

RETHINKING SOCIAL HOUSING



> A collaborative research project on social housing is currently being undertaken through the Sustainable Built Environment National Research Centre (SBEnc). Dr Judy Kraatz, Dr Annie Matan, Johanna Mitchell and Professor Peter Newman explain more.

The research project is titled 'Rethinking Social Housing: Efficient, Effective, Equitable', and it aims to develop a Strategic Evaluation Framework, through which the social and economic return on investment of providing social housing can be demonstrated.

Partners include the Western Australian Department of Housing, the National Affordable Housing Consortium (Qld), Griffith University and Curtin University.

The Strategic Evaluation Framework that is developed over the course of this project is intended for use by policy makers and those delivering social housing to better determine impacts and provide an evidence base to inform future decision-making.

The initial stage of research investigates outcomes achieved

by different forms of social housing. Outcomes to be examined include indirect 'non-housing' outcomes explored from a productivity perspective. These focus on an array of benefits including tenant, macro-economic, fiscal and non-economic perspectives. This is a broad-based approach with a focus on practical outcomes. Outcomes could then form the basis of contracts, against which performance may be tested.

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A key challenge for this research is to quantify the productivity benefits from investment in social housing. Research seeks to both validate a broad-based rationale for social housing investment, and also to assist governments in evaluating forms of housing assistance against the objective of improving individual and collective productivity.

Several innovative delivery models are being explored in both Australian and international settings. Partnerships and financing arrangements that involve a mix of public, private and

community resources and hybrid tenure are to be examined, as well as traditional full ownership and full rental tenures. The proposed evaluation framework should be an effective tool across a range of delivery models in Australia and potentially elsewhere.

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Following a review and analysis of current literature and discussions with our project partners, the following conceptual framework has been developed to guide this and subsequent research. Current steps in this research are to:

- establish key outcomes, indicators and metrics across an array of objectives including employment, education, health and well-being, social, urban, community, financial and housing;
- test this approach through two case studies (in Queensland and Western Australia); and

- seek ongoing funding to build a comprehensive set of Australian-based indicators and metrics, and a GIS-based system dynamic model to realise a useable tool for decision and policy makers.

Reports and presentations to date are available at: <http://www.sbenrc.com.au/research-programs/1-31-rethinking-social-housing-effective-efficient-equitable-e3/>



Dr Judy Kraatz is a Senior Research Fellow with the Urban Research Program, Griffith University.



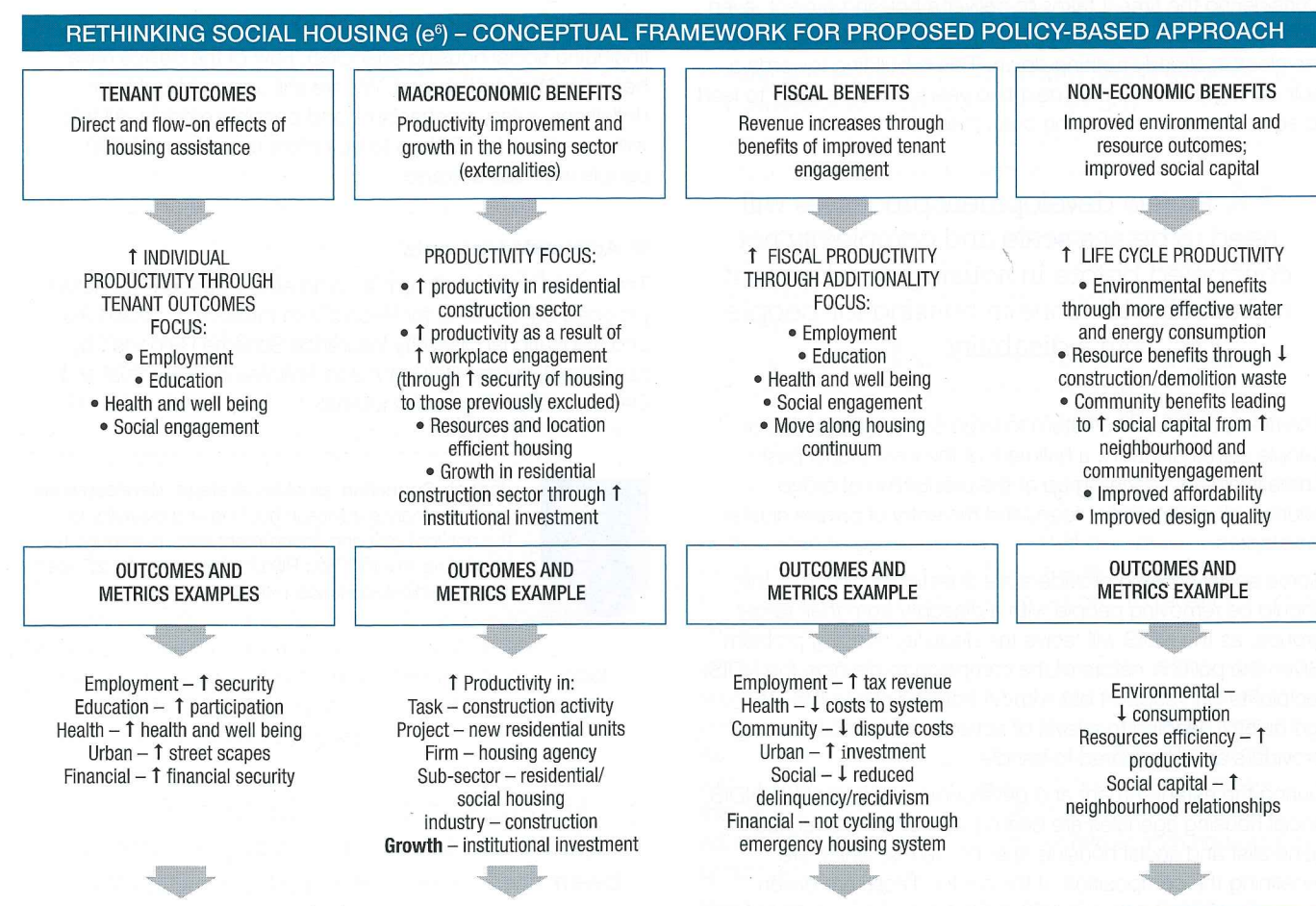
Johanna Mitchell is a PhD Candidate at the Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute.



Dr Annie Matan is a researcher and lecturer at Curtin University Sustainability Policy (CUSP) Institute at Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia.



Professor Peter Newman is a Professor at the Curtin University Sustainability Policy Institute.



STRATEGIC EVALUATION FRAMEWORK (e³) outcomes focus drawing on:
 Social Cost-Benefit (UK Green Book) Social Return on Investment (Ravi & Reinhardt) Wellbeing Valuation Approach (Fujiwara) Cost Benefit Analysis (/unit cost)
 Phase 1 (2014/15 Objective – social housing
 Future phases to address other housing affordability options e.g. rental assistance; shared equity



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CONFIRMED SPEAKERS:

- **Mike Allen** – Former CE of Housing NSW, Department of Family and Community Services and Past Chair of the former Housing and Homelessness Ministers' Advisory Committee
- **Steve Bevington** – Managing Director, CommunityHousing Limited Group
- **Greg Budworth** – Group Managing Director, Compass Housing Services
- **Michael Lennon** – Managing Director, Housing Choices Australia
- **Nazha Saad** – CEO, St George Community Housing
- **Phil Fagan-Schmidt** – Executive Director, Housing SA

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