%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 1% improvement in physical environment of neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 2% decrease in the gap in physical environment of neighbourhood between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)

- gap remained the same in physical environment of neighbourhood between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in the previous 12 months

- 23% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived the physical environment of neighbourhood as getting better compared to 13% who thought it had declined.

H&PE 5—Improved energy efficiency of public housing (ESAS)*

- 3,908 homes retrofitted to produce savings in electricity, gas and greenhouse emissions
- average energy bill savings of \$118 per annum per household.

H&PE 6—Decreased public housing density (DHS)

Public housing density has decreased by 1.2 per cent to 25.8 per cent of all households in neighbourhood renewal areas.

H&PE 7—More diverse household composition

7.7 per cent increase in the allocation of public housing tenants with high support needs between 2002 and 2008 to a total of 79.8 per cent of all neighbourhood renewal allocations compared to a State wide decrease of one per cent to 66.8 per cent of allocations in 2008.

4.5 per cent increase in single parent households from 2002 to 2008 to a total of 48.5 per cent of all neighbourhood renewal allocations compared to a State wide decrease of 2.9 per cent to 35.8 per cent of all allocations.

5.5 Analysis

H&PE 1—Increased resident satisfaction with their own housing

Neighbourhood Renewal resident satisfaction with their own housing rated the highest of all indicators scoring 81 per cent in Round Two, up one per cent from Round One. All up six projects improved and five narrowed the gap. The variance was small at 13 points, with the highest being 87 per cent and the lowest being 74 per cent.

Despite a high satisfaction rating for own housing among Neighbourhood Renewal residents, the gap with the control group increased by two per cent and also by two per cent with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

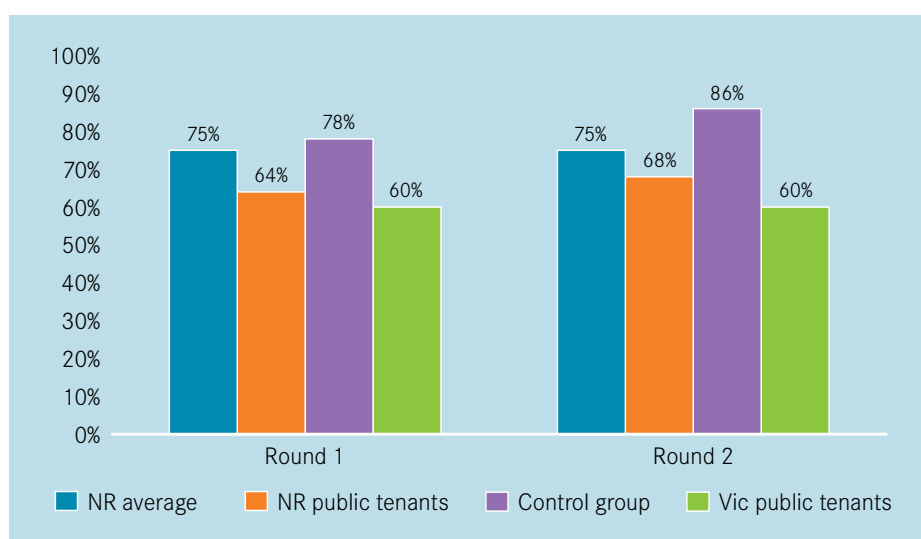
Further analysis of satisfaction with housing conditions is provided by reviewing the percentage of residents who rated their housing as good. Graph 4 shows Neighbourhood Renewal residents' who rated their own housing as good and compares this with public housing tenants and the control group.

Neighbourhood Renewal residents who rated their own housing as good remained steady at 75 per cent. However, Neighbourhood Renewal public housing tenants who rated their own housing as good rose by four per cent to 68 per cent, which is eight per cent higher than the average rating for all public housing tenants.

H&PE 2—Reduced public housing vacancy rates

Department of Human Services statistics show Neighbourhood Renewal has reversed the downward trends and is narrowing the gap on a number of key indicators. Public housing vacancy rates in Neighbourhood Renewal areas reduced by one per cent to three per cent between 2001–02 and 2006–07 while the state average over the same period also reduced by one per cent to three per cent, leaving the gap at one per cent.

Graph 4: Satisfaction with own housing



* Environment Sustainability Action Statement.

H&PE 3—Increased offer acceptance rates

Since 2001, public housing offer acceptance rates in Neighbourhood Renewal areas have consistently exceeded the state average. The greatest difference was recorded in 2006–07 when the Neighbourhood Renewal average was 85 per cent, five per cent greater than the state average. The average offer acceptance rate for Neighbourhood Renewal areas rose from 63 per cent in 1999–2002 to 85 per cent in 2006–07, a 22 per cent improvement.

H&PE 4—A more positive view of the physical environment

In Rounds One and Two, residents reported a net score of 48 and 49 per cent respectively for satisfaction with the physical environment. The rating improved in eight projects and six closed the gap with surrounding neighbourhoods. The highest rating was 65 per cent the lowest 29 per cent—a significant variance of 36 points.

The gap remained the same for perceptions of the physical environment between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the control group. There was a two per cent decrease in the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

More recently, Neighbourhood Renewal and a broad range of government, community, business and other local stakeholders have committed greater levels of investment to improving community infrastructure and the urban form. In 2006–07, for example, over \$14 million (over \$2 million from the Neighbourhood Renewal Community Infrastructure Fund) was provided for 40 community infrastructure projects, bringing the total number of community infrastructure and urban design

projects to over 100. These projects range from the development of a skate parks to the construction of new Neighbourhood Houses.

The impact this more recent investment may have on resident perceptions of the physical environment will be better gauged in Round Three community surveys.

Atherton Gardens estate revitalisation

This \$48 million (as at December 2008) partnership between the Department of Human Services, Department of Planning and Community Development, Environment Protection Authority Victoria, Melbourne Water, Infoxchange and the Brotherhood of St Laurence has resulted in a major revitalisation of the Atherton Gardens high-rise estate in Fitzroy. The project involves modernising apartments including providing computers and intranet wiring, foyer and lift upgrades, creating an IT community hub, basketball court and community garden redevelopment, improved paths, tree planting, and a rain and grey-water recycling system.

H&PE 5—Improved energy efficiency of public housing (ESAS)

Neighbourhood Renewal is improving environmental sustainability. The whole-of-government agreement between Neighbourhood Renewal, the Department of Sustainability and Environment and Sustainability Victoria provides for the strategic allocation of \$1.25 million over four years to integrate environmental outcomes into the program's action areas. This has resulted in several outcomes, including

improved biodiversity for local natural assets, improved thermal comfort and energy efficiency in community facilities and improved food security.

Environmental sustainability outcomes have demonstrated numerous social co-benefits, such as improved operational performance of housing and community infrastructure, which reduces costs. It improves residents' health and wellbeing because houses and facilities are warmer in winter and cooler in summer. Measures to increase environmental sustainability are being driven by changes to the assessment criteria of the Community Infrastructure Fund, which now incorporates environmental sustainability principles.

Energy Task Force Project

The Energy Task Force project is a joint initiative of the Sustainable Energy Authority of Victoria and Neighbourhood Renewal to retrofit houses in disadvantaged communities to save energy and reduce bills. The average retrofit costs \$300 per dwelling. A retrofit may include any or all of the following:

- installing insulation in ceiling above heated rooms
- installing blinds on windows in main living areas
- replacing traditional light globes with energy-efficient fluorescent lighting
- installing door and/or window seals
- installing pelmets and quality curtains to reduce heat loss
- fixing leaking taps
- changing shower roses to water-efficient types.

As of June 2008, 3,908 homes had been retrofitted in Neighbourhood Renewal areas. This has resulted in combined annual savings of:

- electricity—707 MWh
- gas—678 GJ
- greenhouse savings of 2,938 tonnes Co2
- energy bill savings of \$461,144

H&PE 6—More mixed communities: Decreased public housing density (DHS)

To achieve more mixed communities Neighbourhood Renewal projects were tasked to reduce the overall density of public housing and diversify the household mix of public housing tenancies.

There has been little progress in achieving these objectives. Public housing density in renewal areas only decreased marginally by 1.2 per cent and nine projects still having densities of public housing above 30 per cent.

H&PE 7—More diverse household composition

There are now more public housing tenants with complex support needs residing in Neighbourhood Renewal areas than there were when the initiative started.

Since 2002 there has been an increase in allocations to people with complex support needs (segments 1–3) by 7.7 per cent to 79.8 per cent of all allocations. This compares with a one per cent reduction of the same kind of tenancies across the rest of the State's public housing, to a total of 66.8 per cent of all allocations.

Similarly allocation of housing to single parents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas increased by 4.5 per cent to a total of 48.5 per cent of all allocations, whereas these allocations decreased by 2.9 per cent statewide to 35.8 per cent.

In contrast, allocations to tenants that are simply low income but do not require significant social support (wait turn) reduced in Neighbourhood Renewal areas by 6.4 per cent to only 19.3 per cent (whereas they increased statewide by 1.1 to 31.1%).

Table 1 compares new public housing allocations from 2002–03 to 2007–08 for Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the State as a whole.

Findings in this evaluation show that the higher the density of public housing the lower the level of improvement recorded across most indicators. For example the renewal project with the lowest proportion of public housing (11%) recorded a narrowing of the gap with the rest of the State on 14 of 18 survey indicators. This compares to the project with the highest percentage of public housing (100%) recording a narrowing of the gap on only three of 18 indicators.

These results are not surprising given public housing tenants are more likely to be unemployed, one parent families or in receipt of disability pensions with high support needs and multiple barriers to workforce participation. This is well demonstrated in Fitzroy and Collingwood (100% public housing estates) where approximately 80 per cent of the working age community is workless and one parent households make up between 33 and 36 per cent of the total population compared to the State average of eight per cent.

Not only did Neighbourhood Renewal areas with lower proportions of public housing make greater progress than those with high concentrations, but public housing tenants in the three renewal areas with the lowest concentrations of public housing showed the strongest levels of improvement between rounds one and two of the survey.

Table 1: % of new public housing allocations in Neighbourhood Renewal areas compared to the State average

		EH-Seg 1*	EH-Seg 2	EH-Seg 3	EH—Other	Wait turn
% New allocations NR	02–03	13.26	1.98	56.82	2.26	25.68
	07–08	16.53	3.03	60.19	.96	19.28
% change		+3.27	+1.05	+3.37	-1.3	-6.4
% New allocations state wide	02–03	13.69	3.00	51.03	2.27	30.00
	07–08	16.26	3.36	47.14	2.19	31.05
% change		+2.57	+.36	-3.89	-.08	+1.05

* For further information regarding housing segments, visit www.housing.vic.gov.au

5.6 Summary

On most housing and environment indicators the decline of previous years has been halted and improvement has begun, with residents' perception of their own housing and the physical environment recording the highest scores for improvements in the previous 12 months. Investment in housing has had a positive impact on the lives of residents, creating more livable communities and better life opportunities.

Public housing tenants are now more likely to accept an offer of housing in a Neighbourhood Renewal area due to improved living conditions, good-quality local amenities and services, and reduced stigma. Equally important, housing and the environment improvements are impacting positively on perceptions of crime and personal safety and providing much-needed infrastructure to support employment and learning opportunities and improved service provision.

With over 7,000 housing improvements the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the state is narrowing on a number of indicators.

