MARGINA\L\Y GROUNDED

CAMPING GROUND RESIDENCE IN NEW ZEALAND

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This study describes the nature of the experiences of camping ground residents in relation to their health, and within the context of individual, local and national spheres. It situates camping ground residence as a particular form of housing, and contests public understandings of camping grounds as only summer holiday destinations.

Researchers from a range of disciplines continue to make advances in understanding the links between housing and health and extending our knowledge of the relationship. Housing as a health issue is multi-dimensional and complex; it affects individuals and how they interact with their communities and wider society. This thesis views housing in broad terms, taking into account the many influences that shape people’s experiences of their housing. While adequate housing has been identified as a key social determinant of health, and is a major policy goal in New Zealand, there has been little research focused on temporary accommodation. Camping grounds as a form of housing have not been previously discussed in the New Zealand literature.

This thesis presents a narrative analysis of in-depth interviews carried out with 22 camping ground residents and 20 community key informants, in order to present a comprehensive insight into the dynamics of life in camping grounds. This thesis examines camping ground residence through a framework of the socio-spatial nature of housing, and through concepts of place, community and housing pathways. The research highlights the broader socio-political context in which New Zealand camping grounds operate, including the legal and regulatory frameworks, public representations, and definitions of homelessness and healthy housing. The politicisation and problematisation of camping ground residence illustrates the tensions surrounding the provision of housing in camping grounds, which is related to the marginalisation and social exclusion of those who live in camping grounds. This research explores camping ground residence as both positive and detrimental to the health of residents, through the shaping of residents’ opportunities and access to housing resources and community. The social exclusion and vulnerability of some residents, exacerbated by situations of poor quality housing and housing insecurity, is presented alongside other aspects of camping ground residence, such as opportunities to develop social networks and place attachment, which may mediate some of the effects of poor housing and social exclusion.

The findings here offer an understanding of camping ground residence in New Zealand and conceptualise residents’ movements in, through and out of camping grounds. Narrative analysis enabled a comprehensive analysis of the experiences of those living in camping grounds, and facilitated reflection on the many layers of context and experience that shape residents’ housing and health. The thesis concludes by emphasising camping ground residence as contested and complex, and camping grounds as sites of the politics of place.
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INTRODUCTION

CAMPING GROUND RESIDENCE IN NEW ZEALAND

Camping grounds are hailed as a core part of the New Zealand lifestyle, conjuring up images of family holidays by the beach, tents, caravans and summer sun. New Zealanders’ tradition of holidaying in camping grounds is but one view of the scene. While for many camping grounds are sites of tourism and recreation, they remain home to others. Aside from providing accommodation away from home for New Zealanders and overseas tourists alike, there are many who live long-term in cabins, caravans, tents, buses and trucks in camping grounds throughout the country. Researchers from a range of disciplines have continued to make advances in understanding the links between housing and health and extending our knowledge of the relationships, however, few research efforts have been focused on temporary accommodation, particularly people’s experiences of living in camping grounds.

Housing as a health issue is multi-dimensional and complex – it permeates the lives of people and affects their relationship with their community and wider society. There is a significant gap in knowledge of temporary housing (both internationally and in New Zealand) and camping ground housing, including how many people actually live in these housing situations. This research addresses this gap by examining the housing experiences of camping ground residents and the effects of this on their health and well-being.

Access to quality, sustainable, and appropriate housing that is affordable is a major policy goal in New Zealand (HNZC, 2006). The social, political and economic environment has systematically led to poorer access to opportunities for housing for some groups in New Zealand,
which in turn threatens the health of individuals, households and communities. In some instances, temporary accommodation such as camping grounds may meet needs adequately; however, it has been suggested that, while not strictly roofless or houseless, long-term residence in camping grounds is internationally considered a form of homelessness (Meert & Bourgeois, 2005). Meert et al. (2005) explain: ‘[There is a] tendency to equate homelessness with rooflessness [that] results in false impression that rural homelessness is limited or non-existent’ (p. 109). Media accounts also identify this housing situation, relating growing numbers of ‘permanent’ residents in camping grounds to unaffordable housing markets, and claim detrimental health consequences. This media coverage has been primarily in relation to reasonably frequent closures and redevelopments of camping grounds. A common theme in media, public, and political narratives is that people living in caravans are undesirable and lower the standard of the local area: ‘Caravan park haven for misfits’ (Masters, 2005). Camping ground residence falls somewhere between being a ‘personal trouble’ and a ‘public issue’.

