Governance of relocation

An Examination of Residential Relocation Processes in the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder areas in England

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This paper examines governance processes shaping outcomes of neighbourhood restructuring induced residential relocation (RR) in the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) areas in England.

In 2002, the Housing Market Renewal proposed demolition of 100,000 properties to renew the failing housing markets of Northern England and the Midlands (Leather et al.2007). However, residential relocation has been neglected in both policy and research. HMR did not provide any policy guidance or standards for RR delivery and outcomes. The research about HMR in general and residential relocation in particular remains limited. In the UK residential relocation was extensively studied following the slum clearance in the '50s and '60s. Since then RR has been examined as a matter of social and political debates, especially gentrification studies, focusing mainly on negative RR outcomes long after the process was over. This paper argues that such focus had led the researchers to ignore subtle, practical dimensions of relocation delivery and the causal relationships between these and often very diverse RR outcomes. The main innovation of this paper resides in conceptualizing residential relocation as an integral element of urban regeneration governance processes. Using grounded theory framework (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) the paper first identifies processes shaping residential relocation and maps the networks that deliver them within the HMR framework. Rigorous application and critical appraisal of the qualitative methodology unpacks the challenges of 'relocation governance' at the local level by juxtaposition of the local relocation processes with contrasting outcomes for the residents. The paper draws answers from 50 interviews with RR practitioners and residents in Newcastle Gateshead case study and survey of nine Housing Market Renewal Areas in England. It concludes by providing recommendations for the future research.

Introduction

Residential relocation is a critical by-product of the contemporary efforts to respond to global economic and environmental change. Large scale housing demolition has increasingly become states' response to pressures of making urban areas suitable for the future. While, housing market restructuring and environmental improvements are meticulously planned and studied, residential relocation they incur attract considerably less attention.

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In England, nearly half a century after they were abandoned, housing demolition and relocation have been restored as urban regeneration tools. In 2002, the Housing Market Renewal (HMR) programme proposed demolition of around 100,000 homes as a part of strategy to renew weak and failing housing markets in the North of England and the Midlands. The HMR became the second largest housing demolition initiative since the post Second World War (WWII) slum clearance.

