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The loosening control of social housing: creating a holistic retrofit system for an ageing population through the lens of governmentality

With social housing providing accommodation to the most vulnerable individuals within society it is recognised as a key priority area which has the potential to deliver holistic integration across a range of service providers. A need is emerging to examine the nexus between the energy, housing, health and social care sectors to understand how these separate but interlinked policy agendas are integrated in practice. Presented are the findings of interviews conducted with 24 key stakeholders under a thematic analysis, exploring the key themes and prevalent trends which shape the challenges to creating a holistic retrofit system within social housing for the improved wellbeing of older people, through the lens of governmentality. The analysis revealed that the ideological barriers presented prevent a holistic retrofit process and inhibit the potential to create successful collaboration within the healthy ageing agenda. The retrofit of domestic housing is centred around the concept of sustainability; however, the ideological prioritisation of economic considerations over people has created an increased pressure on resources, favouring ease and cost cutting over communication, collaboration, and efficiency. Significant change must occur within governance and organisational structures; increasing flexibility and alliances, creating a viable means of interaction to create solutions and improve implementation.

Keywords: Ageing population, governmentality, retrofit, social housing and strategic decision-making

Introduction

An ageing population poses great challenges in terms of providing appropriate housing facilities and creating sustainable living environments. With most of human life spent inside buildings, it is intrinsically linked with mental health, creating either long-term security or insecurity, impacting social cohesion, trust, a sense of belonging, and ultimately the wellbeing of an individual (Bullen et al., 2008). It is especially imperative to the older population who are estimated to spend 70-90% of their time at home (Age UK, 2014). Furthermore, within the UK's fuel poverty strategies, the elderly, alongside low income families and disabled people, are recognised as the most vulnerable within society (DECC, 2015). The lack of 'decent' dwellings is recognised as a key future challenge to the economy, environment and society of the UK (DCLG, 2006). It has become an area of policy development often cutting across a number of government ministries and departments, with the provision of decent housing overlapping welfare, health and social support (Imison et al., 2017).

As a consequence, of the 2007/8 financial crisis, the UK and much of Europe has experienced over a decade of austerity, characterised by public spending cuts placed upon the most disadvantaged within society (Akhter et al., 2018). However, the decision to implement this form of austerity has been ideologically reworked; shifting the blame from the risk strategies implemented by banks, to the expensive and unmanageable public sector and welfare state creating increasing strain (Clarke and Newman, 2012). Thus, framed by a sustained period of austerity, the ageing population is presenting great challenges to key public services such as health and social care, and an increased demand for appropriate housing at a time of scarce resources. Therefore, there is a need to examine the processes in which housing, energy and health and social care sectors, as well as within the construction

industry, create alignment to the global demand for cross-sector collaboration and joined-up thinking, as well as the inherent restrictions in place within current retrofit agendas.

To date, a considerable body of research has sought to understand the social, environmental and economic impacts from energy efficiency and health adaptations within housing. However, the prospect of interlinking these adaptation practices into an holistic process within social housing, and the resultant benefits from implementation, have rarely been examined. This study is unique in looking at the needs of housing an ageing population, and exploring the challenges and the potential to create alignment between retrofit service providers: seeking to fill this gap by examining the current trends within joined-up retrofit practice amongst the public, private and third sector.

In order to understand the complexity of delivering cross-sector alignment within retrofit practice in Scotland, we apply the lens of governmentality (Foucault, 1991, 1982). By combining an analysis of practice with the underlying ideologies and rationalities within retrofit agendas, governmentality aids in developing greater understanding of governance, policy and practice (McKee, 2011). By considering the ways in which governance shapes alignment between housing, energy and health and social care sectors within social housing retrofit practice, it allows exploration of an increasingly neoliberal political-economic perspective that has been exacerbated since the introduction of New Public Management over a prolonged period of austerity. Thus, engaging with the concept and requirement of a shifting mentality from the extant neoliberal, predominantly economic lens, to one which accommodates sustainable development through a fairer and more equitable society. Using this approach, 24 in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders and analysed to understand existing practice and the key challenges to creating a collaborative cross-sector approach to retrofitting for the improved health and wellbeing of an ageing population within social housing.

Literature review

Policy context

A major global challenge is efficiently and sustainably addressing the social and economic demands arising from the world's ageing population. Constructing healthy ageing has significant implications for public policy in areas such as health, housing and welfare provision. Although the notion of housing as a public health issue is not new, there is little research regarding the practical integration of policy between housing, energy performance, accessibility, and occupant health and care needs as a rounded process to facilitate ageing in place. Appropriate housing conditions play a fundamental role in assuring quality of life, and active and independent living. Within Scotland, the government has stressed the importance of this agenda through policies such as 'Housing for Varying Needs', creating design guidelines to ensure all new builds have the flexibility and accessibility for people of all abilities (Scottish Government, 2011). Therefore, with all new build houses required to cater to the health and wellbeing requirements of older people it has the potential to result in reduced demand on health and aged care services (Miller et al., 2017).

However, another major challenge is the prevention of the ageing and deterioration of existing housing stock. Energy efficiency improvements made to buildings are considered to be one of the most effective measures to reduce carbon emissions, especially in those characterised by poor energy performance (Saiduer, 2009). The term retrofit is used to describe a range of activities involved in the repair, improvement and maintenance of buildings, incorporating innovations which directly shape energy use or influence user behaviour (Buser and Carlsson, 2016). An example of this within practice is the Scottish Government energy efficiency intervention, 'Area Based Scheme' (ABS) which provides solid wall insulation to fuel poor areas (Scottish Government, 2018). The ABS program has been recorded to increase thermal comfort and reduce energy bills, therefore increasing

disposable income and positively impacting the wellbeing of individuals (Scottish Government, 2018; Miller et al., 2017). Thus, owing to the socioeconomic benefits presented through programs such as ABS, retrofit practice has been identified as key priority for both the UK and Scottish Government.

Although environmental policies greatly contribute to the need for the renovation of the existing building stock, there is a need to promote a form of retrofit which focuses on the internal residents environment: of habitability, safety and accessibility, especially for older people (Serrano-Jiménez et al., 2018). The levels of comfort felt by older people may not only be useful in explaining their use of energy, but also be a key part of a holistic view of wellbeing. The interconnections and importance of this agenda can be seen within Figure 1, displaying the nexus between an ageing population and the diverse but related agendas within housing, energy and health.

Insert Figure 1: Policy requirements for holistic retrofit system.

The importance of housing: adapting for an ageing population

Housing is one of the most fundamental conditions that determine living standards such as quality, comfort and wealth and is considered imperative for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Saldaña-Márquez et al., 2018). The housing sector requires a high degree of attention, not only because of its economic and ecological importance, but also due to its enormous social value (Bullen and Kearns, 2008). Both housing and health policy promote the idea of ‘home’ as the best place to grow old, with the option of moving to specialist accommodation such as sheltered housing to be avoided or postponed for as long as possible. Ageing in place, or “*the ability to live in one’s own home for as long as confidently and comfortably possible*” is the ability to be self-reliant at home for as long as it is viable (Shelter, 2007). This initiative is presented as a means to reduce public spending during a period of austerity, alongside a rising dependent population (Vasara,

2015). Retrofitting homes has the ability to empower individuals by maintaining their independence and creating accident prevention, whilst reducing hospital and care home admissions and delays (Adams and Ellison, 2014).