Camping grounds have been viewed as ‘temporary’ dwellings where ‘transients’ reside. This research examines camping ground residence through a discussion of the socio-spatial nature of housing, and through the concepts of place, community and housing pathways. The thesis draws on the narratives of camping ground residents, camping ground owners and managers, and community key informants to build a clearer understanding of camping ground residence in New Zealand, and analysis of narratives will provide a basis on which to make recommendations.

THE AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The overall research question of this study is:

What is the nature of camping ground residents’ experiences of living in camping grounds in relation to their health and in the context of individual, local and national spheres?
The specific research aims were to explore the characteristics of camping ground residents, their perceptions of health, and how these were shaped by camping ground residence. The research aimed to:

- Describe the housing pathways of camping ground residents;
- Describe ways camping ground residence structures access to opportunity, community, and local services;
- Describe sources that contribute to detrimental health experiences and sources that help residents move towards health and well-being in such housing arrangements.

Narrative analysis enabled a comprehensive and subjective analysis of experiences and furthered understandings of camping ground residence. The narratives are not representative of all camping ground residents in New Zealand, but reflect issues and experiences that were salient for these residents, owners, and service providers at the time that they were interviewed.

Through this research, participant camping ground residents, owners and service providers were provided with an opportunity to share their stories of camping ground residence. Emerging from the research were ideas about the heterogeneous nature of narratives about camping ground residence. Narratives presented here in some ways support existing literature about the relationship between place, housing and health, but add to this the complex and often-contradictory nature of camping ground residence. The impact of politicisation and problematisation of camping ground residents, and how place and space are used is also discussed.

Camping ground residence has both positive and detrimental implications for residents’ health, through shaping the barriers and opportunities to housing resources and community. This research highlights the diverse and complex housing situations and experiences of camping ground residents, often characterised by marginalisation and social exclusion. The analysis of participant narratives adds to understandings of housing and health, and has implications for future policy and research.

**Mapping the Thesis**

This thesis is divided into nine chapters. A consideration of existing literature and background concepts related to housing and health (Chapter 2) is followed by an overview of narrative analysis, the research approach used (Chapter 3). The thesis then draws on the stories of 22 camping ground residents and 20 community key informants, analysing their experiences of
camping ground residence (Chapters 4 to 8). Chapter 9 concludes the thesis, drawing together the key ideas associated with camping ground residence.

Chapter 2 Literature review presents the historical and socio-political context of the research, the existing knowledge and key framing concepts. The chapter begins by providing a review of the relationship between housing and health, and the importance of adequate housing for health. Current definitions of homelessness are outlined. The second section presents the literature on the key ideas of place, community and socio-spatial processes and the concept of housing pathways which frame the analysis. The chapter then brings together the literature on camping grounds in New Zealand and overseas, identifying current knowledge and gaps in research. This introductory chapter represents the initial conceptual stage of the research process, and concludes by linking the present research to the background information discussed.

In Chapter 3 Methodology, narrative analysis is introduced. The comprehensive and exploratory nature of the narrative analysis and the usefulness and relevance to this research is discussed. This chapter also details the specific research methods, design, and collection of narratives.

Chapter 4 Pathways provides a discussion of residents’ movement in, through, and out of camping grounds. These pathways are shown to be located within social, economic, cultural and environmental changes within wider society. The forced and active natures of pathways are discussed, and then related to residents’ current housing experiences and satisfaction. The pathways out of camping grounds are also seen to be shaped by camping ground residence, and the personal needs, preferences and capabilities of individual residents.

Chapter 5 Camping ground communities presents the workings of camping ground communities, and the role of social networks and social capital. This chapter shows how residents make sense of their housing in their narratives in reflecting on their experiences of the social aspects of camping grounds, and how the development of these communities may mediate some of the effects of poor housing and social exclusion.

Chapter 6 The problem & politics of camping grounds examines camping grounds as sites of politics of place, where identities and inequalities are constructed and reproduced. The narratives of residents are placed alongside public narratives, showing how camping ground space is negotiated, and the framing of camping ground residence as illegal and illegitimate. The legislation and regulation of camping grounds is covered in this chapter.