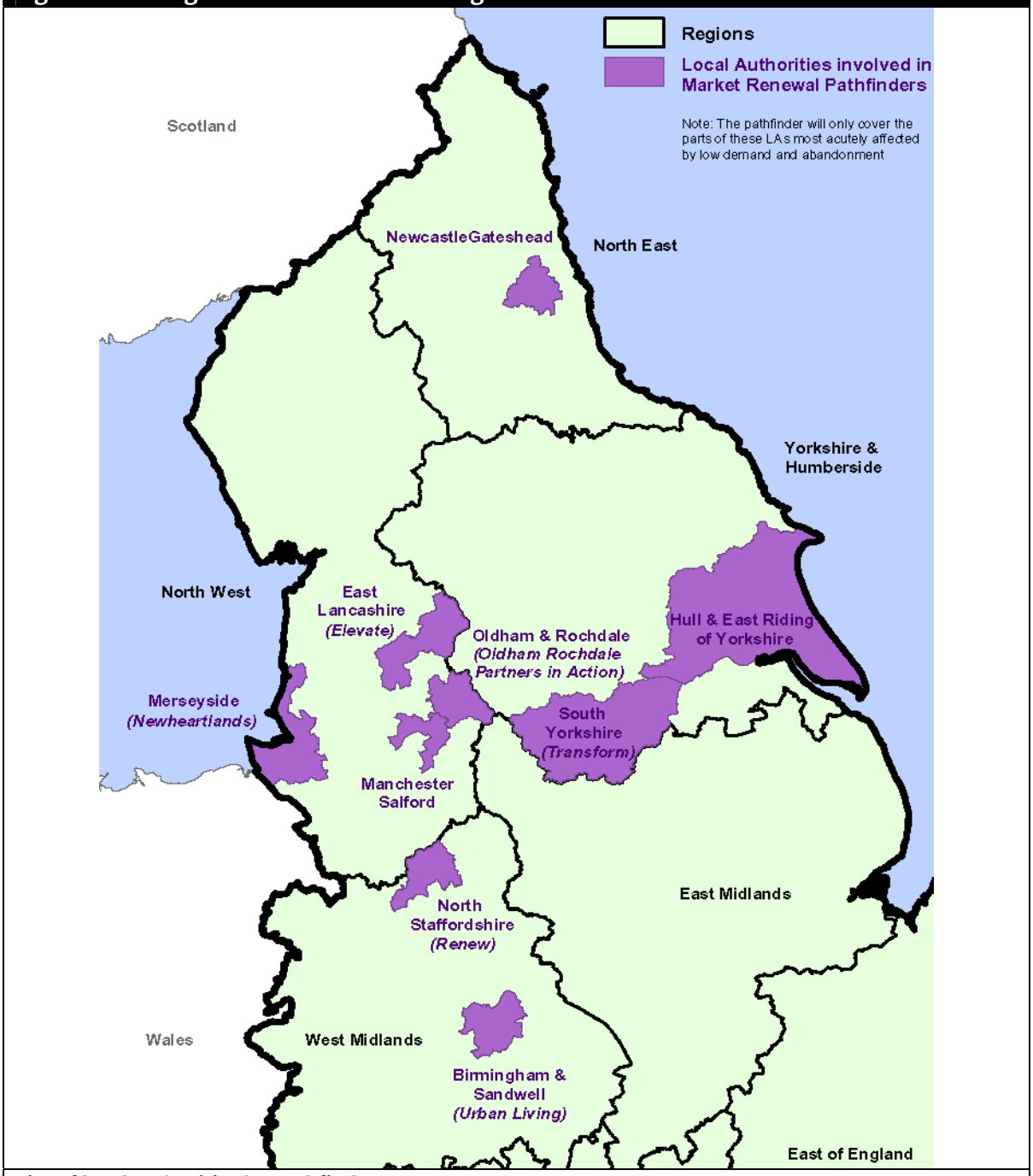
The Housing Market Renewal programme aims to renew failing housing markets. For the Homes and Communities agency the success of the programme is determined by the extent to which the Pathfinders have closed the gap between the housing markets in the pathfinder areas and the relevant regional housing markets (NAO, 2007:22). Its objectives are to reduce the number of low demand and vacant properties (NAO 2007:20). The sub-regional partnerships are expected to achieve these goals through series of interventions involving the physical change of local housing markets. Even though residential relocation is incurred and shaped by number of these interventions (such as: property acquisition, housing clearance and demolition, refurbishment, new building...etc.), it is not acknowledged to be their part.

More importantly, no guidance has been provided to define procedures or standards for delivering residential relocation, on the national, regional or local levels. The HMR was designed to be developed and implemented within highly devolved and decentralised state system. In order to make the HMR implementation more territorially sensitive, the government found nine Pathfinders (see Figure 1). Pathfinders are sub-regional strategic partnerships made up of central, regional and local stakeholders that involve joint work over a number of adjacent local authority areas (Leather et al., 2007: 41).These partnerships were given freedom to design their own policy response and governance structures to deliver HMR (Cole & Nevin, 2004: 27). The delivery of the residential relocation was assumed to be thought trough at the sub-regional or local level, as appropriate.

The issue of the residential relocation is critical. Residential relocation presents one of the most complex aspects of urban regeneration and development. The risk of incurring social, economic and environmental damage is high (Carmon, 1999, Pacione, 2005, Power & Mumford, 1999). Whilst co-ordination of the involved processes may result in improvements of living conditions for the existing population, failures have been known to cause heavy psychological costs of enforced relocation and social costs of community destruction (Carmon, 1999). However, very little is know about the practice of delivering residential relocation in general and HMR in particular.
This paper looks into outcomes of RR in HMR framework and some of the main challenges HMR Pathfinders and their local teams face when trying to deliver residential relocation. Based the case of

the Housing Market Renewal in England, the paper suggests 'governance theory' as theoretical framework for future examination of the residential relocation, as an alternative to the gentrification centred approaches.