Ageing in place holds such importance within governance and society as it allows individuals to maintain greater levels of independence, whilst also allowing them to stay connected to social support networks such as friends and family. It focuses upon personal attachment (Van Hees et al., 2017). Within this, the notion of ‘place’ is not a static concept, but an integral and meaningful aspect of life, fabricated by experience (Vitman Schorr and Khaliala, 2018). This attachment is particularly important to the older population as it is a means of retaining and keeping the past alive; allowing them to maintain a sense of continuity and protection (Cristoforetti et al., 2011). However, the lack of suitable and accessible housing available for an ageing population is a current and future challenge across sectors (Boyle and Thomson, 2016; Vasara, 2015).

The complex relationship between poverty, poor housing and health creates difficulty in generating adequate control due to a lack of understanding of how housing conditions can cause poor health impacts (Zedan and Miller, 2017; Thomson and Thomas, 2015). Many social care and health experts within these sectors have confessed the lack of linkages with, and understanding of, planning within housing which has meant many older people’s need have not been considered or prioritised (Zhang et al., 2018). Yet, an ageing population poses great challenges to the global healthcare system due to increasing acute and long-term requirements. There is a need to maintain and improve the older population’s mental and physical wellbeing, whilst lowering the cost for state and healthcare. Therefore, policy makers and practitioners have an opportunity to address a key social detriment of health through housing, with wide reaching implications for health and social care across Scotland and the UK.

Energy efficiency and the need for retrofit

Energy efficiency has created numerous improvements to health such as reducing winter deaths, fuel poverty and incidences of cold related morbidity. Excess winter deaths are highest amongst older people and related to dwellings with low home temperatures and ineffective energy initiatives (Clinch and Healy, 2001). Within the UK, the housing stock is not only the most inefficient in Europe but has the highest numbers of households suffering fuel poverty (11%) (Gupta and Gregg, 2018). Affording adequately warm homes is problematic for older people, with nearly two thirds of single pensioners spending 18% of their income on fuel (Burholt and Windle, 2006). Yet, thus far energy has been neglected within national and global healthy ageing initiatives, including within the SDG's.

Defining a holistic retrofit system

Within this paper, the term 'holistic retrofit system' is used throughout, this refers to the creation of a process within social housing which incorporates both energy efficiency and health adaptations when making improvements to housing stock. Within this context, 'retrofit' is used to describe all internal or external changes to the building which results in the improved wellbeing of its occupier, including but not limited to, cavity wall insulation, wet floor shower, ramps and door replacements. Therefore, a holistic retrofit system is the practical implementation of a rounded view to the varying needs of older people, allowing them to retain residence in their homes for as long as practicable.

Holistic retrofit practice plays a key role in improving the quality of lives of others; aligning national policy into a cost efficient practice, with wider benefits such as reduced pressure on primary health care. An example of an extant approach which mirrors this concept is the 'Care and Repair' scheme. Within this, a range of services are provided including removing damp, providing and replacing heating sources and adapting for mobility. By working closely with housing, health and social care 'Care and Repair' is an exemplar of

holistic retrofit practice, aiding in preventing admission to hospital and increasing discharge speed (Care and Repair, 2013). Replicating this system is a key challenge for the construction, energy, social housing and health sectors and is essential in creating the knowledge sharing required to improve retrofit practice, utilising a joined-up approach between multidisciplinary areas.

Social housing and neoliberalism

Along with other public services such as primary health care, social housing has been significantly impacted by neoliberal reforms. Neoliberalism represents a new form of political-economic governance which is focused upon the extension of market relationships. Under Keynesian welfarism, the state's provision of services and goods is a means to guarantee the wellbeing of the population, whereas neoliberalism prefers minimal state interference (Larner, 2000). Presently, all state and not-for-profit housing providers adhere to neoliberal practices such as competition, hierarchy and public/private partnerships (Kramer et al., 2011; Dodson, 2006). This determination to control and regulate public services arises from a wider concern surrounding the idea that the public sector is inefficient and lacks accountability (Blessing, 2012). An example of this is housing associations whom are frequently seen in a more positive light than council housing, which are often seen as remote, bureaucratic and a burden upon the state (Fyfe, 2005). By framing housing associations in this way, it reinforces the neoliberal ideological premise that state welfare provisions to the population increase dependency, are expensive and inefficient.

The provision of social housing can be conceptualised as a caring practice, looking after those most vulnerable within society (Mee, 2009). However, there are concerns surrounding the devotion of housing associations to their social mission when faced with commercial advantages (Power and Bergan, 2018; Carter and Fortune, 2007; Haylett, 2003). Social housing is monitored by the Scottish Housing Regulator through the Scottish Housing

Quality Standard (SHQS), as well as compliance to the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (EESH) (Scottish Housing Regulator, 2017). Within these standards, these organisations are required to establish performance management practice such as regulation, audit measures and key performance indicators such as the numbers completed and timeframe taken for adaptations (Dean, 2010; Van Mossel, 2009). Thus, these traditions of ‘care’ are threatened by the growing commercialised focus of social housing, which centres upon returned investment and property management, rather than the needs of its residents (Power and Bergan, 2018). This appeal of audit centres upon the depiction of public services in crisis (McKee, 2009) and whilst the language of neoliberalism stresses notions such as accountability and trust, its practices have the opposite effect – creating and developing greater levels of stress amongst some staff whilst establishing a rationality for private sector interventions (Jacobs and Travers, 2015).

Government structures and ideologies

Upon discussing the need for, and restrictions upon, joined-up thinking within public services, it is vital to analyse the mentalities within governance which created this change, and the alternative rationalities available.

New Public Management

Influenced by new institutional economics and private-sector managerialism, upon the emergence of New Public Management (NPM) consecutive UK government’s since the 1980’s have sought to address perceived ‘failing’s through organisation and managerial restructuring’ (Hood, 1991). NPM is the transformation of large public sector organisations into smaller units through the introduction of market competitiveness (Ashraf and Uddin, 2016). To improve economic efficiency and reduce dependency, it was recommended that the public sector be opened up to a greater degree of privatisation (Andrews and de Walle, 2013; Hood, 1991). This created a greater focus on cost control with an associated audit culture,

greater managerial discretion, performance measures and greater levels of internal efficiency (Hood, 1991).

NPM is often associated with the concept of partnership between public and private sectors; sharing risk and expenses as a means to develop infrastructure capable of providing more efficient service delivery and on-going innovation (Navarra and Cornford, 2012). However, it is argued that NPM has had little impact in improving the overall effectiveness of government run programs and agencies (Kinder, 2012). Focus has shifted from development and investment towards cost cutting, and from controlled regulation to self-regulation. It advocates a redefinition of the role of state within society and its relationship with the market to improve the competency of public politics, creating a shift from process accountability to outcome accountability, a culture which has strengthened under austerity (Navarra and Cornford, 2012; Amagoh, 2011).