More needs to be done to address the issue of the demographic mix of renewal areas. This evaluation report shows little progress in reducing the concentration of public housing in particular neighbourhoods and a significant exacerbation of the issues of locational disadvantage as a result of decisions to continue to disproportionately allocate tenants with complex support needs to renewal areas compared to other locations.

6. Increasing employment, learning opportunities and economic participation

6.1 The challenge

Reversing poor educational attainment, high rates of unemployment and low levels of economic activity.

Schools in Neighbourhood Renewal areas have significantly poorer educational outcomes than the State average. These include:

- low levels of pre-school participation
- student under-performance in literacy and numeracy
- greater levels of truancy and low retention to Year 12 (27% fewer students complete Year 12 or its equivalent)
- greater difficulty in students making transitions from primary to secondary school and secondary school to work or further study.

6.2 What is Neighbourhood Renewal doing to address the challenge?

- lifting employment and training opportunities
- improving access to education
- expanding local economic activity.

6.3 Outputs

Education outputs:

- school–community partnerships
- school regeneration projects
- children’s centres and lifelong learning hubs
- learning–support programs such as homework clubs
- using school as a base for health promotion activities including walking school buses, breakfast clubs, physical activity programs and after-school programs

- improved access to information technology and associated training
- transition support—from pre-school to school and primary to secondary school.

Employment outputs:

- 5,000 job opportunities have been generated through the Community Jobs program, Workforce Participation program, Public Tenant Employment program and Neighbourhood Renewal’s Employment Support Initiative
- 33 social enterprises have been created (11 delivering housing improvement works and services), providing over 130 sustainable supported work and training experiences per annum
- over 30 Neighbourhood Renewal community hubs have been established providing IT access, learning, employment and other support services. For example, the Best Community initiative is now delivering a full-time employment service from a job shop in Wendouree West and has a caseload of over 100 residents. Job shops are also operating in Broadmeadows, Colac, Werribee, Shepparton and the Collingwood and Fitzroy high-rise estates
- targeted social procurement by the Office of Housing (Public Tenant Employment Program, Social Enterprise Initiative), local government and other entities have created jobs for residents
- creating and fostering local business and industry partnerships
- introduction of major ICT initiatives including Parent Connect and E-Ace. E-Ace, operating as a social enterprise, has trained over 1,500 residents to use computers and the internet, resulting in 25 residents gaining IT-related employment. This initiative has also resulted in the \$3.6 million Wired Community @ Collingwood project, which will provide communication, learning and employment opportunities through ICT to all Collingwood estate residents across approximately 950 dwellings
- over \$1.2 million funding per annum for the Employment and Learning Coordinator Network, comprising 17 dedicated community-based Employment and Learning Coordinators (ELCs) to better link residents to improved employment and learning opportunities
- over \$2 million in capital infrastructure for outreach/job shops and community hubs
- \$1.3 million (to the end of June 2008) funding for an Employment Support Initiative to assist residents to complete training and find work in areas with skill and labour shortages
- targeting of state government employment programs and services to deliver intensive and localised support that tackles vocational and non-vocational employment barriers faced by residents.

6.4 Evaluation outcomes

E&L 1—Increased literacy and numeracy (DEECD)

Change data between 2000 and 2006

- Year 3 AIM (Achievement Improvement Monitor) literacy score remained unchanged for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools. There was a marginal increase in the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average
- Year 3 AIM numeracy score decreased marginally for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools. There was a marginal increase in the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average
- Year 5 AIM literacy score increased marginally for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools. There was a marginal decrease in the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average
- Year 5 AIM numeracy score increased marginally for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools. There was a marginal decrease in the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average
- Year 7 AIM literacy score increased marginally for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools. The gap remained the same between Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average
- Year 7 AIM numeracy score decreased marginally for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools. There was a marginal decrease in the gap between Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average.

E&L 2—Decreased school absenteeism (DEECD)

Change data between 2000 and 2006

- Gap in primary school absenteeism decreased to one day between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average
- Gap in secondary school absenteeism decreased to three days between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average.

E&L 3—Increased preschool participation rates (DEECD)

- 59% increase in pre-school participation in Wendouree West between 2001 and 2007.

(Note: data was not available for any other projects.)

E&L 4—Increased number of residents completing Year 12 (ABS)

Change data between 2001 and 2006

- 2% increase in residents completing Year 12 for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 1% decrease in the gap for residents completing Year 12 between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average.

E&L 5—Improved transitions from Year 12

- 1% higher rate of transitions to training, further education and employment of 2007 school leavers for Neighbourhood Renewal residents compared to the state average.

E&L 6—Residents perceive there to be more education and training opportunities

Q. How would you rate the opportunities and facilities for people in your neighbourhood to get education and training? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for education and training opportunities and facilities for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 62%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- the rating remained the same for education and training opportunities for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 3% decrease in the gap for education and training opportunities between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- the gap remained the same for education and training opportunities between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in the previous 12 months

- 18% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived education and training opportunities as getting better compared to seven per cent who thought they had declined.

E&EP 1—Residents perceive there to be more job opportunities

Q. How would you rate the general opportunities for people in your neighbourhood to get satisfactory jobs, either in this neighbourhood or nearby? (CS)

- Round Two net rating of job opportunities for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 37%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 3% improvement in job opportunities for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 5% decrease in the gap in job opportunities between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 2% decrease in the gap in job opportunities between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

E&EP 2—Quality and availability of local employment services and agencies

Q. How would you rate the quality and availability of local services and agencies to help people find work? (CS)

- Round Two net rating of the quality and availability of local employment services and agencies for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 47%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 1% decline in the quality and availability of local employment services and agencies for Neighbourhood Renewal residents

- 4% increase in the gap in the quality and availability of local employment services and agencies between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 3% increase in the gap in the quality and availability of local employment services and agencies between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

E&EP 3—Increased workforce participation (ABS)

Change data between 2001 and 2006

- 4% decrease in unemployment rate for Neighbourhood Renewal residents to 13%
- 2% decrease in gap of unemployment rate between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average
- 2% increase in employment rate for Neighbourhood Renewal residents to 45%
- gap remained the same in employment rate between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average
- worklessness rate remained the same for Neighbourhood Renewal residents at 52%
- gap remained the same in worklessness rate between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average.

E&EP 4—Increased further education qualifications (ABS)

Change data between 2001 and 2006

- 12% increase in higher education qualifications for Neighbourhood Renewal residents to 34%
- 6% decrease in the gap in higher education qualifications between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average.

E&EP 5—Managing on household income

Q. Thinking about your total household take-home pay over the past 12 months, how have you been managing on that income? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for managing on household income for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 42%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 1% improvement for managing on household income for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 5% increase in the gap for managing on household income between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 1% increase in the gap for managing on household income between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

E&EP 6—Improved local economy

Q. How would you rate the state of the local economy in your neighbourhood? (CS)

- Round Two net rating of the local economy for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 41%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 3% improvement in the local economy for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 4% decrease in the gap in the local economy between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)

- 1% increase in the gap in the local economy between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in previous 12 months

- 12% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived the local economy as getting better compared to 17% who thought it had declined.

6.5 Analysis

E&L 1—Increased literacy and numeracy

Literacy and numeracy skills are important for overall educational achievement. The Achievement Improvement Monitor (AIM) is a

state-wide assessment program conducted each year for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 that measures students' literacy and numeracy skills.

Tables 2 and 3 show the averages in skill levels for literacy and numeracy in public schools that serviced Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the State average in 2000 and 2006. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has identified a minimum performance expectation of students. Tables 2 and 3 illustrate that the average AIM scores for Neighbourhood Renewal area feeder schools were below the minimum performance expectation for both literacy and numeracy.

Table 2: Literacy results for Year 3, 5 and 7 in Neighbourhood Renewal areas compared to the State average and minimum benchmarks

LITERACY	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7	
Minimum performance expectation	2.00		3.00		4.00	
Year	2000	2006	2000	2006	2001	2006
State average	2.28	2.33	3.16	3.15	4.11	4.18
Neighbourhood Renewal feeder school average	1.99	2.00	2.73	2.91	3.77	3.84
Gap between state and feeder school average	0.29	0.33	0.43	0.24	0.34	0.34

Table 3: Numeracy results for Year 3, 5 and 7 in Neighbourhood Renewal areas compared to the State average and minimum benchmarks

NUMERACY	Year 3		Year 5		Year 7	
Minimum performance expectation	2.00		3.00		4.00	
Year	2000	2006	2000	2006	2001	2006
State average	2.23	2.18	3.06	3.08	4.05	3.98
Neighbourhood Renewal feeder school average	1.99	1.91	2.74	2.86	3.66	3.64
Gap between state and feeder school average	0.24	0.27	0.32	0.22	0.39	0.34

E&L 2—Decreased school absenteeism

The number of student absent days in schools servicing Neighbourhood Renewal areas provides a good proxy measure for assessing students engagement. The following graphs show the average (mean) number of absent (non-curriculum) days per student based on data from DEECD.

Graph 5 shows the average number of primary student absent days from Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average between 2000 and 2006.

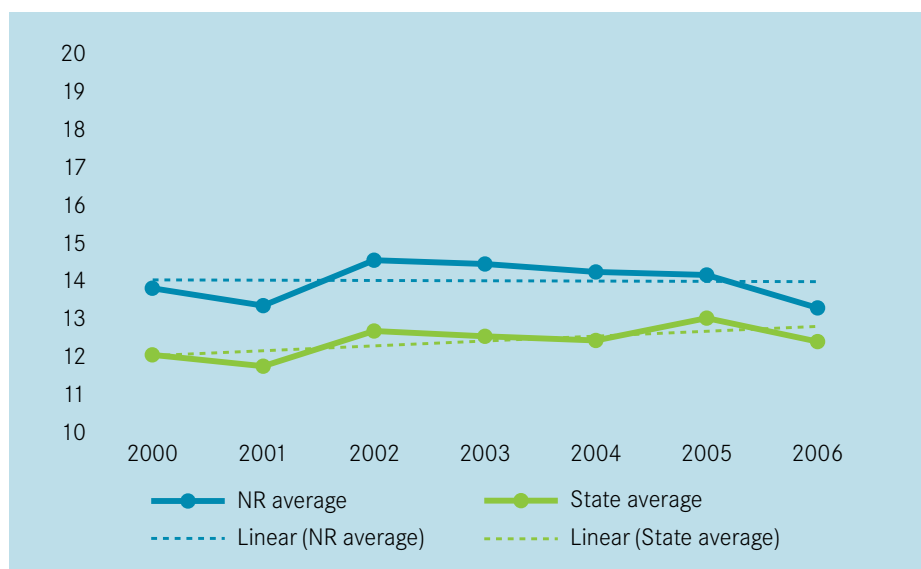
From 2000 to 2004, Prep to Year 6 students in Neighbourhood Renewal areas averaged two more absent days than students across the state. By 2006, the gap had been narrowed to one day, with students in Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools averaging 13.27 absent days compared to the state average of 12.37. From 2002, there has been a gradual downwards trend in absenteeism across the 15 established Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

While this downwards trend in absenteeism is positive, there is significant variation across the 19 projects. In 2006, the average number of absent days for primary school students varied from 8.24 days to 16.9 days across the 19 projects.