Figure 1. Housing Market Pathfinders in England



List of local authorities by Pathfinder
Bridging Newcastle and Gateshead: Newcastle and Gateshead; **Partners in Action**: Oldham and Rochdale; **Elevate East Lancashire**: Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle and Rossendale, and Lancashire County Council ; **Gateway**: Hull and East Riding; **Transform South Yorkshire**: Sheffield, Barnsley, Rotherdam and Doncaster; **Renew North Staffordshire**: Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire Moorlands; **Newheartlands Merseyside:** Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral; **Manchester and Salford**: Manchester and Salford; **Urban Living**: Birmingham and Sandwell.
Map source: Communities and Local Government (2010)

Housing Market Renewal in Research

Even though, effects and outcomes of housing demolition have been at the forefront of media attention since the launch of the HMR programme in 2002 (see for example Chain, 2006, Minton, 2009, Thorpe, 2009) last time residential relocation has been extensively studied in the UK was in the 1960s and 1970s, following the post WWII slum clearance (English et al. 1976, Fried, 1966, Gibson & Langstaff,1982, Parker, 1973, Short, 1982, Wilmott & Young, 1957). Eight years into implementation, the research about the HMR programme in general and residential relocation in particular, remains limited in number of ways. Firstly, the studies about HMR programme are relatively scarce. Secondly, the conclusions they put forward are contrasting. In general terms, the contributions are either supportive or critical of the initiative. They rarely engage with the actual processes of HMR implementation. Lastly, this body of research hardly ever they address residential relocation as their main focus.

'The big picture', 'greater good', 'growth', ' the future'. These are the words that characterise research supportive of the HMR. This work tends to highlight that housing market growth is beneficial for all members of the society. The conclusions rest upon meticulous research and measurement housing market indicators (such as price, number of low demand or vacant properties). The support of the HMR programme is based mainly on the finding that the average housing prices in Pathfinder areas trebled since the launch of the programme (Cole & Nevin, 2004; Leather et al. 2007; Leather & Nevin, 2007; Ferrari, 2007; Nevin, 2007).
In this body of research residential relocation is seen as short term disruption of individual households necessary to achieve housing market growth (Cole & Nevin, 2004). Focus on the housing market in economic terms makes any development process (even when it is officially accounted for as a HMR intervention) hard to examine in procedural, delivery terms. In this body of research RR is not examined.

The body of research that is critical of HMR sees the initiative as a synonym for 'demolition', 'injustice' and 'exploitation' (Allen, 2008, Cameron, 2006, Power, 2007, Edwards & Martin, 2006, Leeming, 2007). Some of the main works in this group are underpinned by Marxist theory (see for example, Allen, 2008). In this paradigm, what seems important for the renewal schemes is their potential increase housing prices, displace low income communities and make profits from the development on the land where they were situated. The Pathfinder interventions are seen as authorities' exercise of power over working class residents in the regenerated areas. The available contributions tend to follow the tradition set after the WWII slum clearance and conceptualise residential relocation as gentrification, or wide social and political issue. On one hand, the right of the government to intervene in the built

environment is questioned (Allen, 2008). On the other, the consequences of residential relocation long after the process is over are examined (Cameron, 2006, Edwards & Martin, 2006, Leeming, 2007). The characteristic of this body of research is presenting residential relocation outcomes as inevitably negative and harmful for the affected community.

The major limitation of the body of research engaging with the HMR in general and relocation in particular, is that works tend to either to overstate or underplay the extent of problems involved. The available research, both supportive and critical of the HMR is characterised by grand narratives of modernism where the conclusions and the recommendations stem from the theory and approaches inherited from the examinations of the post WWII slum clearance. The predefined focus and theoretical positions seem to operate as constraints, limiting the spectrum of the themes researched. Freud (1958) points out that 'through lenses of a specific singular theory understanding of the world is determined in a way which feeds back into the social construction of specific theory' (Freud, 1958, 112 quoted in Flick 2002, 42). This kind of approach puts the researcher 'in danger of never finding anything but what he already knows' (ibid.). There is a conceptual difficulty in dealing with dynamism and change occurring in time of programme implementation. The approach is especially limiting for any research that involves questions about operationalisation of complex practical tasks and multiple projects making up the policy delivery.

The main problem seems to be approaching research of residential relocation when both community and local authority agree that housing demolition and relocation are the way forward. In these cases that are ultimately about RR delivery, traditional research stays paralysed (economic research sees this as a success, and the social one doesn't have what to criticise) while policy gives no guidance how to proceed. This paper proposes and alternative way to researching residential relocation. It starts with identification of the current issues relevant to residential relocation in the HMR framework by using the Grounded Theory approach. The aim is to provide focus on the RR practice rather than pre-set theoretical frameworks and suggest new research and policy focus based on this.