Joined-up government

Contrastingly, joined-up government is the development and structural reorganisation of internal policy coordination to improve the efficiency of service delivery (Darlow et al., 2007). By simplifying the number of intermediaries, it allows greater collaboration between the state and society by reducing the complex landscape that confronts the population when accessing public services. Joined-up government seeks horizontally and vertically coordinated thinking and action; removing undermining policies, with better utilisation of resources, creating greater stakeholder collaboration and empowering the population (Pollitt, 2003). Government aims to improve efficiency by creating a higher level of responsiveness to the dynamic and continuously changing environment within public services. By creating joined-up governance it creates the uniformity required between various programs, policies and agencies, allowing them to collaborate (Klievink and Janssen, 2009). This increased partnership allows the establishment of a more agile and responsive government based on a

holistic methodology of action between public, private and third sector parties (Darlow et al., 2007). However, due to historic investment there is a reluctance to disinvest or reorganise current structures (Hood, 1991).

Yet, with an ageing population, the high costs associated with the provision of housing, health and social care is a highly politically sensitive issue (Rummery, 2009). This increase in need and economic pressure means that services are unable to cope with the increased demand, especially within poorly coordinated and fragmented services (Klievink and Janssen, 2009; Drennan et al., 2005). However, partnership working between different areas of the public, private and voluntary sector is seen as a way of potentially improving services, especially where there is a commonality of interest and a history of failing to coordinate services effectively (Barraket and Loosemore, 2018; Rummery, 2009). Thus, by implementing an approach of joined-up government within healthy ageing and retrofit practice, it has the potential to improve service delivery, whilst reducing economic cost upon vital public services.

Governmentality and housing studies

Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality aids in explaining the structures, processes and values underpinning the activities of governing (Rose, 1999). Within the UK, the form of power/knowledge nexus presented is associated with neoliberalism, and this model of governmentality is implemented through the choices and underlying rationalities of national government (Foucault et al., 2008). Within neoliberal governance, the state is no longer required to solve all of society's needs; citizens are empowered to allow governance to be decentred, diffused and participatory (McKee, 2011). Welfare agencies have loosened control; governed not directly from above but through technologies such as budget regulation, accountancy and audit (Larner, 2000). This is achieved not through direct intervention, but by realigning the population's identities through government ambitions, as

Foucault (2003) labelled the “*technologies of self*”, representing a form of distant governance.

Governmentality has two broad meanings: a mode of exercising power by the state, and the generalised, dispersed practise of governing referred to as the “*conduct of conducts*”. Foucault (1991) explained that governmentality meant the strategies of organisational governance, as well as self-governance by those whom are subjects of organisational governance (Clegg et al., 2002). Governance and strategy are not something organisations own, but rather something done within the wider organisational and institutional phenomenon (Brunet, 2019). Therefore, not only are governmentality and governance linked, but organisational design is also interlinked within this concept (Simard et al., 2018). Thereafter, governmentality helps us understand how the current neoliberal model shapes the culture and rationalities around how decisions are made within not only governance, but also the sectors enacting their policies. As a result, it is possible to analyse current inefficiencies within practice, but also the potential for change and wider state and sector benefits from creating greater alignment of services within the ageing in place agenda.

As the numbers of social housing under state control have decreased and the sector has become more complex, the need for new governing solutions has grown (McKee, 2009). This is linked with emergent forms of managerialism within social housing governance; based upon the effectiveness of market processes and the introduction of audit, accountability and performance measurement culture. This framework is promoted on the basis of efficiency and reflexivity through increased transparency and accountability (Flint, 2004). A key feature of managerialism is the problematisation of issues to create a pretext justifying intervention and change. The sustained critique within social housing represents an ideological belief that serves the commercial interests of organisations seeking to capture new markets in areas of welfare provision (Jacobs and Travers, 2015). However, whilst this move disperses state

function through market mechanisms, it also strengthened governmental control through increased performance management of the sector (McKee, 2009).

There has been criticism for government for not defending social housing, with all state and not-for-profit social housing providers now adhering to neoliberal practices such as competition, hierarchy and public/private partnerships (Jacobs, Berry and Dalton, 2013). This prioritisation upon calculative rationalities is not created to advance services, but rather so that they are seen to advance, with the appeal being largely symbolic and conveying an intent to improve service delivery (Jacobs and Travers, 2015). These rationalities arise from a long line of managerial initiatives which seek to persuade the population that improvements can and are being made during a time of reduced investment and resources. This move is established upon the concept that control and reporting is essential to improve services, however, this paper argues that it is more to do with wider societal shifts created by the welcoming of neoliberal ideological philosophies (Jacobs and Travers, 2015).

Therefore, governmentality provides a lens to expose the rationalities present within governance and governing of retrofit service provision, and the extent to which these interconnecting services enact the joined-up thinking required for successful cross-sector collaboration. Whilst the loosening control of public services is widely acknowledged, the extent to which this occurs and barriers in place are less studied. Therefore, governmentality aids in exposing the ideological and cultural barriers in place between interconnecting services, at a time of severe economic restraint and at a time where local, national and global governments are encouraged to improved alignment to the SDG's. By understanding the rationalities of those charged with maintenance of the population, it provides insight into the potential, or not, of creating a holistic retrofit system for an ageing population within social housing.

Research strategy and methodology

Theoretical framework

The aim of this research was to explore the key themes and prevalent trends which shape the challenges to creating a holistic retrofit system within social housing for the improved health and wellbeing of the elderly. We apply the lens of governmentality as it enables understanding of the processes and mentalities which underpin governance and the ways in which it is enacted, aiding in the analysis of alignment to an approach of joined-up government through cross-sector collaboration. Therefore, creating understanding of the rationalities surrounding macro processes such as how the wider shift from liberal towards neoliberal forms of governance occurs and how stakeholders respond to the implementation of these strategies in practice. With energy being neglected within the healthy ageing agenda, there is a need to understand the barriers in place to integration, within national policy, but also public, private and third sector practice. Therefore, this research will examine the processes in which housing, energy, and health and social care sectors, as well as within the construction industry, create alignment to the global demand for cross-sector collaboration and joined-up thinking, as well as the inherent restrictions in place within current retrofit agendas.

Empirical setting

Having investigated current literature, it was discovered that there was a substantial gap surrounding the nexus of housing, energy and health sectors within retrofit practice. Therefore, this research took an exploratory approach within its design and seeks to develop an understanding of the different agendas and bodies aligned in retrofit practice, within the context of an ageing population (See Figure 2).