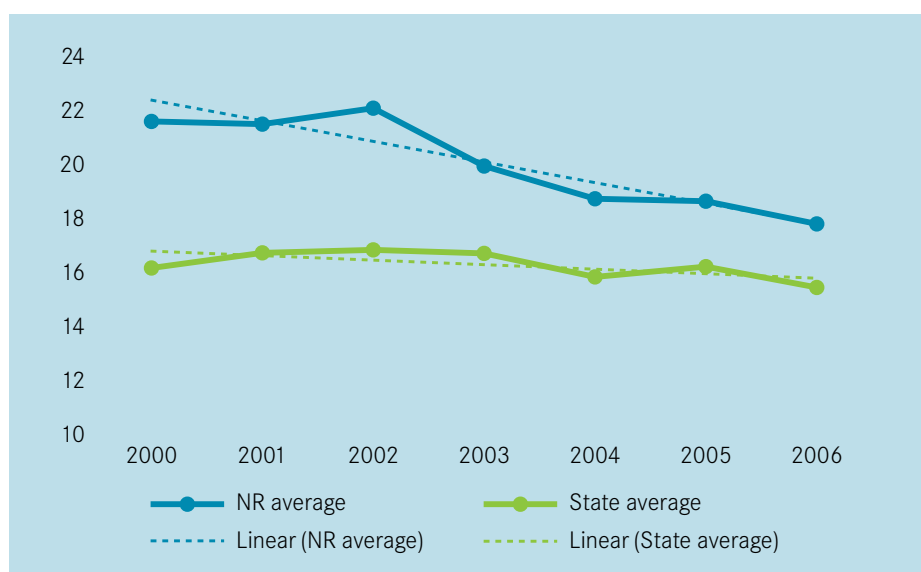
Graph 6 shows the average number of secondary student absent days from secondary school from Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average between 2000 and 2006.

Students who engaged with school in their secondary school years are more likely to have higher educational aspirations and complete their schooling. From 2000 to 2002 the gap

Graph 5: Absent days per primary student per year



Graph 6: Absent days per secondary student per year



for absent days in Years 7–12 with the state was five days higher; by 2006 it had been closed to three days. Absenteeism fell 3.5 days from 2000 to 2006, while the State average fell 0.7 days.

As with primary school absenteeism, secondary school attendance varies significantly across the 19 projects. In 2006, for Years 7 to 12, the

lowest number of absent days for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools was 9.5 days and the highest was 23.3 days, with the state average 15.4 days.

A range of initiatives have been implemented that support the engagement of children and young people in schools, including walking school buses, breakfast clubs and

transition support programs. Initiatives such as 'It's Not OK To Be Away' have been introduced to promote the value of regular attendance at school.

School Engagement Worker

The Neighbourhood Renewal School Engagement Worker at Eaglehawk Secondary College increases the school's capacity to support students with poor attendance. This has helped access the support needed for young people who are experiencing a range of complex issues and who often require assistance from multiple agencies.

Strong partnerships between school and home and with community support agencies are better meeting the needs of young people with significant absenteeism. Many parents have expressed their appreciation that the school is showing a genuine interest in their child despite poor attendance.

E&L 3—Increased preschool participation rates

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to be low educational achievers. There is a strong link between development in the early years and learning and overall life opportunities.

Pre-school participation data was not available at the time of writing this report.

Wendouree West Pre-school Participation Project

The Wendouree West Preschool Participation Project was a partnership between Best Start, Neighbourhood Renewal and the community, and was set up to address the issue of poor pre-school participation. A number of projects were implemented over time (promotion, sponsorship, healthy snacks and lunch programs), resulting in a 59 per cent increase in the proportion of children enrolled at school who had participated in kindergarten (from 36 per cent in 2001 to 95 per cent in 2007).

E&L 4—Increased number of residents completing Year 12

Low completion of Year 12 or its equivalent is concentrated in approximately 20 per cent of Local Government Areas, of which there is significant overlap with Neighbourhood Renewal projects.

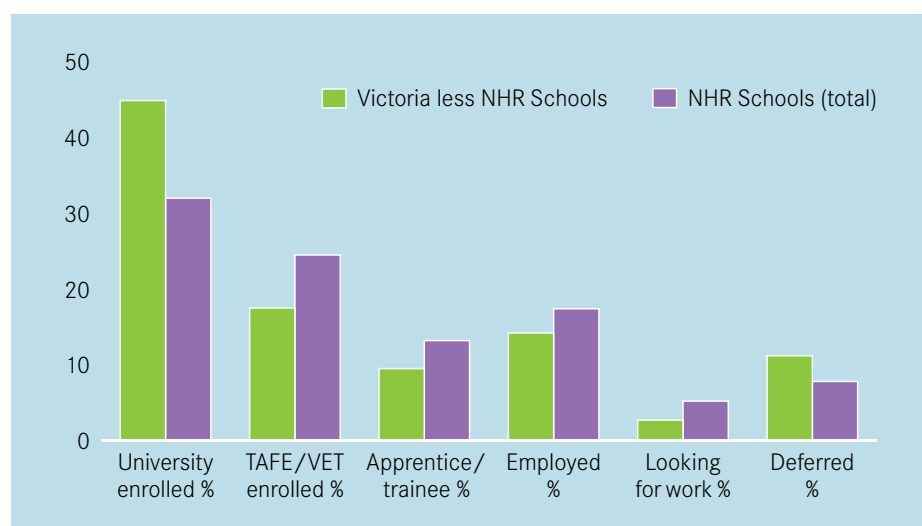
According to the ABS Census data, Neighbourhood Renewal residents are much less likely to have completed Year 12 compared to the state. However, 2001–2006 saw a marginal increase in Year 12 completion, narrowing the gap by one per cent. Further work is required to narrow the gap so that young people are supported in the transition from Year 10 to Years 11 and 12.

E&L 5—Improved transitions from Year 12

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development conducts an annual survey 'On Track'¹⁶ to investigate the pathways young people take to post-school destinations. The findings below are based on a 2008 survey of 2007 Year 12 school leavers. Graph 7 shows the 'On Track' survey results for 2007 school leavers for Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools and the state average less Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools.

State-wide approximately 86 per cent of students who completed Year 12 were employed or in further education compared with 87 per cent in Neighbourhood Renewal areas. However, it should be noted that On Track data was not available for all Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools. As well, the positive result must be considered in the context that it relates

16 Excludes international students

Graph 7: School transitions for Year 12 school leavers

only to students completing Year 12. In Neighbourhood Renewal areas there are fewer residents completing Year 12.

There were differences in destinations of Year 12 completers between Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the rest of the state. For example, only 32 per cent of completers from Neighbourhood Renewal feeder schools went on to university compared to 45 per cent in the rest of the state. Neighbourhood Renewal completers were more likely to enrol in TAFE/VET institutions and commence apprenticeships than the state average and more likely to be looking for work.

E&L 6—Residents perceive there to be more education and training opportunities

The Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating for education and training opportunities remained unchanged at 62 per cent between Rounds One and Two, although six projects did improve. There was a significant 24 point difference across project ratings for

education and training opportunities; the highest was 75 per cent and the lowest was 51 per cent.

The gap remained the same between the control group, but six projects did close the gap including Corio Norlane by nine per cent. Neighbourhood Renewals' success in creating education and training opportunities is reflected by the closing of the gap by three per cent with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Eighteen per cent of residents surveyed rated education and training opportunities as improving over the previous 12 months while only seven per cent perceived a decline, an improvement of 11 per cent. An example of a Neighbourhood Renewal initiative to improve education and training opportunities is the Wendouree West Community Learning Hub.

Wendouree West Life Long Learning Hub

The Wendouree West Community Learning Hub is an excellent example of what collaboration between government, local agencies and the community can achieve. Neighbourhood Renewal's place-based approach enabled the whole community to be genuinely involved in this lifelong learning vision for their community.

The precinct has become the central focus of activity in Wendouree West. It houses an integrated educational facility encompassing: Prep to Year 8 school; kindergarten; occasional care; an information technology centre; adult education; neighbourhood house and other community and education spaces and services.

The hub has increased residents' confidence to be involved with schools as demonstrated through inaugural school council elections being held. In 2007, 95 per cent of prep children had attended kindergarten, an increase from only 36 per cent in 2004. Further school absenteeism is reducing and increased numbers of students are completing Year 12.

E&EP 1—Residents perceive there to be more job opportunities

Residents rated general opportunities for work relatively poorly compared to other questions in the survey with a Round Two net rating of only 37 per cent, a three per cent improvement since Round One. There was a significant variance across the projects of 38 points: the highest was 56 per cent and the lowest was 18 per cent.

The gap with the control group closed by two per cent and by five per cent with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Nine projects improved and eight closed the gap with surrounding neighbourhoods, including Braybrook and Maidstone by 12 per cent.

Positive results correlated with projects where local social infrastructure (such as job shops and local hubs) have been developed allowing service providers to work within the neighbourhood and positively engage residents.

Bright Street Enterprise Hub—Eaglehawk

Bendigo Access Employment purchased disused buildings in Eaglehawk, Bendigo, to create a vibrant community and learning centre. Operated and controlled by the community, the enterprise hub has brought employment, learning and other services. It provides employment and hospitality training to six people through a café and milk bar and internet services with associated education programs and childcare access.

E&EP 2—Quality and availability of local employment services and agencies

The community survey net rating in regard to the quality and availability of employment services and agencies fell one per cent: 48 per cent in Round One to 47 per cent in Round Two. There was a 22 point variance across projects: the highest was 61 per cent and the lowest was of 39 per cent.

The gap with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group increased by four per cent and by three per cent with the control group.

Despite this overall trend, six projects reported an improvement, including Broadmeadows by 12 per cent, and eight projects narrowed the gap.

As is the case with the rating of job opportunities, projects with local social infrastructure that supports employment reported improved quality and availability of local services and agencies to help find work.

Helping local people get jobs

Worklessness at the Collingwood and Fitzroy estates is approximately 87 per cent. Only 13 per cent of residents are wage earners and over 40 per cent are on either sole parent or disability pensions. In partnership with a range of agencies, including the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Neighbourhood Renewal has supported over 400 tenants into jobs. Typically this takes up to 18 months for each person and involves engagement, intensive support, pre-vocational training, work experience, traineeships and finally post-placement support to ensure job retention.

A number of community enterprises have been established along with a local skills register and job club.

E&EP 3—Increased workforce participation (ABS)

Graph 8 illustrates the employment and unemployment rates across both Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the state of Victoria from the 2001 and 2006 census.

From 2001 and 2006, there was a two per cent increase in the employment rate for both residents and

the rest of the state, leaving a significant gap of 16 per cent.

Between 2001 and 2006 unemployment for residents fell four per cent from 17 to 13 per cent while the rest of the state fell two per cent. Notwithstanding this improvement, unemployment remains at a high level of 13 per cent compounded by 48 per cent of Neighbourhood Renewal residents remaining outside the labour market altogether.