Towards engaging with practice of residential relocation delivery : Grounded Theory

This paper uses inductive, Grounded Theory (Glaser and Sraus, 1967) approach to examine the residential relocation delivery within the HMR framework. Grounded Theory presents a 'prior step of discovering what concepts and hypotheses are relevant for the area that one wishes to research' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:2). Therefore it seems especially suitable for researching issues of planning practice that require alternative conceptualisation than the one provided in the available literature.

Exploratory, grounded theory, 'gives preference to the data and the field under study against theoretical assumptions' (Flick, 2002: 41 see also Glaser and Strauss, 1967, Glaser B. 1978, 1992). Grounded Theory is grounded in data systematically obtained from social research (Glaser 1978, Bryant & Chamaz, 2007). This means that the conclusions stem from the examination of practice rather than theory. Grounded theory uses 'theoretical sampling': 'this is the process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses [her] data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop [her] theory as it emerges' (Glaser & Strauss 1967: 45). The methods used are adjusted to the object under study and not the other way around. In the case of this research the qualitative methods were deemed the most appropriate because of the nature of the research aim and lack of data about the practice of the residential relocation delivery within the Housing Market Renewal initiative.

There are three starting questions that GT was used to answer. Considering the fact that the available research is presenting the outcomes of RR as mainly positive or mainly negative, the first question to be answered was: *What are the outcomes of the RR* (in fact, when no theoretical underpinning is used to launch the resrch)? The second question was: *What are processes shaping residential relocation?* (even though some authors alluded that coordination of processes may help achive more acceptable RR outcomes, there isn't a comprehensive list of what RR are, in HMR or in general). The last question to be answered was: *Who are the actors delivering residential relocation in HMR?* and related to this question: what are their working relations?

The case of HMR Pathfinders in England

The HMR Pathfinders were set up by the Government in 2002 to tackle long-standing problems which have caused neighborhoods across the Northern England and the Midlands to become less popular places to live. In such neighbourhoods, the high concentrations of difficult to let or sell properties ("low demand" properties), the loss of population and the inability to attract new households had created neighbourhood decline and deprivation. The HMR initiative established sub-regional partnerships or 'pathfinders' covering nine areas in Newcastle and Gateshead; Oldham and Rochdale; East Lancashire; Hull and East Riding; South Yorkshire; North Staffordshire; Merseyside; Manchester and Salford; and Birmingham and Sandwell (HCC, 2008). These areas consist of 26 local authorities and cover only their weakest housing markets (Figure 1).

Pathfinders present both the geographical areas (see Figure 1.) of the weakest housing markets in England and the sub-regional Partnerships found to regenerate them. Pathfinder partnerships do not

have statutory powers to enforce the implementation of Housing Market Renewal strategies. Instead they must influence a large number of local and regional regeneration agencies to achieve their plans. The HMR initiative aims renew the sub-regional housing markets by improving the quality of the physical infrastructure of the neighbourhoods concerned, between 2002 and 2018. So far, over 10.000 houses have been demolished across England. This paper examines residential relocation from these properties and the present practice. The conclusions are based the Grounded Theory analysis of on 50 phone and face to face semi structured interviews with key players responsible for residential relocation in nine HMR Pathfinders, on regional, sub-regional and local levels; rigorous secondary data analysis; results of the site and participant observation of the development sites in: Bridging Newcastle Gateshead, all conducted between May 2008 and November 2009.

Outcomes of residential relocation within the HMR framework

'It's like a tale of two cities, to be honest. The approach on the East End and the West End [Newcastle]... they are just miles apart. It is really interesting to see how one city can take such different and diverse approach to regeneration'

(Respondent BNG4).

These words of a relocation officer in Newcastle best illustrate the approach to residential relocation within the HMR framework. The analysis of residential relocation delivery outcomes across nine Pathfinders show that the decentralised approach to policy design, combined with the lack of RR guidance, has led to the proliferation of a range of strategies for residential relocation that substantially differ in time and space. The Pathfinders indicated that they take so called '*implementational approach to residential relocation*'. In other words, since there are no set rules, standards or guidance for RR on the national, policy or local levels, the practitioners involved in residential relocation delivery, design their strategies in response to specific issues related to each particular project[2] within their local authority.