Insert Figure 2: Different bodies and agents with retrofit practice

It is therefore important to assess existing partnerships and the complexity of delivering this agenda across four sectors: energy (governmental and non-governmental domestic retrofit programs), construction (new build and renovation), social housing (local authority and housing associations) and health (NHS and social care). However, within each sector there are a number of complexities involved. Although there is an alignment of service providers within the Ageing in Place agenda, a key issue is the silo-based approach towards decision-making and policy implementation, with each sector comprising of divergent policies, protocols and targets. Yet if these outcomes were communicated cross-sector, there is greater potential for common solutions to be found. An exemplar of this is bed blocking within primary health care: if a procedure was extant to query household conditions and needs at the point of admission, there is potential for adaptations to be implemented by housing providers before discharge, therefore, creating a vital connection between sectors, a method of communication and preventing delayed discharge. This concept has the potential to create a fundamental change by allowing the housing provider to know the condition and location of their resident whilst building trust between sectors, permits time to implement the required structural changes and creates a safe and accessible living environment for the individual, thus preventing hospital readmission. Though this change is minor in practice, it has potential for vast socioeconomic impacts. This is especially fundamental within state funded service providers such as social housing and health and social care, whom receive funding and strategic vision from central government, but from different governmental departments.

Therefore, it is a key area of research to determine the key themes and prevalent trends which shape the potential and the challenges in place to creating an holistic retrofit system within social housing for the improved health and wellbeing of the elderly.

Epistemology

Mainstream housing research relies heavily upon a positivist epistemology, looking at objective facts (Clapham, 2002). However, this creates difficulty in pursuing new lines of investigation and creates reactive change within governance and policy development. This is particularly important as debates within housing studies and policy are dominated by the competing ideologies of encouraging market mechanisms or extending the role of an active state (Jacobs and Manzi, 2000). In contrast, a constructivist approach understands an individual's experience is an active process of interpretation: society and policy is malleable and subject to power struggles (Clapham, 2002). Therefore, constructivism offers a different conception of reality (Hayes and Oppenheim, 1997). We are all influenced by our history and cultural context, which shapes our view of the world and the meaning of truth. Thus, assuming a relativist ontological position; the world consists of multiple individual realities which are influenced by context (Mills et al., 2006).

Epistemologically, constructivism is a research paradigm that denies the existence of an objective reality, asserting instead that realities are social constructions of the mind, and there are many that exist (Hayes and Oppenheim, 1997). By taking a constructivist perspective to data analysis in this research, the data is seen through the perspective that meaning and experience are socially produced and reproduced, rather than existing within the individuals (Burr, 2006). Furthermore, constructivism permits an emphasis on the subjective interrelationship between the researcher and participant, and co-constructing of meaning (Hayes and Oppenheim, 1997) which is important in this context given the need to engage with actors who shape decisions this enables the researchers to be part of the research and enabling our values to be acknowledged by themselves as an inevitable aspect of the analysis and discussion (Guba and Lincoln, 1989).

Constructivism is particularly important in exploring organisational conflicts and tensions. Organisations do not share a single view of reality, but are sites of multiple conflict in which actors fight for control and power (Jacobs and Manzi, 2000). This approach differs from traditional housing research, which maintains that problems reflect underlying social realities. In contrast, constructivism is committed to seeking the underlying tensions and rhetoric; exploring competing interpretations of truth and has the potential to shine a light upon the links between ideology and social and economic change (Jacobs and Manzi, 2000). Thus, if used appropriately, this approach can disentangle multifaceted organisational problems and processes, whilst clarifying meaning within everyday practice of housing professionals (Jacobs and Manzi, 2000).

There are many different versions of knowledge and ‘truth’ including shared versions of knowledge across sectors and governance all of which are in a state of constant flux as social contexts and interactions change (Sherratt, 2014). Thus, grounded in relativist ontology, this approach considers the world as constructed and created by people through their social interactions (Sage, 2016). Whilst there are criticisms of constructivism, such as the predominant focus upon micro-level interactions, the lens of governmentality allows the discussion to be conceptualised around the wider issues within retrofit practice, governance and ideological principles (Clapham, 2002).

Methods

The empirical analysis is based on data collected throughout 2018. Data was collected across the public sector and registered social landlords (RSL’s) across the west coast and central belt of Scotland. These organisations were chosen to gain an understanding across local authority boundaries which could be representative of the issues presented across the country. The data for the study was collected using qualitative methods which are concerned with understanding individuals perceptions of the world they live in (Bell, 1993). This

approach was selected for two reasons. Firstly, a qualitative approach is well placed to uncover the wider issues across housing, health and energy, as well as the decision-making which governs them (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). Secondly, there has been little prior research on decision-making with regards to creating joined-up practice across interlinking, but practically disconnected sectors thus, this research requires in-depth understanding of the drivers and challenges in place. Therefore, interviews were selected as the data collection method due to the potential to generate rich data, exploring a range of perspectives and creating a holistic viewpoint. Furthermore, an abductive approach was utilised due to its pragmatic nature, creating a logical inference to find the most likely explanation from the data presented.

Interviews took place at locations chosen by the participants, ranging from personal offices to coffee shops and lasted between 18-131 minutes. To reach a deeper understanding of the stakeholder's perception and to allow for a variety of qualified informants, a purposeful sampling method was employed (Hemstöm et al., 2017). In total, 41 stakeholders were contacted and 24 industry experts provided written consent to participate, giving a response rate of 58.5%; their demographic details are shown in Table 1.

Insert Table 1: Interview participants

Participants were selected to represent a rounded view of current retrofit practice across housing, energy and health. Therefore, it was important to select individuals who represented both a macro and micro view: those governing and those implementing policies. Participants were selected based on various characteristics identified as important in the data, such as professional background and the number of years' experience working within industry (3+ year minimum). It was deemed essential to develop the empirical evidence from 'experts' within the field, thus, initially people were selected due to influence in the field and alignment of job title with the research aim to explore the key themes and prevalent trends

which shape the challenges to creating a holistic retrofit system within social housing for the improved health and wellbeing of an ageing population. Moreover, a key function of the selection process was to include as many variables and levels of authority as possible within the different sectors to gain a full understanding of the interconnecting agendas. An example of this is meeting with a member of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament, management within the Energy Saving Trust, to an individual implementing the policies within the Area Based Scheme who install all external retrofits for a local authority's social housing stock. From this, a snowball sampling method was employed, where interviewees recommended individuals that they believed would be fundamental to the research. The function of these interviews was to gauge a full understanding of the impact of policies and how ideological principles impact the capacity of joined-up practice across the different sectors. However, in future research in-depth analysis will be undertaken with older residents in social housing through questionnaires and focus groups to understand their experience and determine the 'truth' from those living within social housing and impacted by policy direction.

An interview guide containing questions and probes was created to guide the conversation and ensure it remained focused and a neutral approach was adopted, ensuring no leading questions were asked. Interviewees were asked questions related to three topic areas: the drivers and decision-making for retrofit practice, the levels of collaboration across the sectors under the retrofit agenda and the feasibility of creating a holistic retrofit system. The function of these topics was to gauge an understanding of the decision-making and application within the sectors, looking at those creating the policies and those ordered to implement them. Furthermore, it was fundamental to determine the current level of partnership working, allowing analysis of indices of best practice and perceived failings within the sectors, as well as determining feasibility and enthusiasm for change. Each

interview began with the same opening question, “*What do you believe are the biggest issues facing housing with an ageing population?*”. However, a list of further example questions can be found in Table 2.

