

Post Disaster Housing: Adding Insult to Injury



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Aims of today

- Highlight a UK case studies with international implications
- Inform future emergency planning: try to prevent knee jerk reactions to displaced people
- *The Injury: the disaster The Insult: the response?*

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After Toll Barr



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After Katrina



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Context

- UK floods, 2007 (widespread) and previous experience 2000-2007 e.g. Carlisle, York
- Pitt Review
- UK Resilience Agenda: flooding as a risk that is here to stay
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004: Planning for recovery in advance and post disaster housing as a crucial part of that

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The Numbers

- Widespread use of caravans after 2007 floods
- End of March 2008: 10,000 people in the UK still unable to return home. Hull is worst affected with 2,269.
- 18.4 million in recovery grants
- Association of British Insurers: 180,000 claims, 3 billion pounds

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Key Issues

- Expectations of both the displaced community and the responders
- Concepts of “Community” and “Resilience” (Coles and Buckle, 2004)
- Housing as a Right. **Housing as part of a Right Based Approach to Disaster Management.** (Coles and Buckle, 2004)
- Availability of Insurance

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Post Disaster Housing after the 2007 floods

- Different options : caravans at home, caravans on specific site, hotels, living upstairs, moving elsewhere, friends and relatives
- USA comparative policy:
 - As a policy, FEMA will provide financial assistance (e.g. rental assistance) as the preferred means for housing assistance. When rental resources are lacking, FEMA will look to alternative types of temporary housing units for use in disasters. Manufactured housing (e.g. mobile homes), the construction of which is regulated by HUD and which is designed for long-term habitation, will continue to be installed in support of and occupied by eligible disaster victims.
 - http://www.fema.gov/media/fact_sheets/qa_deploy_sale.shtm

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Comparisons with existing Studies

- *Number of studies on post disaster housing dating back a number of years*
- *UK : less focus on this issue with greater attention to developing nations?*
- Temporary housing programmes suffer from excessively high costs, late delivery, poor location and improper unit design
- Quick decisions made: also see in Toll Barr
- Cultural and Climatic Inappropriateness: Caravans not the place to be in a South Yorkshire winter!
- (Johnson,2007)

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Caravans as “Home”

- Emergency response focus on speedy “recovery”
- Practical, procedural, operational focus
- Discussions of the loss of home, place, space and personal property seen as less important
- Importance on the reestablishment of normal routines
- Impact on long term, real, recovery

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Practical Issues 1

- Practical issues when using caravans
- The use and siting of caravan parks
- The allocation of government funds and the collections of and other payments
- Increased living costs e.g. Going out to “escape” or to eat
- Duration of stay,
- The psychosocial impact on communities: health, trauma, staying in limbo for over a year

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Practical Issues 2

- Practical issues when getting people home
- Some parts of the UK: lack of competent trades people and fraudulent activities
- Delays : Builders, Insurers
- Drying Out
- Ethnography: pre-existing vulnerabilities within the community, extremely low levels of insurance, reliance on council support
- Management: One building contractor is managing the return to home designed to coincide with one year "anniversary"

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Carlisle Floods



Press Release: April 11

- **New FEMA Procurement Specifications Require Significantly Reduced Formaldehyde Levels in Mobile Homes And Park Models**
- Full production of UFAS, IAQ-compliant models underway, first units expected in time for 2008 hurricane season
- Release Date: April 11, 2008
Release Number: HQ-08-056
- WASHINGTON, D.C. – All future temporary housing units purchased by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) must meet strict new procurement specifications for indoor air quality, including a requirement that formaldehyde emission levels must be significantly reduced inside the units. Each unit must test below .016 parts per million (ppm). This requirement means that the units will be comparable to conventional U.S. homes, where the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say indoor air concentrations of formaldehyde typically range from .010 to .030 ppm.
- The primary methodology for lowering formaldehyde levels in temporary housing units involves removing products that release elevated levels of formaldehyde and other chemicals called Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). This means that products containing formaldehyde or VOCs, such as Medium Density Fiber products, all vinyl gypsum board, all urea formaldehyde emitting materials and high formaldehyde emitting insulation products must not be present in the units. Also, to ensure proper air circulation, FEMA is requiring that all newly purchased housing units comply with HUD's 35 percent minimum air exchange rate per hour for manufactured housing.
- <http://www.fema.gov/news/newrelease.fema?id=43180>

Recommendations

More detailed pre disaster housing recovery plan to be informed by:

- Better assessments including Social Impact Assessments (Cottrell & King, 2006)
- Need to 'understand' our communities better
- Clarification of the insurance situation
- Assessment of available resources including reconstruction resources (builders, plumbers, electricians etc)

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Bibliography

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- Green, R. Bates, L. Smyth, A. (2007). 'Impediments to Recovery in New Orleans' Upper and Lower Ninth Ward: One year after Hurricane Katrina'. *Disasters*. Vol 31, No 4, December, pp 311-335.
- Easthope, L. Observational Field Notes, Toll Barr, South Yorkshire 2007-8. Unpublished.
- Johnson (2007) 'Strategic Planning for Post Disaster Housing'. Volume 31, No 4, December, pp. 435-458
- Convery I & Bailey (2008). 'After the Flood: the health and social consequences of the 2005 Carlisle Flood event' *Journal Flood Risk Management*, April

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Further Information

- www.ukresilience.info (for information on UK government flood preparedness and details of the Pitt Review)
- www.fema.gov
- Study of the impact of the flooding in Hull, UK
- "Flood, vulnerability and urban resilience: a real-time study of local recovery following the floods of June 2007 in Hull" funded by Economic and Social Research Council, the Engineering and Physical Science Research Council, and Environment Agency (October 2007-September 2009). **Further project details:**
http://www.lec.lancs.ac.uk/cswm/Hull%20Floods%20Project/HFP_home.php

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- Use of Images:
- All Hurricane Katrina images available from www.bbc.co.uk
- All Toll Barr images taken by Lucy Easthope. Please e mail for further information.

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