The flexible approach to policy delivery was assumed to have the capacity to maximise positive results through decisions better adapted to local conditions, suited to demands and needs of the local population (Cole & Flint, 2007). However, the preliminary analysis of RR across the HMR indicates that this is not the case. Residents' testimonies show that the RR outcomes are highly uncertain and

[2] By 'project' we mean definite area of the masterplan or area development plan, with specific number of residential units to be demolished and built; an area the have definite boundary in terms of design and intervention.

contrasting in terms of process length, location, quality and size of alternative properties. These differences are present at Pathfinder, local authority, project and household levels, between and within the tenures.

While some residents get relocated on the opposite side of their street to a brand new property, others struggle to find or afford alternative accommodation within the boundaries of their local authority. Depending on a case, the relocation process can last from couple of months to ten years from the moment the decision to demolish has been advertised to the residents. The situation is similar in terms of quality and size of the property. Bridging Newcastle Gateshead[3] case shows that in some particularly deprived parts of this pathfinder the residents *'could not wait'* to be relocated out of their neighbourhoods that suffered high levels of deprivation, crime and physical deterioration. They took statutory payment of few thousand pounds to make the desperate move. Other residents in the same neighbourhood, found community pressure groups and made the local authority provide new homes, in size, quality and location they desired. This resulted in some residents moving from homes worth less than 20.000 pounds, to some of the state of art sustainable homes worth over 150.000 pounds.

The results are in stark contrast with the common view presented in the literature that RR unavoidably brings negative outcomes to powerless deprived population resisting housing demolition in regenerated areas (Power, 2007, Allen, 2008). The residents' testimonies show that resident groups have been successful in halting and reducing demolition in the areas they did not agree with it. In some local authorities such as Newcastle, the mistakes of the local council resulted in formation of residents' pressure groups that shaped and reshaped the process of RR for over ten years. In Manchester, the local council has made the first step and consulted the residents about the demolition potential in their neighbourhood and designed regeneration based on this. However, these lessons are not recorded, exchanged or learned from. Rather, each of the 26 local authorities involved in the HMR programme invents and re-invents its own RR solutions as the perceived problems arise, in most cases on the scale of individual development projects (which can be few hundred residential units).

The paradox is that the substantive amount of the 3 billion pound HMR funding has been invested in clearance and demolition; financial assistance packages have been developed to assist relocation, and the community consultation has been made compulsory on HMR level. Yet, in these areas the outcomes of residential relocation are contrasting and chaotic in form. The process is characterised by uncertainty for the residents and development delays and financial loss that comes as a result of unplanned and

[3] BNG is one of the most advanced Pathfinders in terms of number of demolished properties.

mismanaged residential relocation. The reasons for these results were searched in identification of RR processes in HMR.

Processes shaping residential relocation in HMR framework

It has been known since the post Second World War (WWII) slum clearance that residential relocation presents one of the most complex planning interventions. Cole and Flint (2007:2) argue that one of the main RR challenges in HMR, is achieving synergies between demolition, residential relocation and new building as interests and actions of different stakeholders is extremely difficult to manage (Cole & Flint, 2007:2). While this is statement can be supported in terms of RR delivery, two main assumptions underpin this statement. First, is that the processes shaping residential relocation are known. Second, that demolition, residential relocation and new building are all processes shaping the RR. The results of the interviews with the key players involved in delivering residential relocation across nine Pathfinders show that this is not the case.

There is striking confusion among the practitioners on what residential relocation entails. 'Compulsory purchase', 'neighbourhood management', ‘community consultation’, ‘property acquisition’ were all referred to as *'residential relocation process'*. The policy design focused around main HMR goals, reliance on decentralised policy development and delivery, combined with lack of guidance or standards for RR delivery, resulted in no consensus being made among partnerships as to what residential relocation entails, nor who is officially accountable for it. The findings show that different relocation processes emerged and evolved in course of HMR programme implementation, without pre planned strategies or networks to deliver them.