Insert Table 2. Example interview questions.

Having identified stakeholders as potentially influential actors within these sectors, the purpose was to understand the potential and barriers within retrofit practice in social housing for the wellbeing of the older population. Initial interviews were open and free-flowing to give participants the freedom to discuss their experiences, with follow-up questions asked when interesting statements were made that required further analysis. Later interviews were driven by data analysis and theoretical sampling to expand categories and relationships between them. Data collection took place until saturation was achieved and no new themes emerged from the coding process.

Data analysis

The results of the interviews underwent thematic analysis as it allowed for an abductive approach of inquiry (Bowen et al., 2014; Thomas and Harden, 2008). Thematic analysis is a flexible approach to identifying, analysing and reporting patterns across a dataset to find repeated patterns of meaning. Thematic analysis is a method to identify, analyse and report themes within data. Participants responses were analysed using the 6 phases of thematic analysis outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). The first phase involved familiarising oneself with the data, searching for meanings and patterns by becoming immersed in the data during transcription and repeatedly reading the written data to get a full understanding of the text as a whole. Next, the initial codes were produced using NVivo analytical software. Stakeholder responses were coded for key words, phrases and sentences which indicated recurring and interesting patterns within the data and meaningful units and paragraphs were selected which included vital information. Initially the analysis yielded 223 codes, which

were reduced to 158 by another review. The codes were then re-focused and analysed at the broader level of conceptual themes, rather than codes. Once themes emerged, these were then reviewed and refined and once they were satisfactory, the data was analysed within the themes and extracts were selected which illustrated the key themes present. This process continued until 4 key themes were selected, and each given subthemes. During the process of designing the results, key quotes were moved and categories were renamed as literature was reviewed. An iterative approach was implemented, where the emerging data was informed by a review of a range of theoretical and current literature. Although no preliminary themes were selected before beginning data analysis, the emerging data was informed and consistently reviewed by a range of current literature and the theoretical framework of governmentality. The research team met routinely to review observation notes, examine the data analysis: adding to concepts and themes and consulting for iterative feedback.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval from participants was essential to ensure the integrity of the research was maintained and to guarantee informed consent. The research invitation letter made the aims of the research, participation criteria and data collection methods clear. The invitation for participation also set out the confidential nature of the data and made it clear that the participant had the right to withdraw at any time during the interview. All data has been de-identified and pseudonyms were used for all participants.

Findings

From the data analysis, three main trends arose which will be discussed: 1) public sector collaboration, 2) multi-sector collaboration and 3) public sector and end-user collaboration.

1) Public sector collaboration

Inter-departmental

Within the public sector, there appears to be a lack of knowledge and understanding amongst interlinking government programmes and departments, resulting in fragmentation. This is visible through C22 Community OT's exemplar, *"when they [property and maintenance] changed the doors they created a problem for every ramp we had...they put in a 2-inch step, so all the referrals came into us because they couldn't get in or out of their house"* and is reinforced by C24 Communities Manager, *"a local authority would do a new external wall insulation project but then go back 1 or 2 years later and change the roofs and pay for all that scaffolding again...it makes no sense whatsoever...if you joined all that information into one dataset you wouldn't have the massive cost of scaffolding twice in a short time period"*. The consequences of this lack of understanding, communication and joined-up thinking are not only harmful to the residents wellbeing, but create an increased cost to the social housing provider. Further, the Communities Manager raises a potential key issue surrounding public sector infrastructure whereby there are inherent inefficiencies which prevent configuration of interconnecting datasets. If this issue is present within housing departments, it is proffered that this is a much wider issue within the public sector, requiring investment to create the very basis of alignment between connecting services if strategic joined-up thinking is to come to fruition.

Cross-sector

When exploring the present levels of joined-up service provision across sectors divergent attitudes towards the capacity and requirement of creating linkages between health, housing and energy emerged. The frustration arising from this stagnation is visible through C18 Policy Coord, *"you bang your head against a brick wall sometimes...health doesn't see the importance, they don't ask about what someone is going home to until the day before they*

are discharged". Contrastingly, C3 MSP, whom is in a position of power to improve practice has a more resigned view, *"everyone is given a job to do and a budget to do it in, which are declining...therefore people don't think outside the box...your concern is day to day health. Is it that their heating is working? Probably not"*. These polarised views are indicative of personal inclination to change under adverse economic circumstances; with one promoting a vision of change, of improving, and another accepting current conditions as they are resultant of their political party implementing an agenda of austerity unto the public sector. However, this gap in knowledge arises from single-minded policies and a lack of understanding of the fundamental barriers in place through a lack of determination to do more, do better and invest in public services to raise awareness and knowledge share. When decision-makers detach from the consequences of their policies, and those practically implementing them, it creates substantial barriers to creating joined-up practice. Thereafter, disengaging from the concept of relational governance whereby there is a culture of trust and strong mutual commitment (Dong et al., 2017), instead committing to singular agendas rather than the wider, institutional benefits arising from holistic, sustainable forms of care.

Wider governance

Within different levels of governance, from local authorities to members of parliament, and the energy sector, there is a view that the selection of individuals for support is inadequate and misaligned with the goals of protecting those most vulnerable. C3 MSP, begins this dialogue stating, *"all the resources and the low hanging fruit being plucked; chosen by government in dealing with cities and towns first"*. This statement refers to the choice between supporting urban and rural areas; the most convenient and inexpensive areas are selected first to receive support, regardless of the known disadvantages faced within rural locations. Those who are most at risk from isolation and affordable warmth are often forgotten due to disinclination of contractors, and increased cost for government in its

application. Exploring this issue in greater depth, C14 Public Health discusses the economic ideologies and decision-making within government which appears to forsake the vulnerable and encourage a reduction of care, *“I have been at meetings with the DWP where they have said we shouldn’t be helping as much with the residents, we replied that we do, we hold hands, these are very vulnerable people whose support is being cut”*. These statements highlight the priorities behind decision-making within both built environment and economic policy making. There were no discussions surrounding the struggles faced by the elderly which can often result in people being forced into, or continuing to suffer challenging living conditions, by limiting individuals based on numerical values such as their postcode or income. This disregard of those in need within the current policy direction could be seen as a representation of the direct loosening control within governance and the prioritisation of economic efficiency over the protection of the population.