Chapter 7 Place & home uses narratives to show how camping grounds often provide a place of meaning and identity for residents. The social construction of camping ground places is analysed through residents’ individual and collective use, experience in and conception of camping grounds.
Chapter 8 *The health of camping ground residents* concludes the analysis of participants’ narratives, linking the main findings of the research and relating these specifically to residents’ health experiences. This chapter seeks to integrate and distil the role of camping ground residence in residents’ experiences and understandings of health and well-being. Pathways, community, place, and the socio-spatial nature of camping ground residence are used to discuss residents’ access to health resources and opportunities. An analysis of the ways in which camping grounds residents experience health benefits and face increased vulnerability and exclusion is discussed along with residents’ housing rights.

Chapter 9 *Conclusion* summarises the main findings of the study, and presents the overall development of understanding of camping ground residence in New Zealand. Framed by the research questions, this chapter gives an overview of the many layers of context and experience that shape resident’s pathways, their health, and the structures that influence their access to opportunities and resources. The chapter concludes with a discussion of policy implications, reflections on methodology, and recommendations for future research.
LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

‘Buildings stabilize social life. They give structure to social institutions, durability to social networks, persistence to behavior pattern ... And yet, buildings stabilize imperfectly ... Buildings don't just sit there imposing themselves. They are forever objects of (re)interpretation, narration and representation and meanings or stories are sometimes more pliable than the walls and floors they depict’ (Gieryn, 2002, p. 35).

As Gieryn suggests, housing is constructed and deconstructed continually, both materially and in meaning. An understanding of camping ground residence, therefore, requires an acknowledgement of the social, political and cultural contexts in which it is located. This chapter provides a background to the relationships between housing and health. This literature review is divided into three parts, beginning with an analysis of how housing literature demonstrates the importance of adequate housing for health. However, despite literature acknowledging this relationship, there exists little knowledge about the specific mediating mechanisms. Current definitions and literature on homelessness are outlined, and how housing affects health at individual levels and through place-effects. Housing is widely regarded as a social determinant of health through its physical attributes, how it relates to its occupants and the wider neighbourhood context in which it is located.

The second section presents some key concepts used throughout the research. As the literature suggests, health and housing are multidimensional. This encourages a contextual approach in housing research, one that takes into account the many influences which shape residents’ experiences of their housing. Place is described as giving attention to both location and identity and is central to understandings of how people interact, interpret and perceive their
housing. Ideas of place attachment and home are analysed. The role of social connections in health is explained and then related to housing. Space is defined and put forward as a useful concept in understanding the relationships between individuals, communities and housing. Socio-spatial processes, such as social exclusion, are outlined as a particularly important aspect through which to see temporary accommodation. Then, a pathways approach is shown to capture the dynamic nature of housing and people’s interaction with their housing over time.

The third and final section brings together literature on camping grounds in New Zealand and overseas, exploring current research and gaps in knowledge. The regulations and legislation pertaining to camping grounds in New Zealand and the limitations of New Zealand Census data in providing a clear picture of this housing are presented. The considerable amount of recent Australian research on caravan parks gives an understanding of both positive and negative impacts on residents. In other countries, temporary housing is referred to, but little academic research has been carried out. Regardless of the wide acknowledgement of the relationship between inadequate housing and poor health, very little attention been given to camping ground residence, which underscores the importance of further research in the New Zealand context.

**HOUSING**

It is generally agreed that housing transcends the basic functionality of providing shelter. The provision of housing does help most people meet the need for shelter, so it is an important end in itself; however, the benefits of housing extend beyond ‘a roof’. The quality and form of housing is well researched; the literature on housing frequently used terms such as ‘standards’ and ‘adequate’ to describe the nature of housing. Adequate housing has been politicised as a human right, and New Zealand is party to that Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which Article 25(1) states: ‘Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health of himself [sic] and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services’. New Zealand is also a state signatory to the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of which Article 11(1) identifies the right of everyone to, ‘An adequate standard of living for himself [sic] and his family including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to continuous improvement of living conditions’. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UNCESCR) (1991) defined these adequate housing rights as access at

1 However, the right to adequate housing is not explicitly manifest in any New Zealand legislation (Human Rights Commission, 2004), but is referred to in various government policies, such as the Residential Tenancies Act (1986).
all times to security of tenure (not evicted without reason or harassed or threatened) and access to basic services (such as water, power and drainage). In addition, adequate housing is: affordable; habitable with adequate space, not cold or damp or polluted; accessible; located in an area where people can find work, have access to healthcare, schools, childcare, and social facilities; and culturally appropriate.