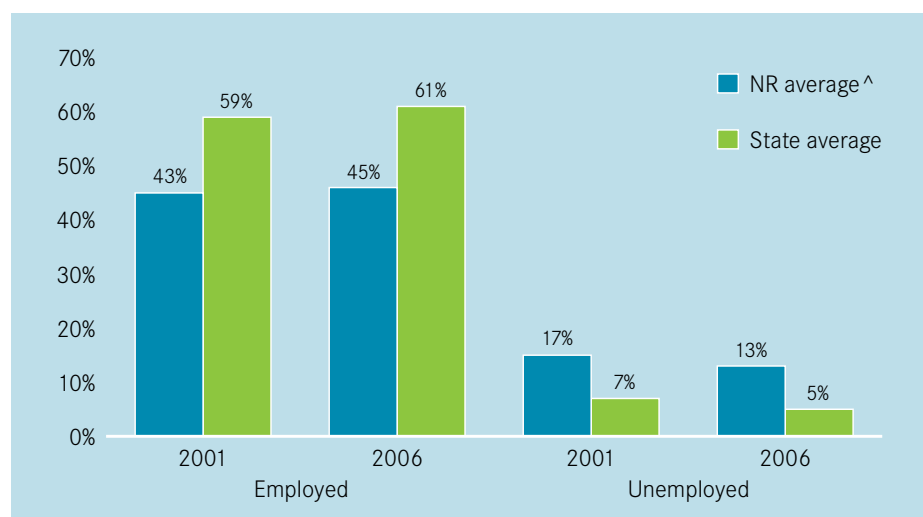
Unemployment fell five per cent or more in four projects namely Braybrook and Maidstone five per cent; Wendouree West five per cent; Ashburton, Ashwood and Chadstone six per cent; and Latrobe Valley eight per cent. Conversely unemployment increased in two projects: Collingwood by two per cent and Fitzroy by one per cent, both of which are 100 per cent public housing, with a high composition of one-parent families and lower percentage of residents with further education qualifications.

According to census data from 2001 and 2006, 52 per cent of residents participate in the workforce, compared to 64 per cent for the rest of Victoria. Labour market figures were static at the time of the 2001 and 2006 census, as presented in Graph 9. Workforce participation across Neighbourhood Renewal projects varied from 39 per cent to 59 per cent.

Despite improvements in employment and unemployment rates, workforce participation remains low compared to the rest of the state. This indicates a need for ongoing and increased investment by the service system to engage more intensively with individuals and support their entry into the workforce.

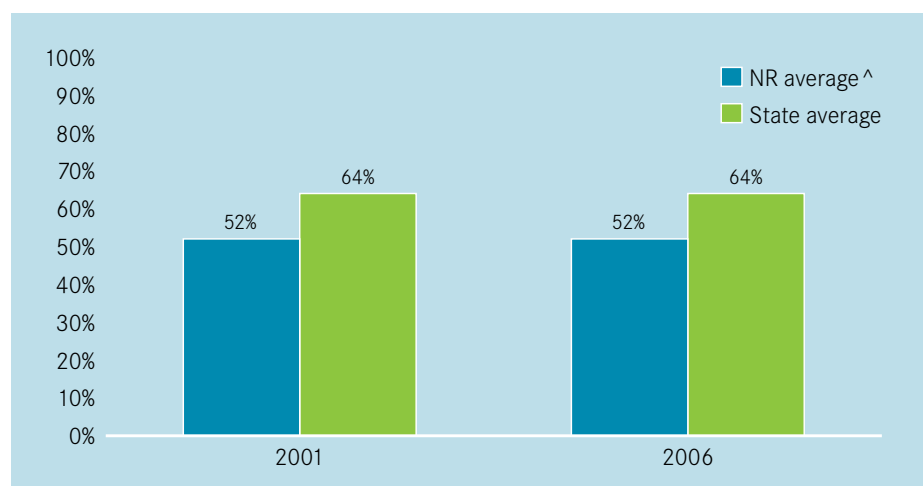
The projects reporting lower workforce participation are affected by significant factors that impact on residents' ability to participate in the workforce. These projects have fewer residents of working-age population with further education qualifications and have higher percentages of residents who have not completed Year 12. Several studies have found that educational attainment is strongly related to workforce

Graph 8: Employment and unemployment rates (ABS data)



^ NR average is based on the 15 most established projects.

Graph 9: Workforce participation (ABS Census data)



^ NR average is based on the 15 most established projects.

participation. Labour force participation is generally lower in populations with lower educational attainment¹⁷.

Women with a partner and one or more children are more likely to participate in the labour force than single mothers¹⁸. Neighbourhood Renewal areas with low workforce participation rates also have the highest ratios of one-parent families of all projects at over a third.

Residents face multiple barriers to workforce participation and are generally not adequately engaged or supported into the labour market. Employees in Mission Australia's Urban Renewal Employment Enterprise Program (UREEP) reported experiencing multiple barriers to employment and education. These included:

- *personal barriers*—such as lack of confidence and self-esteem, lack of motivation, limited or no work history, poor health, limited English proficiency, poor interpersonal skills, criminal history, drug and alcohol addiction
- *environmental barriers*—such as lack of secure housing and lack of transport
- *intergenerational barriers*—such as lack of family and peer experience of work and looking for work, and limited educational attainment
- *systemic barriers*—such as experiences of workplace discrimination and violence.

Urban Renewal Employment Enterprise Program

Established in 2006, Mission Australia's Urban Renewal Employment Enterprise Program (UREEP) is one of the community works enterprises operating a transitional labour market program. This provides opportunities for disadvantaged and jobless groups to access waged employment in a supported, real-work environment, with the aim of enabling a successful transition to employment.

The project targets young jobseekers from Heidelberg West and East Reservoir Neighbourhood Renewal, and has supported over 30 people from a wide range of disadvantaged groups, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disabilities, people with a mental illness, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, mature-aged jobseekers, retrenched workers, recently released offenders and homeless jobseekers. The majority of trainees are Office of Housing tenants.

The premise of the UREEP program and other community works enterprises is that some disadvantaged and longer term unemployed people require additional training and support above and beyond that which is available in the work-first oriented labour market programs. The skills and motivations developed in transitional labour market programs can assist the jobseeker to find rewarding and sustainable employment in the long term.

Another indicator of the success of delivering targeted employment services locally has been the state government's Workforce Participation Partnership Program. The funding for this project was targeted across Neighbourhood Renewal sites to provide localised and intensive case management services.

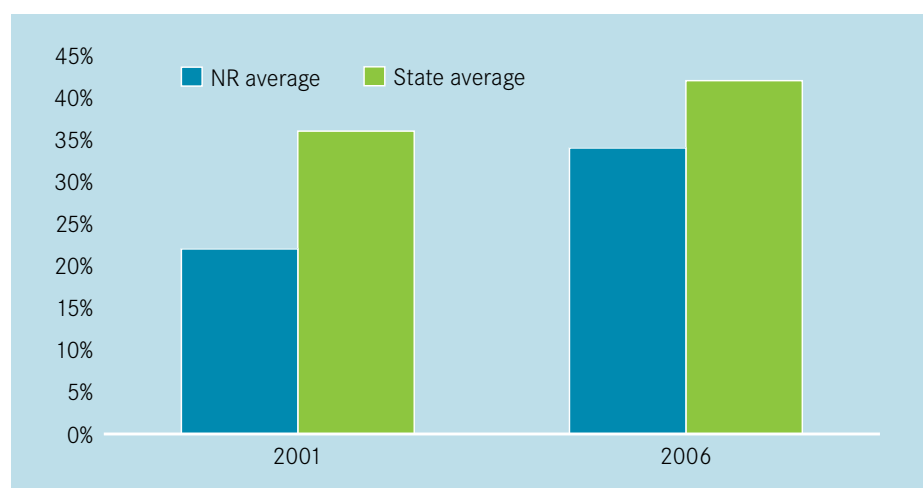
E&EP 4—Increased further education qualifications

Skills to improve residents' employment opportunities is a focus of all Neighbourhood Renewal projects. Graph 10 compares the average percentage of residents with further education qualifications with the state average.

Between 2001 and 2006 there was a 12 per cent improvement in further education qualifications up to 36 per cent and closing the gap by six per cent. However, the gap is still significant at eight per cent. Further, Neighbourhood Renewal residents are more likely to have lower level qualifications (Certificate I–III), and hence lower paid work opportunities.

17 The Allen Consulting Group 2005, *Barriers to and options for increased workforce participation in Victoria*, pg 11.

18 The Allen Consulting Group 2005, *Barriers to and options for increased workforce participation in Victoria*, pg 37.

Graph 10: Further education qualifications (ABS Census data)

E&EP 5—Managing on household income

Residents' rating on how they have been managing on their household income over the previous 12 months improved by one per cent in Round Two to 42 per cent.

In Round Two the gap with the control group increased by one per cent. On average 80 per cent of residents reported they were coping or finding it difficult to manage on their total household income compared to just 50 per cent of residents in surrounding neighbourhoods. Only 17 per cent of Neighbourhood Renewal residents reported living comfortably compared to 49 per cent of their counterparts in surrounding neighbourhoods.

Significantly, the gap for managing on household income also increased by five per cent between residents and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Analysis of ABS census data for 2006 reveals 54 per cent of Neighbourhood Renewal residents earned less than \$400 per week, compared to the state average of 42 per cent. In three project areas over 60 per cent of

residents earned below \$400 per week: Wendouree West 62 per cent, Collingwood 69 per cent and Fitzroy 69 per cent. These areas also had the greatest number of one-parent families with 31 per cent, 33 per cent and 36 per cent respectively.

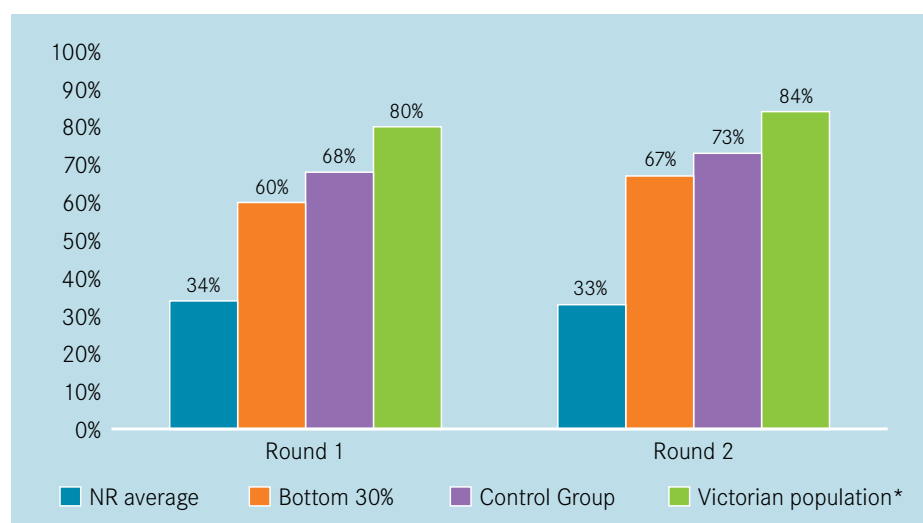
Further analysis of 2006 ABS census data reveals 47 per cent of Neighbourhood Renewal households earned below \$650 per week, compared to the state average of 30 per cent. In two project areas over 70 per cent of households reported an income below \$650 per week: Collingwood 75 per cent and Fitzroy 75 per cent. These

projects also reported the highest levels of worklessness, with 78 per cent and 81 per cent respectively.

Despite improvements in residents' perceptions of the local economy and administrative data, which shows that unemployment has decreased, Neighbourhood Renewal residents are still earning considerably less than their counterparts and are over-represented in the low-income categories.

To further analyse economic participation and access to financial resources residents were asked whether in an emergency they would be able to raise \$2,000 in two days from relatives or friends. Graph 11 reveals the stark differences between Neighbourhood Renewal residents' ability to raise funds in a short period of time compared with people in neighbouring areas and the state generally.