2) Multi-sector collaboration

Public and private sector

As previously suggested within the literature, there is a perception that housing association’s (HA’s) are private bodies governed by overriding commercial rationalities. This view is reflected by C21 Pub. Health consultant whilst providing an analysis of the causation of this *“they’ve [RSL’s] taken over within a social landlord agreement rather than providers of social housing... local government is more subcontracting them...[local government] have this response of do this otherwise you don’t get our money”*, reflecting that RSL’s are more representative of commercially driven models with different priorities, unequal to local government and are obligated to their directives or risk losing all economic support. This is reinforced by C18 Policy Coord, *“there is a different attitude to local government and HA’s...they should have the same strategic aims but I don’t think we do...What is the objective of a HA? Is it ok to have 70 houses and have a chief executive on £70,000 a year,*

but not build?”, displaying a feeling of almost disdain and a lack of trust unto the culture and vision of housing associations. As housing providers whom control a substantial percentage of all social housing within Scotland and the UK, this negative perception impedes wider improvements and positive change through a protectionist and competitive mentality and a neglect to look at the broader potential through collaboration. Furthermore, this perception within the public sector has impeded practice within the RSL sector as C16 HA Director states, *“I’ve worked in a number of local authority areas...the communication between HA’s and housing departments in council’s and health partnerships is really really poor, incredibly fragmented”*. Whilst none of these quotes represent this presumed neoliberal philosophy within RSL’s, the public sector clearly holds this perception which in-turn has created a disinterest in collaboration due to an apparent lack of trust of their core values.

Public and third sector

In contrast to public and private sector collaboration, joint-working is more progressive when aligning services to the third sector organisations. This is seen through C18 Policy Coord’s experience of the ABS retrofit program, *“we work very closely with the Energy Agency...they make the decisions but we are the funder...they basically take it off our hands...we let [them] go and do their work and they really deliver”*. An interesting concept within this is not the collaborative efforts, but rather the relinquishing of control. Instead of working together, the Energy Agency is given free reign, working more as a subcontractor with increased power than a partner. It is therefore suggested that this is potentially resultant of a lack of knowledge and skills of the complex nature of retrofitting within the council. Furthermore, C15 Pub. Health Consultant retold her experience in attempting to improve collaboration, *“[local authority] created a portal which created a single point of contact to make referrals...there was concerns of it not being share equally...everyone had to agree, have an element of trust...then someone started sending out emails to contact them*

directly...it all totally fell apart". This showcases the underlying requirement for an ethos of trust for successful collaboration, and how substantial a barrier this can be within implementation. To create and improve cohesion across sectors within service provision, there must be a rounded approach centred upon knowledge share, whilst renouncing individual power to realise the potential benefits unto not only vulnerable people, but for reduced pressure during a time of severe fiscal restrictions.

3) Public sector and end-user collaboration

Governance assessment

Upon analysing the extent to which the public sector inwardly and outwardly collaborate, it is vital to assess its approach towards those whom their services are directed towards: the public. Social housing is heavily regulated, however there is a belief that these analytical measures are not fit for purpose. This is visible from C16 HA Director, *"there is a lot of demographic stock information that we have to provide and we don't understand the process in creating them, what use is it to the residents or the government? Void, re-let times...There is very little linkage to health/social aspects"* and reinforced by C18 Policy Coord, *"the charter indicator and things like that are ridiculous, the amount of time spent pulling all this data together and what you have is HA's and council housing focused on meeting these when all these bigger, more important things are missed...we are all just working to make sure we are ticking these boxes"*. Thus displaying views that this audit culture is both intrinsically inefficient and unnecessary, and results in increased pressure which creates unintended consequences as C16 HA Director enforces, *"there is a tipping point, at some point you go 'too much' and rent has to go up to pay for it"*. Thereafter displaying the inadequacy of this process, and the disillusionment felt within the sector, surrounding how they are monitored and the motivations behind it; adding little value to the

lives of residents but pushed by government, resulting in inadvertent consequences that the most vulnerable are forced to pay for.

Assessing need

Throughout discussion it became clear that there is a form of neglect of care within retrofit policies unto an ageing population, as clear within the following quotes, C23 HA Forum, “[repairs] are the most obvious policy that affects tenants...it would be interesting to see how many associations have reference to older people...I suspect it may just be forgotten...they’ll say we treat everyone the same but mainstreaming can lead you to ignore things” and C16 HA Director, “there are some really bizarre anomalies I’ve come across, people putting in wet floor showers in an upstairs property...explain that to me...the person clearly has mobility issues, yet they’re having to climb stairs to get in, and you’re spending £3500 to install it”. Therefore showcasing that although an ageing population is a priority within governance, this is not infiltrated within local policy nor practical implementation. Instead there is a reactive approach, focusing on a quick, immediate resolutions rather than understanding long-term need and economic investment required. The varying requirements of the elderly will not change, thus there must be a lens of sustainability placed upon within asset management planning and decision-making, shifting the view from the immediate to the lifespan of residents and dwellings.

The knowledge nexus

Furthermore, it is vital to understand the public sector’s approach towards the knowledge nexus when considering engagement of vulnerable residents within the energy agenda. However, throughout this process it is clear that not only is the landscape difficult to engage with, but residents are left disempowered with little support once receiving retrofits as C13 Head of Political Party states, “for the most part it’s still a passive set-up a phone line and wait to see who rings in, I get emails from constituents saying that I want to do the right

thing but it's a confusing landscape of different agencies and support, how do I cut through it?". This is then emphasised by C11 Lead Pub. Health, *"you're wondering what this is all about and nobody explains it, there's nothing comprehensive left for us to learn about [post-installation] ...new technology requires a lot of explanation, practical demonstrations to give people confidence...its vulnerable people and that's the least of their worries"*. These quotes display the complexity that the public is faced with, whereby they are left disengaged due to poor dissemination of information. Within both examples there is unnecessary complication within the process due to a lack of communication and knowledge sharing. If the goal of these initiatives is wider sustainability through improved health and wellbeing, then there must be greater consideration of the very individuals whom it is aimed towards. Without these basic improvements in practice it otherwise risks not only inefficiencies but unintended consequences at cost to both users and service provider.

Overview

Throughout this paper there has been discussion upon the various agendas and rationalities observed within decision-making and implementation. However, to better explain the conflicting concerns across these agendas Table 3 was created. Within this, it displays the wide variation of agendas in place and how a lack of a proactive, practical approach to retrofitting for an ageing population has created a method which favours cost-cutting and ease over collaboration and proactive change. Although there is increasing pressure placed upon public services from decreased funding and an amplified focus on calculable outcomes, it is clear that there is also great understanding across health, housing and energy of the potential benefits of greater levels of collaboration within domestic retrofit practice.

Insert Table 3. Thematic explanation

Discussion

Government occupies a unique position within the sustainability agenda. Developing the instruments of control through policies, regulations and financial incentives they shape the economy, environment and society for current and future generations. Therefore, it is imperative that these policies are progressive in order to protect the health and wellbeing of the population. However, it is within the mentality held by decision-makers that these are formed and enforced, therefore enabling or preventing alignment to the global healthy ageing agenda. Through data analysis it became clear that the encumbering structures of the public sector, coupled with the government's underpinning neoliberal ideological philosophy, creates a strong disconnect within internal, cross-sector and user collaboration within retrofit service provision. By utilising Michel Foucault's (1991) concept of governmentality it allows the analysis of individual and collective rationalities and how these influence power and control within retrofit practice. However, it became clear the collective mentalities presented within this research were that of mistrust, protectionism and power struggles. Although there was a presence of motivation for change, it is impeded by an overriding focus upon economic savings and short-term goals – further impeding potential for external collaboration and therefore the varying needs of older people. Whilst government shapes society through the processes of state, this audit driven culture does little for those living in social housing, focusing on quantifiable factors rather than dynamics that directly impact an individual's health and wellbeing.