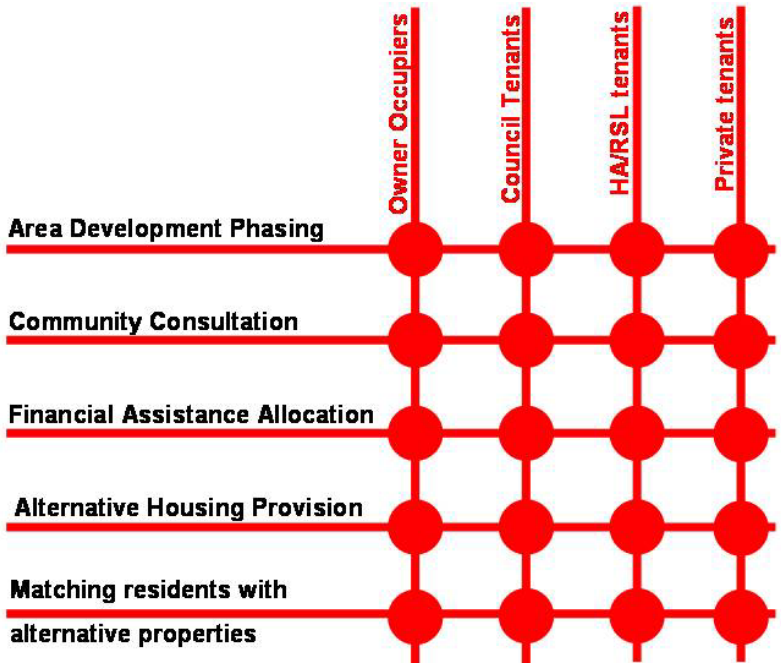
Some of the residential relocation processes developed as a result of specific HMR implementation problems. Procedures such as allocation of financial assistance packages emerged in response to affordability problems[4] in the course of housing market renewal. Namely, the HMR policy design ignored RR to the extent that financial assistance for the people to move from the demolished properties was not thought through. In 2007, when the HMR brought first results (Cole and Flint, 2007, Leather et al., 2007) and the housing market prices started to rise as planned, the residential relocation affected residents became priced out of the alternative properties in the area. In order to overcome this problem the Pathfinders have developed an innovative set of financial assistance packages few years after the commencement of the programme. This resulted in new set of actors joining RR delivery

[4] The affordability problems surfaced as a result of the housing market recovery between 2002 and 2007 (Cole & Flint, 2007).

efforts (e.g. new departments in within local authorities, private lenders such as Kick Start in Renew North Staffordshire, or Registered Social Landlords in Gateway Hull).

The analysis of respondent's narratives, using open and axial coding of the grounded theory led to identification of five distinct processes shaping residential relocation within Housing Market Renewal programme. These are: area development phasing, community consultation, financial assistance allocation, matching residents with alternative properties, and alternative housing provision. They are presented and described in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Processes involved in residential relocation

Name:	Description:
	**Area Development Phasing:** includes master planning and phasing development of each area within the project in terms of timelines for clearance, demolition, relocation and new building. **Community consultation:** entails engagement of the residents in various stages of the project development. **Financial Assistance Allocation:** is distribution of the financial assistance packages to the affected residents across tenures. **Alternative housing provision:** is a process of building and/or refurbishing properties that will serve as alternative to demolished ones. **Matching residents with alternative properties:** involves guiding demolition affected residents (owner occupiers, private tenants, RSL and council tenants) through process of search for the alternative property.
Based on axial coding of Pilot Studies' data	

This results show that 'demolition, residential relocation and new building' considered the main process that need to be coordinated for 'good' RR outcomes, do not present the full nor accurate list in HMR. Consequently, the research that focuses only on these is in danger of ignoring the all processes and actors influencing the RR outcomes. In addition, as the processes shaping residential relocation are not clearly identified and addressed on national, regional or local levels there is little thought to synchronise them in any way. Similarly, the necessity of collaboration or information exchange between the actors delivering RR is not something that is considered in practice. This research points out that policy mess and lack of the insight into RR practice are the main reasons of the unplanned RR outcomes.

Actors and networks delivering residential relocation in HMR

The previous section showed that there are no institutionally defined or acknowledged processes for RR delivery within the HMR. Consequently, it is hard to know who are the actors delivering and shaping the outcomes of RR. The inquiry into functioning of nine Pathfinders showed that various local authority departments and external contractors carry out various residential relocation processes (see Figure 2), while being variably affiliated with Pathfinder teams. There was a general confusion over *'who does what'* (Albrechts, 2009:62) presenting a major problem in identifying the actors responsible and accountable for the residential relocation delivery and outcomes.