In Round Two of the community survey, only 33 per cent of Neighbourhood Renewal residents felt they had the financial resourcefulness to raise \$2,000 in two days from relatives and friends in an emergency compared to 73 per cent of the control group, and 67 per cent of the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Graph 11: Ability to raise \$2,000 in an emergency in two days

E&EP 6—Improved local economy

The rating of the local economy improved three per cent between Rounds One and Two, up to 41 per cent, with five projects showing an improvement. The variance was significant at 29 points—the highest was 55 per cent and the lowest was 26 per cent.

There was a one per cent increase in the gap with the control group in the local economy in Round Two, but six projects narrowed the gap. Encouragingly, the gap fell four per cent with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Of the Neighbourhood Renewal residents surveyed 12 per cent perceived the local economy had improved in the previous 12 months while 17 per cent thought it had declined.

6.6 Summary

The results for education and learning are mixed; however, the overall impact of Neighbourhood Renewal has been positive. Rates of numeracy and literacy would not be expected to show great change at this early stage, but the improvements in attendance (decreases in absenteeism) and the number of residents completing Year 12 are encouraging.

Despite positive outcomes there remains a significant gap between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and both the control group and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Overall, the results in creating employment are encouraging. However, while there are significant reductions in unemployment, and even stronger improvements in further education qualifications, the workforce participation rate has remained the same.

7. Improving personal safety and reducing crime

7.1 The challenge

Tackling high crime rates, a lack of engagement with Police and unsafe, degraded physical environments

7.2 What is Neighbourhood Renewal doing to address the challenge?

- tackling the causes of crime and motivation of offenders
- physically limiting crime opportunities by designing safer environments
- deterring potential offenders by increasing the risk of being caught
- engaging local communities in crime prevention strategies.

7.3 Outputs

- Reassurance Policing project in Maidstone Braybrook
- police are members of Neighbourhood Renewal Crime and Safety Working Groups
- mounted patrols undertaken in Latrobe Valley
- increased patrols in known 'hot spots'
- police working closely with schools
- introduction of Neighbourhood Watch in several communities
- anti-bullying and violence prevention programs, as well as youth-specific initiatives
- local strategies targeted at crime 'hot spots', which led to three Neighbourhood Renewal projects winning Australian Crime and Violence Prevention Awards in 2004
- a three-year grant secured by Heidelberg West from the National Community Crime Prevention Program

- TAC funding secured by Heathdale (Werribee) for a road safety campaign
- large-scale redevelopments of degraded housing estates have resulted in neighbourhoods with improved housing, urban amenity and community facilities.

7.4 Evaluation outcomes

C&S 1—Residents feel safe walking alone after dark

Q. Could you say if you agree or disagree, and how strongly, with the following statement about crime and safety issues: I feel safe walking alone down my street after dark? (CS)

- Round Two net rating of feeling safe walking alone after dark for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 38%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- the net rating remained the same for feeling safe walking alone after dark for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 5% decrease in the gap in feeling safe walking alone after dark between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 2% increase in the gap in feeling safe walking alone after dark between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

C&S 2—Residents feel the neighbourhood is a safer place to live

Q. How would you rate conditions in your neighbourhood in relation to crime and personal safety generally? (CS)

- Round Two net rating of crime and personal safety for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 40%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 2% improvement in crime and personal safety for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 2% decrease in the gap in crime and personal safety between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 4% increase in the gap in crime and person safety between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in the previous 12 months

- 14% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived crime and personal safety as improving compared to 17% who thought it had declined.

C&S 3—Crimes reduced (VP)

- 12% average reduction in all reported crimes between 2002 and 2007
- 2.3% reduction in the gap compared to the State average
- 27% average reduction in crimes against property between 2002 and 2007
- 1.5% reduction in the gap compared to the State average

- 7.5% average increase in crimes against the person between 2002 and 2007
- Insignificant reduction in the gap of .3%.

C&S 4—Child protection notifications and substantiations are reduced (DHS)

Change data between 2000–01 and 2004–05

- 6% increase in child protection notifications for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 4% increase in the gap in child protection notifications between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state
- 6% decrease in child protection substantiations for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 1% increase in the gap in child protection substantiations between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state.

7.5 Analysis

C&S 1—Residents feel safe walking alone after dark

Residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas rated feeling safe walking alone after dark poorly in Round Two with a net average of just 38 per cent, the same as Round One. There was a significant 29 point variance in ratings across projects, with 50 per cent the highest and 21 per cent the lowest.

Compared to the control group Neighbourhood Renewal residents rated their neighbourhood quite poorly for personal safety. The gap increased by two per cent for personal safety rating with the control group. Three projects narrowed the gap, with Corio Norlane reducing it by 14 per cent. The gap narrowed by five per cent with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group due to a decrease in the comparison group rating.

At the time of the Round Two survey, 56 per cent of residents in Neighbourhood Renewal areas did not feel safe walking alone in their street after dark. This is unchanged from Round One, although four projects improved. In the rest of the state only 23 per cent of all Victorians¹⁹ did not feel safe in their street after dark.

There is a correlation between feelings of safety and the physical environment. Round Two community survey results revealed that if a resident rated the physical environment good the likelihood that they reported feeling safe was doubled. In contrast those who felt most unsafe in their street after dark generally rated the physical environment of their neighbourhood as poor, as shown in Table 4.

C&S 2—Residents feel the neighbourhood is a safer place to live

Round Two featured a two per cent improvement in residents rating of the neighbourhood as a safer place to live, with the net rating increasing to 40 per cent. There was a significant 26 point variance, with a high of 49 per cent and a low of 23 per cent. Nine projects improved, including Braybrook and Maidstone by 11 per cent.

Six projects narrowed the gap with surrounding neighbourhoods, although the average gap increased by four per cent. The gap also increased by two per cent with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Overall, there was a three per cent net decrease in residents who thought crime and personal safety had improved over the previous 12 months.

C&S 3—Crimes reduced

All crimes

Between 2002 and 2007, there has been an overall average reduction of 12 per cent in all crimes reported. Across the program, 60 per cent of projects reported a decrease in total crime, with two projects—Collingwood and Shepparton—recording a reduction across all four crime-reporting categories.

Table 4: Residents' perceptions of the physical environment and personal safety

Physical environment rating	Do not feel safe	Neither	Do feel safe	No response
Good	42%	6%	46%	6%
Average	55%	7%	32%	5%
Poor	70%	4%	23%	2%

¹⁹ Victorian Population Health Survey 2002–2006.

These results show crime and personal safety is being addressed. Good examples include initiatives at Collingwood and Fitzroy to address local issues like drugs and alcohol, feeling unsafe and antisocial behaviour. This includes a community chat program, police youth officers and sporting activities, a reinvigorated physical environment and a range of new security measures including the Community Contact Service. Further, the establishment of the Neighbourhood Justice Centre aims to enhance community involvement with the justice system.

The impact of these initiatives can be seen in reported crime rates. Collingwood reported reductions in crimes against property (22%), persons (27%), drug offences (42%) and other offences (46%). Similarly, Fitzroy reported reductions in crimes against property (16%), drug offences (47%), and other offences (15%), although it recorded an increase in crimes against the person.

In response to resident concerns about drug dealers and other non-legitimate persons accessing the high-rise estates, a concierge service (Community Contact Service) now controls access to the buildings on the Atherton Gardens and Collingwood housing estates.

Community Contact Service

A concierge service has been established at the base of the seven high-rise towers on the Collingwood and Atherton Gardens (Fitzroy) estates to control access and limit drug dealers and other non-legitimate persons.

The Community Contact Service is a community enterprise providing 11 jobs per annum for public housing tenants and plays an essential community building and liaison role for residents.

A 2006 evaluation found it to be both effective and efficient and concluded it had:

- increased the number of sustainable tenancies
- provided a cost-effective model for the delivery of concierge services while building a robust model for providing supported employment and training activities
- achieved strong employment outcomes, with most participants moving into further employment or enrolling in full-time education
- made a significant and positive contribution to the community and stakeholders through the implementation of a wide range of customer service, community safety and community-building activities.

Crimes against property

There was a significant 27 per cent average reduction in reported property crimes across all Neighbourhood Renewal areas between 2002–03 and 2006–07. Seven projects showed a reduction and two recorded significant reductions including Braybrook and Maidstone 21 per cent and Shepparton 45 per cent.

A small narrowing of the gap was also recorded.

Crimes against the person

Crimes against the person rose by an average 7.5 per cent across projects between 2002–03 and 2006–07, the only category of crime to record an average increase. Only three projects recorded less crimes against the person, but these reductions were significant. Collingwood improved by 27 per cent, Colac 33 per cent and Shepparton 59 per cent.

It should be noted that over the same period the state average for crimes against the person also increased.

In projects where residents recorded good responses to the physical environment there was less crime. For example, in Wendouree West residents reported that crime and safety of the neighbourhood had improved by three per cent and the physical environment by four per cent, while crime rates decreased against property by 7.8 per cent, drug offences by 23.5 per cent and other offences by 22.5 per cent. The revitalisation of the local shopping strip is one project, among many, that is creating a safer community.

Violet Grove shopping precinct

In 2001 the Violet Grove precinct—once disparagingly referred to as ‘Violent Grove’—had five vacant shops and one fish and chip shop; it was run down, badly vandalised and covered in graffiti. Collaboration between government and local community groups in Wendouree West has since revitalised and transformed it into a vibrant and community-focused precinct that meets the needs of local residents.

It now has a hairdresser, St Vinnies Budget Groceries, Simplicity is BEST Computer Centre, the fish and chip shop and a large office complex that houses services from UnitingCare, Ballarat Group Training, Highlands Personnel, Primary Care Partnerships and several visiting services.

7.6 Summary

Overall reported crimes fell significantly across all Neighbourhood Renewal projects particularly where known hot spots were targeted with a range of initiatives. Despite these results, crime rates in many areas still remain considerably higher than the state average. Child protection notifications and substantiations have also shown improvement but a significant gap with the state average remains.

C&S 4—Child protection notifications and substantiations

From 2000–01 to 2004–05, child protection notifications increased on average by six per cent in Neighbourhood Renewal areas and by two per cent across the state—a four per cent increase in the gap. Across the same time period, substantiations fell six per cent in Neighbourhood Renewal projects and seven per cent across the state, increasing the gap by one per cent.

Notifications fell in 57 per cent of projects and substantiations fell in 50 per cent of projects between 2000–01 and 2004–05.

8. Improving health and wellbeing

8.1 The challenge

Transforming health inequalities due to a broad range of social, environmental and economic factors as well as poor nutrition, limited opportunities for physical activity, higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse, social isolation and mental health issues.

8.2 What is Neighbourhood Renewal doing to address the challenge?

- better targeting services and programs to those most in need
- improving access to better coordinated services
- tackling the social and environmental factors which impact on health and wellbeing.

8.3 Outputs

- health promotion projects
- sports projects such as Midnight Basketball and football clinics
- cycling programs and walking groups
- 19 community kitchens (operating and in development)
- 8 community gardens
- 2 food security rapid assessment pilot projects.
- breakfast clubs, school activity programs and life education programs
- programs addressing access and affordability of local sport and leisure centres
- partnerships with 'access for all abilities' and disability access workers
- improved access to eye testing and referral
- community-based gambling prevention programs

- integrated Children's Centre funding, and early years initiatives including Best Start and Communities for Children
- 4 'Smiles for Miles' oral health initiatives for pre-school children and their families.