Loosening control is apparent through various areas of housing and health care, mixing accountability with professional self-regulation, operating at a micro level, but with decision-making and economic prioritisation operating largely at a macro level (Ferlie et al., 2012). This is resultant from the neoliberal economic lens through which the UK has approached austerity through the reduction of expenditure within the public sector, aimed at

diminishing dependence on the state. However, this has had much wider impacts upon the public sector resulting in a loss of vital sector specific skills and the redistribution of power upon external bodies whom have little regulation nor allegiance, whilst neglecting wider considerations such energy within healthy ageing (Heald and Steel, 2018). Instead government focuses on the establishment of inadequate analytical instruments to aid economic growth (Schweber, 2017), thus inhibiting both internal and external relationships within retrofit practice. This is visible through the fragmented adaptation practices presented. There is a disinclination to understand one another, and the potential benefits which could arise from greater alignment of service provision. Thus potentially creating greater dependency on key national resources such as the NHS due to bed blocking or readmission, resultant of a poor quality internal ambient environment within their home; aggravating the very thing they were admitted to hospital for. Thus, there is a requirement to shift from the existing neoliberal lens to one of sustainability, looking at all areas of the public, private and third sector and how these differing bodies can support and collaborate to implement true healthy ageing, whilst reducing national pressure and cost.

Foucault (1991) spoke of the requirement for the power of knowledge to be passed to an individual level to successfully enforce change and create independence from state, deployed via a power-knowledge nexus between state and professionals. The requirement for knowledge sharing is clearly prevalent within retrofit practice, yet the lack of successful implementation is seen across sectors, and most crucially within communication between service providers and users. Therefore, translating this concept into practice, if the understanding of energy efficiency was seen by industry and population alike as ‘preventative medicine’, the power of public opinion would create a normalised practice; monitored, protected and promoted by public judgement. This creates alignment with the notion of governance viewing population to be the most valuable national resource, thereafter

prioritising engagement and knowledge sharing to create a culture shift, whilst bringing socioeconomic improvements to the vulnerable and public sector (Guizzo and de Lima, 2015; Rose, 1999). Yet thus far a hands-off approach has been taken, resulting in disengagement and thereafter a neglect of care and neglect towards sustainable practice. However, this is not entirely the fault of the public sector. Local authorities were placed in a fiscal position whereby many were forced to remove internal skills and knowledge base and instead rely on private and third sector subcontractors. This loosening control means many staff members lack the understanding of technologies implemented and means in which to improve efficiency and knowledge share, yet seek wider collaboration when they lack the internal capacity to make this a reality. Thus the extant non-interventionist approach which is resultant of severe economic pressures, and a focus upon market relationships, prevents the knowledge sharing that is required to take an holistic approach and create a fairer society. Henceforth there must be a repositioning within prioritisations: investing within knowledge and improving dissemination throughout internal and external stakeholders. However, this requires strong leadership centrally and locally, with those in power having a mentality of change, of investment and of improvement.

When looking at the macro approach towards retrofit practice, it is vital to acknowledge that the direction of policy has serious implications for practice; impacting how they are planned, organised and implemented. The organisation of construction projects are becoming increasingly more complex and difficult to manage (Williams, 2002; Alshaw and Ingrige, 2003) and the need for greater integration, cooperation and coordination within inter-organisational ventures is well recognised (Cicmil and Marshall, 2005). Although stakeholder collaboration within project management (PM) practice has improved over the years, this trend has not been fully established within retrofit practice in social housing. Decision-making is integral to successful project management, as PM techniques are inherently

decision-orientated (Kwak and Anbari, 2009). Yet, decision based problems exist in almost all management hierarchies of project-based organisations (Beringer et al., 2013). This problem is accentuated within public sector organisations, which rely heavily upon collaborative decision-making groups, forming close relationships which contribute to successful project completion (Jaber et al., 2015). However, the coordination and communication required amongst multiple decision-makers can take considerable amounts of time, therefore creating substantial delays (Beringer et al., 2013).

Moreover, the concept of project governance is vital. It is defined as “*primarily concerned with aligning project objectives with an overarching organisation strategy, and that is necessary to create stakeholder benefits across organisational levels*” (Biesenthal and Wilden, 2014). This notion is a continuum of practice enacted at different levels, creating multi-level forms of governance that are characterised across the organisation, thus improving stakeholder engagement (Brunet, 2019). Stakeholder engagement is the practices a project or organisation perform to positively involve stakeholders in an activity (Greenwood, 2007). Due to changing circumstances and volatile economic conditions, there is a need for continuous and systematic engagement with a variety of stakeholder throughout projects (Pascale et al., 2019), shifting to a form of collaborative practice and engagement (Meynhardt et al., 2016) and diverging from the existing loosened control and power struggles between interconnecting services. As all sectors have been encouraged to improve social and environmental responsibility, the adoption of a network-level approach to projects which include a broad and varied network of external stakeholders has the potential to create system-wide benefits (Pascale et al., 2019) including reduced economic pressure on key national resources. However this requires shifting the current mentalities held within governance and the public sector; switching to a view of stakeholders from different networks into one, unified within a systematic approach which focuses on value-creation at

all levels, rather than seeking individual outcomes. This approach aids in developing and diffusing new ideas and innovations, whilst redistributing power and creating the trust required amongst stakeholders (Rampersad et al., 2010).

Although the need for greater levels of integration within decision-making and practice has been acknowledged by stakeholders within this research, there is a fundamental lack of implementation. As previously prescribed, this requires a shift within the current forms of governmentality within governance and practice. A key example of this ethos shift resulting in improved project delivery is seen within Clegg's (2019) example of the construction company 'Alliance', whom choose to design and implement their own project culture – diverging from the norms within the construction industry. Within this, they designed a set of cultural commitments to which all were committed, employing an identity of being within the Alliance team rather than a delegate of their own respective organisations. Within this, the project prospered and exhibited the potential for success when deploying an ethos of collaboration, trust and communication.

The fragmentation present within retrofit practice may be resultant of power struggles, through silo based funding and policy, but also ideological barriers; with competing priorities between bolstering market mechanisms and the desire for greater state control. Mutual communication channels are essential in the creation of stakeholder networks, however they are absent across not only internal public sector departments, but wider relationships. Therefore, the processes and protocols required to create a holistic, cross sector approach to retrofitting is not present, and cannot exist due to the current barriers created through poor communication, decision-making and inadequate resources (Karlsen, 2002). In a time of severe austerity and restricted economic capability, there is another option available – retrofit service can choose to come together and collaborate through a shift towards sustainability and create vital change which would be felt across the state, but also

those receiving the services. However, another key issue may also be the lack of incentive or recognition within strategic positions for the need for change, which has resulted in this disjointed approach towards retrofit practice within the context of Ageing in Place. Thus, there is a need to create tools for implementation and collaboration such as single points of contact and integrated training to build relationships and create a mentality of joint-working and trust if the stakeholder engagement required is to become a workable reality.