For example, for some of the respondents high in Pathfinder hierarchy (e.g. Pathfinder Board, Pathfinder Directors) residential relocation appeared to be *'something that local authorities do'* (*Respondent TVL1)*. However, for the practitioners in local authorities *'residential relocation is something that [they] didn't do for at least twenty years'* (*Respondent TVL2*) as respondents from Tees Valley Pathfinder pointed out. An additional issue identified in the course of empirical research was fragmentation of the tasks. This can be illustrated by the words of an officer in the Newheartlands Pathfinder:

'There are separate officers responsible for phasing development. Other officers would be responsible for the provision of financial assistance packages and the relocation advisory teams [would be separate]. So to get a complete picture you may need to speak to several officers from each of three local authorities'

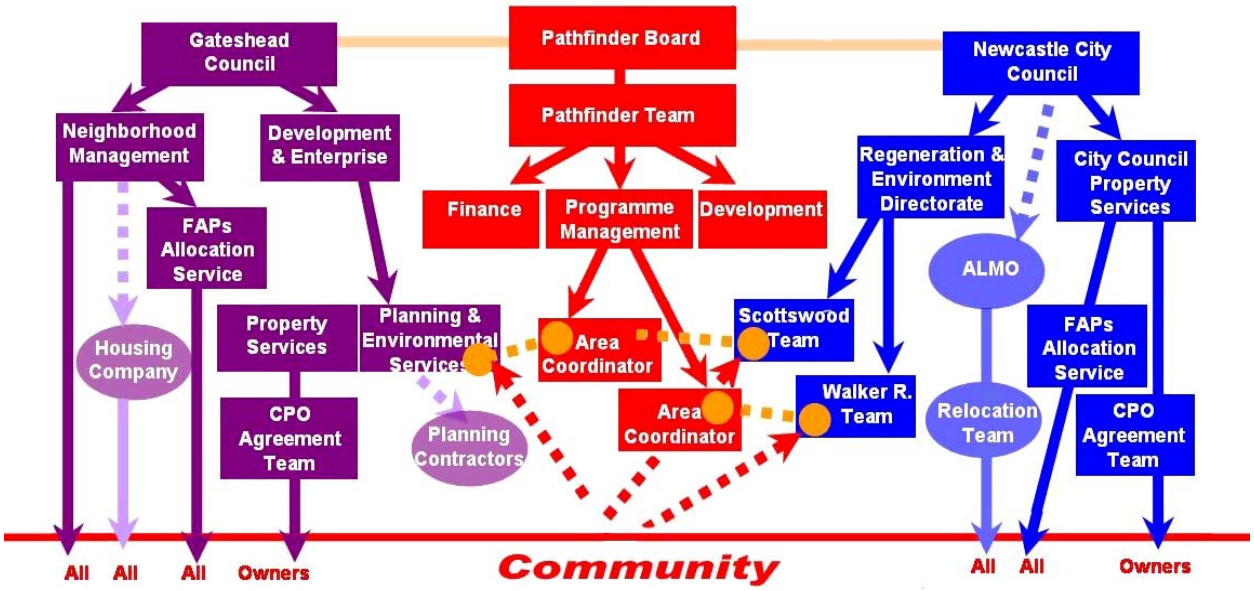
(Respondent NHL1)

Pathfinder governance structures were designed to follow function - to renew the housing markets in the North England and Midlands. The previous sections showed that residential relocation is not a HMR goal nor it is a part of its listed interventions. For this reason the actors and networks delivering residential relocation are not known. Certainly, the practioners having to execute specific tasks know who are the colleagues within the LA that they could turn to. However, they are not aware of the full network of actors that may influence the outcomes of their decisions.