8.4 Evaluation outcomes

H&WB 1—Residents' assessment of their own health shows improvement

Q. In general would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor? (CS)

- Round Two net rating of self-rated health for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 76%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- own health net rating remained the same for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 3% increase in the gap in own health between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group (NEI)
- 2% increase in the gap in own health between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in previous 12 months

- 17% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived their own health as getting better compared to 20% who thought it had declined.

H&WB 2—Residents' assessment of health and wellbeing of people in the neighbourhood shows improvement

Q. How would you rate the general health and wellbeing of people in your neighbourhood? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for general health and wellbeing of people in the neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 48%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 1% improvement in the general health and wellbeing of people in the neighbourhood for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 4% decrease in the gap of the general health and wellbeing of people in the neighbourhood between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 1% increase in the gap in the general health and wellbeing of people in the neighbourhood between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

H&WB 3—Residents' perceived improved quality and availability of health and welfare services

Change in previous 12 months (CS)

- 12% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived the quality and availability of health and welfare services as getting better compared to 9% who thought they had declined.

H&WB 4—Utilisation of maternal and child health services rises to state average (DHS)

- 2% gap in visitation rates of maternal and child health services at two weeks between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average
- 3% gap in visitation rates of maternal and child health services at four months between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average
- 6% gap in visitation rates of maternal and child health services at 12 months between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the state average.

(Note: data only available for 2006 thus no comparison of change available)

8.5 Analysis

H&WB 1—Residents' assessment of their own health shows improvement

International epidemiology literature shows self-rated health data correlates closely with future morbidity and mortality data in the population.²⁰ Data from both surveys along with the Victorian Population Health Survey was used to determine residents' personal health assessment and compare this with the state average.

The overall net result in Round Two for own health remained the same between Rounds One and Two at 76 per cent but the gap with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group increased by three per cent. There was also a two per cent increase in the gap with the control group.

Five projects reported an improvement and four narrowed the gap with surrounding neighbourhoods. Average responses ranged from a low net rating of 66 per cent to a high of 82 per cent. Three projects reported net ratings above 80—Heathdale, Colac and Corio Norlane. Both Colac and Corio Norlane have narrowed the gap with the state to within six and eight points respectively. In Colac, these results could in part be attributed to the state government's investment in obesity prevention, including the highly successful Be Active Eat Well project.

Be Active Eat Well

Be Active Eat Well in Colac was a three-year community capacity-building program designed specifically for children and their families to increase promotion of healthy eating and physical activity. It was designed and implemented by a range of partners, particularly Colac Area Health (lead agency), Colac Otway Shire and Colac Neighbourhood Renewal, with Deakin University providing support, training and evaluation. The program was found to be a safe and effective way of slowing the rate of weight gain (by approx. 1 kg) and waist gain (approx. 3 cm) in primary-aged children. Sanigorski et al. (2008) reported that Be Active Eat Well was the first obesity prevention program to show significant impact on Body Mass Index.

Further University of Melbourne research (Kelaher et al. 2007) into the health impacts of Neighbourhood Renewal showed that over a two-year period, residents participating in renewal activities reported a 14 per cent improvement in their own health compared to a three per cent improvement in the control group.

Survey data shows 63 per cent of residents expressed a positive view of their own personal health for Round Two, a one per cent improvement from Round One, as illustrated in Graph 12.²¹ However, in Round Two there remained a large gap of 20 per cent or more compared to 83 per cent for the control group and 84 per cent for the average Victorian.

A further comparison shows that overall in Round Two Neighbourhood Renewal residents rated lower self-reported positive health at 63 per cent compared to 77 per cent for the lowest 30 per cent on the SEIFA scale from surrounding areas.

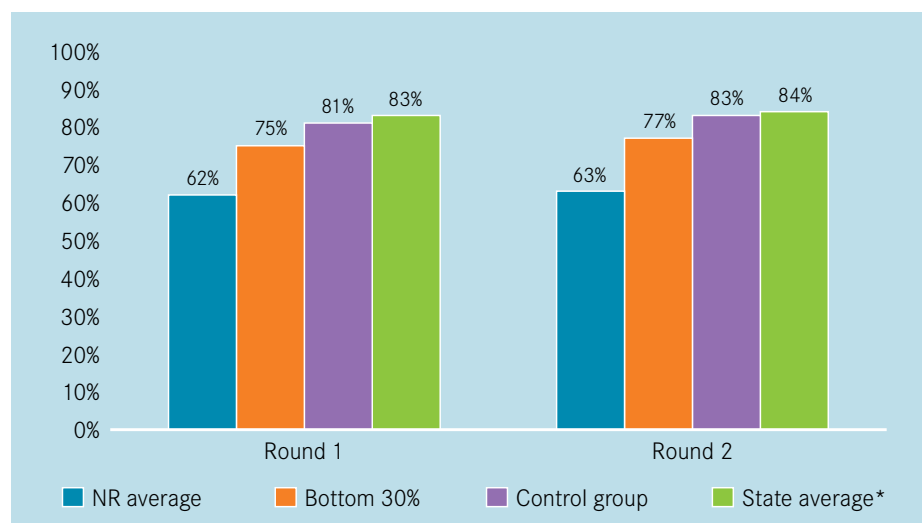
Further analysis shows that self-rated health varied considerably with positive perceptions of own health ratings as follows:

- younger respondents (18–30 years: 74%, 31–40 years: 78%)
- those who do not identify themselves as having a disability (76%)
- residents who are participating in the workforce (82%)
- owner occupiers and private rental residents (72%).

²⁰ Victorian Population Health Survey 2001–2005.

²¹ Victorian Population Health Survey 2001–2005.

Graph 12: Self-rated health (Neighbourhood Renewal CS and Victorian Population Health Survey data)



* The state average is calculated as the average of the three years during which each VPHS round was conducted, that is, Round One = 2001–03 and Round Two = 2004–2006.

In contrast, self-rated health scored lowest among disabled residents (31%), and those not working (53%). Public housing tenants were also less positive about their health than others (54%). This data is significant given the high levels of public housing tenants, disabled residents and workless residents in Neighbourhood Renewal communities.

H&WB 2—Residents' assessment of health and wellbeing of people in the neighbourhood shows improvement

Overall there was a minor improvement of one per cent up to 48 per cent in the net rating for general health and wellbeing of the neighbourhood, with eight projects reporting an improvement. There was a moderate rating difference of 15 points across projects, with 55 per cent the highest and 40 per cent the lowest.

The gap increased by one per cent with the control group and five projects did narrow the gap. The gap was closed by four per cent with the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

General health and wellbeing of people in the neighbourhood was rated slightly higher among:

- older respondents (56%, satisfaction increased with age)
- owner occupiers (53%)
- couples without children (53%) and with child(ren) over 18 living at home (52%)
- Neighbourhood Renewal residents who do not classify themselves as having a disability or a chronic illness (51%).

As with the own health rating, general health and wellbeing rated poorer in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of public housing tenants, the disabled and single parents. Interestingly, residents had a much poorer perception of neighbourhood health and wellbeing compared to personal health.

H&WB 3—Residents perceive improved quality and availability of health and welfare services

In Round Two, 12 per cent of residents reported improvements to health and welfare services, 79 per cent said it was steady and nine per cent perceived a decline in the previous 12 months—a net improvement of three per cent.

Health and wellbeing groups have focused their efforts to help improve the responsiveness and delivery of health services and health promotion initiatives. This partnership between service providers and residents has had a positive impact on the planning and delivery of appropriate and responsive local interventions. As a consequence of policy and neighbourhood level action, Neighbourhood Renewal areas are now zones for priority action in community health and municipal public health plans.

H&WB 4—Utilisation of maternal and child health service rises to state average

Utilisation of maternal and child health services has been shown to be important to children's development. Graph 13 illustrates maternal and child health services usage across Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the state average for 2006 at the key ages of two weeks, four months and 12 months.

Overall, Neighbourhood Renewal residents' participation rates in maternal and child health service are below the state average. The difference in averages was marginal at two weeks and four months but increased to a six per cent difference at 12 months. The declining trend in participation was evident over time in both Neighbourhood Renewal areas and the state, but was slightly more noticeable across Neighbourhood Renewal areas.

Research shows that early childhood experiences have a significant influence on future life opportunities. To ensure that children are provided the best start in life Neighbourhood Renewal projects must work with their local maternal and

child health staff to improve knowledge of, and access to, local services. To further support children and families Neighbourhood Renewal has been identified as one of the priority settings for Victorian Integrated Children's Centre capital funding.

8.6 Summary

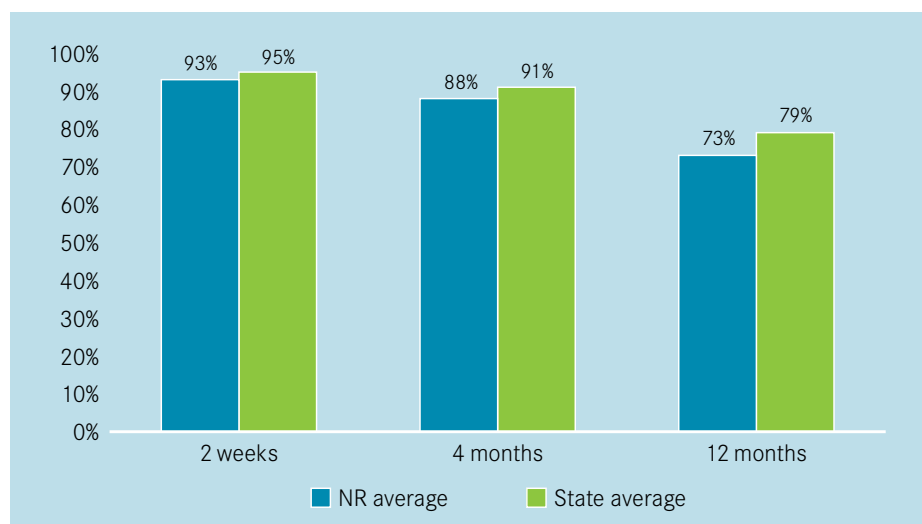
Neighbourhood Renewal has an impact on the broader social determinants of health such as housing, employment and safety. This report is evidence that initiatives to address these action areas are improving residents' lives.

However, the need to continue prioritising Neighbourhood Renewal health services planning is apparent when comparing the health and wellbeing of the neighbourhood rating with the control group. Despite improvements compared to other lower socio-economic counterparts in the control group, a significant 24 per cent gap remains with the control group.

Overall, the results are mixed in the area of health and well being. This is consistent with research that shows changes to health status are often incremental and changes in the social

determinants of health may take many years to manifest. However, recorded improvements in personal health in a number projects demonstrates the capacity of the intervention to effect change.

Graph 13: Maternal and Child Health participation rates for key stage visits for 2006



9. Increasing access to services and improving government responsiveness

9.1 The challenge

Improving access to services and government responsiveness in neighbourhoods that experience deep social exclusion.

9.2 What is Neighbourhood Renewal doing to address the challenge?

- establishing whole-of government coordination groups for each Neighbourhood Renewal project with senior government representation to oversee the coordination of government resources and initiatives
- target initiatives and prioritise resources to Neighbourhood Renewal projects
- improve access to services including transport
- support development and implementation of local Neighbourhood Renewal Action Plans and Housing Master Plans
- work with local communities through local Neighbourhood Renewal partnership agreements.