Whilst global governments are going through severe financial constraint it is of optimal value for the state to ensure health and wellbeing is considered consistently and coherently in every domain of government (Hunt, 2012). Health is not, and should not, be seen as the sole responsibility of the health ministries. Government must balance the requirements of the population today, whilst responding to the evolving challenges of maintaining and caring for an ageing population in the future (Nicholls and Strengers, 2018; Ebi et al., 2017). Government can enforce significant change, enabling a shift from management of the delivery of single sector services, to a much broader, more inclusive agenda which takes into account the interconnections between housing, energy and health (Austin et al., 2018; Clarke et al., 2017). There is an initial requirement for greater fiscal outlay, however there is potential for long-term savings from reducing pressure on key assets and balancing consignment across different bodies, closing the information gap between housing stock and the future needs of the older population, through an approach of joined-up governance (Boyle and Thomson, 2016; Gottlieb and Haugbølle, 2013; Hartmann et al., 2010). Therefore, in line with Foucault (1982), converting strategy into an open-ended communication is necessary if the concept is to travel across different types of institutions, however, it requires analytical clarity, organisational coherence and clear practical routines (Buser and Carlsson, 2017). Thus, there must be understanding and acceptance that health, housing and energy all have the potential to improve and promote good health, stimulate

change and promote resilience through the retrofit industry through a greater level of collaborative working.

Although the importance of retrofit practice within housing, energy, health and the construction sector has been widely recognised, there has been little focus on creating joined-up practice, particularly within the empirical setting of an ageing population. This research explores the field of knowledge concerning the trends of fragmentation and intrinsic barriers in place to creating an holistic retrofit within social housing; investigating a macro and micro perspective of practice and looking at how ideological philosophies impede practice by focusing on calculable outcomes, rather than empowering practice and people. The prevailing focus on avoiding a welfare state and improving economic efficiencies, guided by neoliberal values, actually increases dependence through a lack of wider, joined-up thinking within practice: pushing for performance measures over long-term care, creating unintended consequences which result in greater investment requirements due to increased pressure upon public services such as readmission to public health care due to inadequate housing conditions upon exiting hospital. Within this context, governmentality was vital as a framework in expressing and understanding these key concepts, including the power struggles felt and fundamental structural barriers within state services which inhibit cross-sector collaboration. Thus, generating the question of the need to change the very basis of governance structures, removing silo-based funding and singular view of policies and outcomes. Therefore, realising all sectors are trying to achieve the same goal of improving the wellbeing of an ageing population. This agenda requires practical measures to allow greater cross-sector communication, collaboration and knowledge share in order to create a holistic retrofit practice.

Within this knowledge-based economy whereby organisations face unprecedented levels of complexity and dynamism from their environments and with highly complex

organisational forms still not fully understood, there is a need for an altered mindset across all sectors: removing complexity through increased collaboration and knowledge share, internally and external. Although the concepts of collaboration and partnership working are widely acknowledged to be beneficial, this research takes a different perspective, looking at the ideological, knowledge based, motivational and practical drivers and barriers in place which impede this advancement within retrofit practice. Currently, state service provision have been infiltrated by the market, driven by competition and demand, which has resulted in an array of knowledge based and sustainability challenges in delivering coordinated cross-sector service delivery. However, if this agenda were to be considered from a different perspective to that within neoliberal influence on Western governance, it becomes clear that creating a holistic retrofit system aligns with the capability to reduce government influence and investment by creating a long-term, sustainable practice which could potentially create meaningful change amongst the most vulnerable.

Conclusion

There is a need for greater collaboration and communication amongst national retrofit programmes and agendas to protect the health of the older population and prevent unintended detrimental consequences. The retrofit of domestic housing is centred around the concept of sustainability however, the ideological prioritisation of economy over people has created increased pressure on resources, favouring ease and cost cutting over communication, collaboration and efficiency. By introducing market principles into the delivery of vital state services, it creates fragmentation with competing priorities, rather than alignment of interconnecting agendas – this is seen within social housing provision, as visible by the lack of joint-working between local authorities and RSL's. Moreover, there is a severe lack of integration and partnership working amongst the government, different retrofit programmes and the people. This absence of understanding amongst programmes within housing, health

and energy of the immediate and wider picture creates substantial barriers within asset management focused upon the care of the older population and prevents meaningful knowledge share between external bodies and the people.

The UK's overriding neoliberal ideology is characterised by the increasing commodification of the vulnerable, responsibilisation of the population and retreat from the welfare state. This ideological principle draws upon the concept that the state is no longer required to solve societies problems, however this is a dangerous precedence during an extended period of austerity. Government is pushing a hands-off approach to political and organisational governance, yet neglecting to support the population through knowledge share and accessible care, thus increasing dependence upon the welfare state. By viewing public sector support as a drain upon society, it creates considerable risk to the protection of society. Therefore, socioeconomic sustainability must be sought after; protecting the vulnerable and the environment, whilst allowing the economy to recover without holding those most at risk responsible to pay the price for poor global financial decision-making.

Significant change must occur within government structure; increasing flexibility and alliances to create a viable method of interaction and collaboration to create solutions and improve implementation throughout the system. Whilst housing, energy and health may share features of neoliberal techniques such as the reliance upon outcomes to determine success, the inability to easily quantify collaborative practice renders a move towards a joined-up approach to retrofit practice futile within the current governance paradigm inhibiting the prospect of increased investment. However, with people continuing to live longer and with the maintenance of the existing housing stock remaining the dominant response to meet pressure on resources, a change in mind-set is required which recognises the value of investing in collaborative approaches. There must be a willingness to change and to holistically review the processes in place and resultant implications, implementing a different

ideological approach to governance which does not target the poorest within society, but shares the burden evenly. Thus, refocusing upon the goals of sustainable development, rather than individual agendas. Cross sector stakeholder collaboration is vital in not only reducing costs, but finding innovative solutions to critical problems which cannot be overcome within the current fragmented landscape. Therefore through this proposed altered mentalities creating a sustainable national retrofit programme that protects the most vulnerable, alleviates pressure from key national resources such as the NHS and promotes joined-up decision-making in alignment with the SDG's.

Future research may explore an ethnographic study of asset management of social housing in the UK. A review of the daily processes and studying behaviour from a top-down level, will allow for determination of the practical barriers in place whilst allowing for solutions to be created in order to increase partnership working and raise awareness of the nexus between housing, energy and health within governance and society. Furthermore, exploration into understanding the power effects and struggles of subjectivity felt by residents against the attempt to balance between economic efficiency and the protection of social values within housing provisions could make an important contribution within social housing governmentality studies. Thereafter, linking with the evolution towards eco-governmentality whereby there is a requirement to reduce resources but also create fair and equitable care upon the population: progressing from the current neoliberal stance towards austerity, and instead look upon the needs of all within society through true sustainability and environmental protection.

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