Figure 3. presents the author's attempt to map the actors and the network delivering residential in case of the Newcastle Gateshead Pathfinder (BNG). The figure shows that residential relocation is delivered by a complex network of actors. The network stretches from the Pathfinder board, through local authorities, their departments, external contractors (e.g. Registered Social Landlords, Housing Associations, developers, private lending companies) to the relocated community. As the BNG

Pathfinder covers two local authorities (up to six local authorities in other partnerships), the relations between the partnership and the local authorities vary. The reason for this are the differences in governance structures of the two local authorities (Newcastle and Gateshead). Within this framework the relations within single local authority vary and are adjusted to every project they delivered. The BNG example, well illustrates the situation in remaining eight HMR pathfinders.

Figure 3. Bringing Newcastle Pathfinder Relocation RR delivery structure



Designed based on pilot study and secondary data analysis.
All – refers to all tenure groups within a community affected by relocation; **Owners** – refers only to owner occupiers

The interviews with the key players and practitioners involved in residential relocation showed that the RR delivery and management are chaotic and add-hoc in form. After being presented by Figure 3. the respondents in Bridging Newcastle Gateshead confessed that they did not know about the existence or link with certain actors in the network. Surprisingly, the network map triggered their thinking into the ways to connect or collaborate within the identified network. These findings indicate that there is lack of knowledge about the ways RR is delivered not only in policy and researchers circles but within the professional community as well. The HMR policy was designed on quite abstract level (economic concepts of the housing market renewal) and the policy designers hoped that the devolution of responsibility to the sub-regional partnerships would result in high levels of organisation and precise delivery (especially of the practical issues that according to them needed no planning as they were considered practical) on the pathfinder level. This clearly wasn't the case. Considering the limitation of the existing RR research identified at the beginning of this paper, the next section this paper presents a

way to approach researching the practical aspects of residential relocation by focus on the residential relocation processes and networks delivering them.

Conclusion: Towards examining Residential Relocation as Urban Governance

This research shows that the lack of knowledge about the management of the residential relocation process in the HMR, lack of the awareness about its components and actors involved is one of the main reasons the process and the outcomes of the residential relocation are chaotic in form and uncertain. There is a lack understanding as to what practices bring positive and what negative outcomes for the residents, and who is responsible for them. The residents do not fear enforced relocation or negative outcomes as it is presented in the available literature, they feel they can influence these, the uncertainty about the length of the RR process, location, type, size and quality of the alternative property present the main problem for them. The point that has been largely overlooked in the available contributions is that lack of RR management causes significant delays and financial loss in terms development itself, and jeopardises the policy success in terms.

In general terms, the multiplicity of actors involved, complexity of the RR delivery network, and lack of clarity about the responsibility for residential relocation could be used as an explanation for the diverse outcomes of the residential relocation within and across Pathfinders. However, by taking this path the future research would fall into a generalisation trap similar to the one of the existing HMR research, and fail to learn from specific, 'real' practices that developed in response to specific set of issues in 'life worlds'.

The available research tends to conceptualise residential relocation as a social and political issue. On one hand, this body of research follows a tradition of examining consequences of residential relocation. It assumes that the outcomes of the residential relocation are inevitably negative. On the other hand, the research questions the very right of the governmental bodies to intervene in the built environment. The point of inquiry are the central (and its departments) and or local government (local authorities). A limited number of available contributions relating to HMR relocation follow this pattern. This paper argues that focus had led the researchers to ignore subtle, important practical dimensions of relocation delivery. As a result, it is very difficult to plan and predict course and outcomes of the residential relocation.

In previous sections this paper showed that the residential relocation is delivered by complex network of actors managing five distinct processes that shape the RR outcomes. Therefore, the research system

that focuses on the way the central and/or local government (as single delivery agency) operates fails to account for the much complex (and interdependent) bargaining and negotiating and now takes place at local level (and is much more concerned with resident participation and community involvement).

Based on the presented results this paper argues for new approach in the residential relocation research. The new direction in the residential relocation research must examine the phenomena as an integral part of urban governance processes. More research in needed to develop understanding about the nature and structure of networks delivering residential relocation in practice (beyond the central and local government), the ways these come to being, evolve and behave in specific policy, political and housing market contexts. Understanding the governance processes related to residential relocation utilising the knowledge from chosen governance theories has a potential to help future policy development in the new era of 'governance' and devolved central power, and therefore be relevant to current issues of RR. Based on the results of this research I propose that next task in the evolution of the residential relocation research is to search, examine and debate which theories of governance are the most suitable for RR examination, and which among those could best help future policy development.

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