9.3 Outputs

- active involvement of local governments
- active engagement of six state government departments and annual negotiation of commitments
- substantial reprioritisation of funds to disadvantaged areas (more than \$10 million in non-Office of Housing funding for 2007–08)
- collaboration across state and local government and other partner agencies to build community infrastructure
- co-location of diverse service providers to create one-stop shops for local residents.

9.4 Evaluation outcomes

S&GR 1—Improved quality and availability of services

Q. How would you generally rate the quality and accessibility of services for people living in your neighbourhood? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for the quality and accessibility of services for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 66%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 1% decline in quality and accessibility of services for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 6% decrease in the gap in quality and accessibility of services between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- the gap remained the same in quality and accessibility of services between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

S&GR 2—Improved government performance

Change in previous 12 months

- 13% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived government performance as improving compared to 14% who thought it had declined.

S&GR 3—Increasing State government investment through whole of government agreements

- Over \$10 million in whole of government investment in 2007–08

S&GR 4—Improved local transport options

Q. How would you generally rate public transport services for people in your neighbourhood? (CS)

- Round Two net rating for public transport services for Neighbourhood Renewal residents is 65%.

Change data between Rounds One and Two

- 1% decline in public transport services for Neighbourhood Renewal residents
- 9% increase in the rating* for public transport services between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the bottom 30% of the control group (NEI)
- 2% increase in the positive rating* for public transport services between Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating and the control group (RDI).

Change in previous 12 months

- 15% of Neighbourhood Renewal residents perceived public transport services as improving compared to 5% who thought it had declined.

(* No gap existed as Neighbourhood Renewal resident rating was higher than the control group.)

9.5 Analysis

S&GR 1—Improved quality and availability of services

Residents' net rating of the quality and accessibility of neighbourhood services decreased from 67 in Round One to 66 in Round Two. Of the 15 projects nine showed an improvement and nine narrowed the gap. There was a significant difference of 26 points in the ratings across projects, with 50 per cent the lowest and 76 per cent the highest.

The gap remained the same in the quality and availability of services between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the control group. There was a significant decrease of six per cent between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and their socio-economic counterparts in the bottom 30 per cent of the control group.

Across Neighbourhood Renewal projects many agencies are co-locating to improve responsiveness. These one-stop shops in new and improved community facilities offer access to a range of previously dispersed, difficult to access services.

Community Hub co-location—Colac

Workers from Colac Area Health and Colac Adult and Community Education Inc. are now co-located at the Colac Community Hub. Residents can readily access a variety of service providers and health professionals including education, health promotion and community development workers.

Contact Point—Shepparton

Neighbourhood Renewal, Office of Housing and Centrelink staff in Shepparton are using the Neighbourhood Renewal Contact Point to deliver services in the Neighbourhood Renewal area.

Further analysis of government services is provided by specific questions related to employment services and health and welfare services.

S&GR 2—Improved government performance

In Round Two average results indicated that in the previous 12 months 13 per cent of residents rated government performance as better, 14 per cent worse and 73 per cent felt it was steady.

To assess people's perceptions of the impact of Neighbourhood Renewal on government performance, residents were also asked to rate how Neighbourhood Renewal had changed the performance of government in their neighbourhood.

In Round One 14 per cent reported an improvement, two per cent said it was worse and 27 per cent felt it was the same. However, 57 per cent gave no response or did not know. In Round Two twice as many residents reported improved government performance at 29 per cent, seven per cent said it was worse and 42 per cent said it was the same. Only 22 per cent did not respond, a 35 per cent improvement from Round One. This demonstrates a significant improvement in residents' overall awareness of Neighbourhood Renewal and perception of its impact on government performance.

S&GR 3—Increasing State government investment through whole of government agreements

Neighbourhood Renewal combines a 'top-down' commitment to social investment in disadvantaged communities with a 'bottom-up' process for engaging residents in decisions about the allocation of resources and delivery of neighbourhood services.

Annual whole-of-government agreements are joining up government investment and activity to transform neighbourhoods. For example in 2007–08, departments prioritised resources to Neighbourhood Renewal communities, including:

- over \$48 million on housing works and a further \$90 million committed for major redevelopments (Department of Human Services)
- creation of 190 jobs through Housing & Community Building funded employment programs (\$1.4 million) (Department of Human Services)
- Environmental Policy and Climate Change Sustainability Fund (\$375K) supporting projects in Collingwood, East Reservoir, Broadmeadows, Doveton, Heidelberg West, Delacombe and Eaglehawk (Department of Sustainability and Environment)
- Workforce Participation Partnerships creating 50 jobs in four projects (\$400K) (Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development)
- piloting a place based problem gambling service (\$60K) in Braybrook and Maidstone, and consumer affairs community educators in renewal areas Ashburton/Ashwood/Chadstone and Broadmeadows (Department of Justice)
- transport related activities such as Travel Smart pilots, new bus shelters and train stations as community hubs (Department of Transport)
- Community Education Catalyst—partnership with Education Foundation to encourage links between schools and community: Linking Schools and Early Years—Corio Norlane and City Centre Program—Heidelberg West (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development)

- extensive investment through Sport and Recreation (\$1.1 million) Community Support Fund (\$1.5 million), community ICT investment (\$480K), social enterprise development and Neighbourhood House funding (\$2.4 million) (Department of Planning and Community Development).

Neighbourhood Renewal also works to develop robust partnerships between communities and local governments. The partnership of Neighbourhood Renewal with local government is integral to the success of the strategy. While relationships with local governments vary across the 19 projects, strong partnerships have been established in many areas that ensure the priorities of the local community are integrated with local government planning processes.

S&GR 3—Improved local transport options

The net rating of neighbourhood public transport decreased from 66 in Round One to 65 in Round Two. Five projects reported an improvement.

Compared to the control group, Neighbourhood Renewal has had positive public transport results in both Rounds One and Two, increasing the overall net average rating to two per cent above the control group. Overall there was a nine per cent increase in the positive rating between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group, which also resulted in a positive rating.

Public transport showed the greatest difference across projects. There was a 55 point variance in Round Two, ranging from 83 per cent in metropolitan Fitzroy to 28 per cent in rural Colac.

Of the 15 projects only seven still have a gap with the surrounding control group. Five of these are rural and two are outer metropolitan where accessible public transport is limited.

To assess perceptions of change, Neighbourhood Renewal residents were also asked if transport services in their neighbourhood had changed for the better or worse over the previous 12 months. In Round Two average results indicated that 15 per cent of residents said public transport had improved, 80 per cent thought it had remained the same and five per cent said it had declined. This represents a net improvement of ten per cent.

9.6 Summary

The above results reflect a significant difference in the quality and availability of services in Neighbourhood Renewal areas, despite their high concentrations of disadvantaged residents. Encouragingly, the gap in the quality and availability of services was closed significantly with neighbouring socio-economic counterparts. However, further work is required to encourage services to locate in easily accessible areas.

Overwhelmingly, residents saw the introduction of Neighbourhood renewal improving the responsiveness of government.

Appendix 1: Explanatory Notes

1. Size of Neighbourhood Renewal areas

With one exception, the population of each area ranges from about 1,000 to 10,000, the number of housing units from about 300 to 4,000, and the proportion of public housing from ten per cent to 100 per cent. Corio-Norlane is the exception, with a population of about 20,000 and a housing total of nearly 10,000 of which 18 per cent is public housing.

2. Standardised figure

Two sets of figures are quoted in this report. One set is the primary percentages, ie the percentages of residents surveyed who expressed a certain view, eg 48 per cent of residents believe public transport was 'good' or 35 per cent of residents state that their household income was 'poor'.

The other set is that of the *net figures*. In this report the term 'net figure' refers to rating scales that have had a weighting attributed to each of the values i.e. Good = 1, Average = 0.5 and Poor = 0. The weighting process distributes the scores out of 100—therefore if all respondents indicated a service was good the standardised score would be 100 per cent whereas if all respondents rated the service as average the standardised score would be 50% and if all respondents rated the aspect as poor a score of 0 per cent would be returned.

3. Relative Disadvantage Index

The *Relative Disadvantage Index* is a comparative measure derived from the net figures yielded by the Neighbourhood Renewal population and the control group as a whole. It is the difference between these two net figures. For example, if on average the net figure for residents' view of the current condition of their own household income was—16 per cent for Neighbourhood Renewal residents and +27 per cent for the control group, the Relative Disadvantage Index for own household income is 43 (ie there is a 43% difference between Neighbourhood Renewal residents and the control group).

4. Neighbourhood Effect Index

The *Neighbourhood Effect Index* is a variation of the Relative Disadvantage Index. The Neighbourhood Effect Index is a comparative measure derived from the net figures yielded by the Neighbourhood Renewal population and the bottom 30 per cent of the control group on the SEIFA scale, ie the difference between these two net figures. The comparison is therefore between the Neighbourhood Renewal area and the lowest socio-economic segment of the surrounding population.

5. Multiple choice questions

A substantial number of questions in the community survey allowed for three alternative responses which might be labelled positive, neutral and negative, eg:

- Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree
- Good, Average, Poor
- Better, Same, Worse.

In a few instances multiple categories have been collapsed to maintain the tripartite structure. These are:

- Q 10 (own housing) where the positive categories of 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied' have been amalgamated, as have the negative categories of 'dissatisfied' and 'very dissatisfied'
- Q 33 (participation in the workforce) where the categories of 'employed full-time', 'employed part-time', 'unemployed and looking for work' and 'studying or training' have been merged into the single category of 'participating in the workforce'; the categories of 'in voluntary work', 'full-time parenting not in paid work', 'disability pension' and 'retired' have been integrated as 'not participating in the workforce'
- Q 44 (own health) where the three positive categories of 'excellent', 'very good' and 'good' have been collapsed into one (there was only one negative option)
- Q 52 (safety after dark) where the positive categories of 'agree strongly' and 'agree' have been amalgamated, as have the negative categories of 'disagree' and 'disagree strongly'.

Appendix 2: Neighbourhood Renewal Evaluation Framework 2008

Objective	Indicator	Data Source
To increase people's pride and participation in the community	• More residents see it as a good place to live.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 4</i>
	• More residents feel a sense of belonging.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 60 (2)</i>
	• More residents feel pride in the neighbourhood.	<i>Community Survey</i> <i>BD Q 56</i> <i>CD Q 64</i>
	• More resident interaction and participation in the community.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD 57, 69</i> <i>CD Q 65</i>
	• Turnover of public housing tenants decreases.	DHS
	• Increased resident involvement in decision making.	Neighbourhood Renewal Fact Sheets
To lift employment, training and education and expand local economic activity	• Increased workforce participation (employment, unemployment and worklessness).	ABS
	• Residents perceive there to be more education and training opportunities.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 27</i> <i>CD Q 30</i>
	• Residents perceive there to be more job opportunities.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 31, 32</i>
	• Residents perceive better economic conditions.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 36, 46</i> <i>CD Q 38</i>
	• Increased literacy and numeracy of primary school aged children.	DEECD
	• Decreased absenteeism in primary and secondary school.	DEECD
	• More residents complete Year 12 or its equivalent.	ABS
	• More residents obtain further education qualifications.	ABS

Objective	Indicator	Data Source
To enhance housing and the physical environment	• Increased resident satisfaction with their house or flat.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 10</i> <i>CD Q 13</i>
	• A more positive view of the physical environment by residents.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 14</i> <i>CD Q 17</i>
	• Reduced vacancy rates.	DHS
	• Increased offer acceptance rates.	DHS
	• Decreased public housing densities.	DHS
	• More diverse household composition.	DHS
	• Improved energy efficiency of public housing.	Environmental Sustainability Audit
To improve personal safety and reduce crime	• Residents feel the neighbourhood is a safer place to live.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Qq 49, 52 (1)</i> <i>CD Q 55</i>
	• Crime against property and persons is reduced.	VicPolice
	• Child protection notifications and substantiations are reduced.	DHS: Child Protection Branch
To promote health and wellbeing	• Residents' perceive improved quality and availability of health and welfare services.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>CD Q 43</i>
	• Residents' assessment of their own health shows improvement.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 39, 44</i> <i>CD Q 48</i>
	• Utilisation of Maternal and Child Health service rises to State average.	DEECD
	• Attendance at pre-school increases to State average.	Not available
To increase access to transport and other key services and improve government responsiveness	• Improved local transport options.	<i>Community survey</i> <i>BD Q 20</i> <i>CD Q 22</i>
	• Improved quality and availability of services.	<i>Community Survey</i> <i>BD Q 18</i> <i>CD Q 25</i>
	• Improved government responsiveness.	<i>Community Survey</i> <i>CD Q 74</i>
	• Increased government investment.	Neighbourhood Renewal Reports

Appendix 3: Community Survey: Current Conditions Questions

Pride and participation

- Neighbourhood generally
(Q 4: Overall, how would you rate your neighbourhood as a place to live? Would you say it was good, average or poor?)
- Pride in neighbourhood
(Q 56: How much pride do most local people have in this neighbourhood? Would you say they have a lot, a moderate amount or very little?)
- Participation in local activities
(Q 57: How much do most people in this neighbourhood participate in local activities [examples given]? Would you say they participate a lot, a moderate amount or very little?)
- Sense of belonging
(Q 60: Can you tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statement: (2) I feel a sense of belonging to this community

Employment and learning opportunities

- Education and training opportunities
(Q 27: How would you rate the opportunities and facilities for people in your neighbourhood to get education and training? Would you say they are good, average or poor?)
- Job opportunities
(Q 31: How would you rate the general opportunities for people in your neighbourhood to get satisfactory jobs, either in this neighbourhood or nearby? Would you say they are good, average or poor?)

- Local employment services
(Q 32: How would you rate the quality and availability of local services and agencies to help people find work: are they good, average or poor?)
Q 33: Describe your present employment situation: employed full-time, employed part-time, in voluntary work, full-time parenting not in paid work, unemployed and looking for work, studying or training, disability pension, retired, other)
- Own household income
(Q 46: Thinking about your total household take-home pay over the past 12 months, how have you been managing on that income: living comfortably, coping or finding it difficult?)
- Local economy
(Q 36: [preamble] How would you rate the state of the local economy in your neighbourhood: is it good, average or poor?)

Housing and environment

- Own housing
(Q 10: How satisfied are you with your own housing: very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, not satisfied, very dissatisfied?)
- Physical environment
(Q 14: [preamble] Generally, how would you rate the physical environment in your neighbourhood? Would you say it was good, average or poor?)

Crime and safety

- Crime and safety generally
(Q 49: How would you rate conditions in your neighbourhood in relation to crime and personal safety generally? Would you say they were good, average or poor?)
- Personal safety in street after dark
(Q 52: Could you say if you agree or disagree, and how strongly, with the following statement about crime and safety issues: I feel safe walking alone down my street after dark?)

Health and wellbeing

- General health in neighbourhood
(Q 39: How would you rate the general health and wellbeing in your neighbourhood: would you say it is generally good, poor or average?)
- Own personal health
(Q 44: In general would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair or poor?)

Services and Government

- Quality and availability of local services
(Q 18: How would you generally rate the quality and accessibility of services for people living in your neighbourhood? Are they good, poor or average?)
- Public transport
(Q 20: How would you generally rate public transport services for people in your neighbourhood? Are they good, poor or average?)

Appendix 4: Perceived Change Data: Indicators and Data Source

Pride and participation

Survey data

- community pride

(Q 64 Looking back, would you say that in general there is more or less pride in the community than there was 6 to 12 months ago or has it stayed about the same?)

- community participation

(Q 65 ...people in the neighbourhood are participating more or less in local community activities, or about the same?)

Administrative data

- increased resident involvement in Neighbourhood Renewal decision-making
- reduced turnover of public housing

Education and training opportunities

Survey data

- local education and training opportunities

(Q 30 ...the opportunities for education and training for people in your neighbourhood have got better or worse or stayed the same?)

- local economy

(Q 38 ...the local economy in your neighbourhood...?)

Administrative data

- increased workforce participation
- increased literacy and numeracy of primary-school-aged children
- decreased student absenteeism in primary and secondary schools

- increased no of residents completing Year 12 or its equivalent

- increased no of residents obtaining further education qualifications

Housing and environment

Survey data

- housing

(Q 13 ...the standard of housing in your neighbourhood...?)

- physical environment

(Q 17 ...the condition of the physical environment in your neighbourhood ...?)

Administrative data

- improved energy efficiency of public housing
- reduced vacancy rates for public housing
- increased offer acceptance rates for public housing
- decreased densities public housing
- increased diversity of household composition

Crime and safety

Survey data

- crime and safety

(Q 55...conditions in your neighbourhood in relation to crime and personal safety...?)

Administrative data

- crime against property and persons is reduced
- child protection notifications and substantiations are reduced

Health and wellbeing

Survey data

- health and welfare services

(Q 43 ...health and welfare services in your neighbourhood...?)

- own health

(Q 48 ...your own personal health and wellbeing...?)

Administrative data

- utilisation of Maternal and Child Health service rises to State average
- attendance at pre-school increases to State average

Services and Government

Survey data

- public transport

(Q 22 ...transport services for people in your neighbourhood...?)

- government performance

(Q 25 and Q74 ...the performance of government in your neighbourhood...?)

Administrative data

- improved whole-of-government planning and allocation of resources

Appendix 5: List of Tertiary Institutes for Community Survey

Project	Tertiary Institute
Wendouree West	School of Business University of Ballarat
Latrobe Valley	Deakin University (Burwood campus)
Maidstone-Braybrook	Wellness Promotions Unit School of Psychology Victoria University
Corio-Norlane	School of Health and Social Development Faculty of Health and Behavioural Science Deakin University (Waterfront Campus) Geelong
Seymour Shepparton	Department of Rural Health University of Melbourne Shepparton
Long Gully Eaglehawk	Wellness Promotions Unit School of Psychology Victoria University
Fitzroy	Program Evaluation Unit School of Population Health Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences University of Melbourne
Collingwood	Program Evaluation Unit School of Population Health Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences University of Melbourne
Ashburton-Ashwood-Chadstone	Wellness Promotions Unit School of Psychology Victoria University
Broadmeadows	Centre for the Study of Health & Society School of Population Health University of Melbourne
Doveton-Eumemmerring	Brotherhood of St Laurence
Werribee	Wellness Promotions Unit School of Psychology Victoria University
Colac	Faculty of Health and Behavioural Science Deakin University (Waterfront Campus) Geelong
Delacombe	School of Business University of Ballarat
Hastings	Department of Health Science School of Primary Health Care Monash University (Peninsula campus)
East Reservoir	Centre for the Study of Health & Society School of Population Health University of Melbourne
West Heidelberg	Centre for the Study of Health & Society School of Population Health University of Melbourne

Appendix 6: Demographics—Community Survey

Neighbourhood Renewal

		Round 1		Round 2	
NR Residents		4261	100%	4222	100%
Gender	Female	2797	66%	2837	67%
	Male	1386	33%	1331	32%
Gender/Age	Male 18–30 yrs	276	6%	346	8%
	Male 31–40 yrs	294	7%	227	5%
	Male 41–50 yrs	264	6%	236	6%
	Male 51–60 yrs	205	5%	198	5%
	Male 61–70 yrs	180	4%	175	4%
	Male 70+ yrs	128	3%	121	3%
	Female 18–30 yrs	597	14%	618	15%
	Female 31–40 yrs	708	17%	672	16%
	Female 41–50 yrs	548	13%	522	12%
	Female 51–60 yrs	378	9%	369	9%
	Female 61–70 yrs	303	7%	316	7%
	Female 70+ yrs	204	5%	233	6%
Sole parents in public housing		445	10%	445	11%
Household type	Couple with child(ren) under 18 living at home	966	23%	885	21%
	Couple with child(ren) over 18 living at home	245	6%	244	6%
	Couple without child(ren)	606	14%	606	14%
	Sole parent with child(ren) under 18 living at home	796	19%	746	18%
	Sole parent with child(ren) over 18 living at home	208	5%	204	5%
	Single person living alone	944	22%	978	23%
Workforce	Participating	1724	40%	1609	38%
	Not participating	2244	53%	2228	53%
Net Household income	<\$10K	496	12%	406	10%
	\$10K–\$15K	1084	25%	1062	25%
	\$15K–\$20K	643	15%	526	12%
	\$20K–\$30K	664	16%	656	16%
	\$30K–\$40K	305	7%	310	7%
	\$40K+	341	8%	399	9%
Tenure	Owner occupier	1470	34%	1347	32%
	Private rental	586	14%	633	15%
	Public rental	1520	36%	1643	39%
Location	Metro	1969	46%	2116	50%
	Country	2292	54%	2106	50%

Control Group

		Round 1		Round 2	
Control group		1857	100%	2264	100%
	Bottom 30%	255	14%	631	28%
	Top 30%	275	15%	630	28%
Gender	Female	1188	64%	1454	64%
	Male	650	35%	807	36%
Gender/Age	Male 18–30 yrs	110	6%	94	4%
	Male 31–40 yrs	138	7%	138	6%
	Male 41–50 yrs	133	7%	182	8%
	Male 51–60 yrs	111	6%	181	8%
	Male 61–70 yrs	60	3%	109	5%
	Male 70+ yrs	89	5%	100	4%
	Female 18–30 yrs	201	11%	146	6%
	Female 31–40 yrs	265	14%	281	12%
	Female 41–50 yrs	257	14%	326	14%
	Female 51–60 yrs	180	10%	285	13%
	Female 61–70 yrs	115	6%	216	10%
	Female 70+ yrs	146	8%	190	8%
Household type	Couple with child (ren) under 18 living at home	466	25%	504	22%
	Couple with child(ren) over 18 living at home	165	9%	195	9%
	Couple without child(ren)	369	20%	291	13%
	Sole parent with child(ren) under 18 living at home	95	5%	95	4%
	Sole parent with child(ren) over 18 living at home	41	2%	64	3%
	Single person living alone	349	19%	451	20%
Workforce	Participating	1057	57%	1285	57%
	Not participating	652	35%	820	36%
Net Household income	<\$10K	83	4%	43	2%
	\$10K–\$15K	168	9%	183	8%
	\$15K–\$20K	140	8%	118	5%
	\$20K–\$30K	217	12%	225	10%
	\$30K–\$40K	191	10%	204	9%
	\$40K+	626	34%	918	41%
Tenure	Owner occupier	1380	74%	1816	80%
	Private rental	306	16%	334	15%
	Public rental	92	5%	77	3%
Location	Metro	843	45%	1051	46%
	Country	1014	55%	1213	54%

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