The New Zealand Housing Strategy (2006) presents the vision that ‘all New Zealanders have access to affordable, sustainable, decent quality housing appropriate to their needs’ (p. 7). This highlights an expectation that adequate housing is important for residents, and reveals the common stance of the centrality of housing in people’s lives. Analogously, as Dorvil, Morin, Beaulieu and Robert (2005) argue, inadequate housing can remove access to other social rights such as education, employment, health and basic services.

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is also recognised as being shaped by a range of socio-political structures and processes and is dependent on what is culturally and politically appropriate and acceptable housing (Kellett & Moore, 2003). ‘Homelessness is not only a housing problem, but a wider personal, social, cultural, economic and political issue (Kellett et al., 2003, p. 125). A review of the homelessness literature shows an abundance of definitions of homelessness, varying over time and place. Homelessness is most often defined as a continuum from extreme rooflessness to unacceptable forms of accommodation (see for example, Watson & Austerberry, 1986; Chamberlain & McKenzie, 1992; Mc Naughton, 2008). This broad conceptualisation is fluid and people can move between categories depending on their housing situations (McNaughton, 2008).

The New Zealand Definition of Homelessness

In 2009, Statistics New Zealand published the ‘New Zealand Definition of Homelessness’ (NZDH) (Statistics New Zealand, 2009a). This adapted the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) to reflect New Zealand’s cultural, social and environmental contexts. This definition aims to enable better enumeration of homelessness in New Zealand by focusing on the social, physical and legal domains of housing.

The social domain is being able to pursue normal social relations, have a personal (household) living space, maintain privacy, and have safe accommodation.

The legal domain covers having exclusive possession, security of occupation or tenure.
The physical domain is the structural aspect of housing and means having habitable housing. (Statistics New Zealand, 2009a).

These three domains are seen to ‘constitute a home, the absence of which can be taken to delineate homelessness’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2009a, p. 4). The absence of safe, secure and habitable housing is represented in four conceptual categories of homelessness:

- without shelter
- temporary accommodation
- sharing accommodation
- uninhabitable housing

Living situations where there are ‘options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation’ are excluded.

NZDH’s definition of temporary accommodation is of particular relevance to this research:

‘The intersection of housing with the social, legal and physical domains means for those living situations contained within the ‘temporary accommodation’ category, they may not have personal living space, may not be able to maintain privacy and/or may not have safe accommodation in the social domain. They are without exclusive possession of accommodation and security of occupation in the legal domain’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2009a, p. 4-5).

Camping grounds are considered temporary housing as they are non-private and not intended to be used as long-term, permanent accommodation. Those in these living situations are included as homeless, where there are no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation. This definition aims to encapsulate homelessness within the New Zealand context, and pays particular attention to issues of quality and crowding (Statistics New Zealand, 2009a). It is thought that New Zealand has particularly concealed forms of homelessness, such as shared accommodation and the use of temporary accommodation (Statistics New Zealand, 2009).

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2 The NZDH further excludes tourists and travelers, even without usual residence, for example, retired people touring in mobile homes following sale of their house, or people living in converted house trucks.

3 A non-private dwelling ‘provides short or long-term communal or transitory type accommodation’ and are ‘generally available to the public’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2009).
HOUSING & HEALTH

‘It is almost a truism to say that housing plays an important role in human well-being. In the absence of adequate and affordable housing, health is endangered; there is no security from physical adversity or human abuse; and everyday life processes such as education, socialization, and interaction are jeopardized’ (Kearns et al., 1991, p. 369).

Adequate housing is widely accepted as a prerequisite for health, and the relationship between housing and health has been reviewed comprehensively (for example, WHO, 2004; Howden-Chapman & Carroll, 2004). Research gives evidence for the role of the built environment (for example, physical risks) and less tangible effects on occupants’ health (such as control, security, access to services) (Mackenbach & Howden-Chapman, 2002). There has been increasing interest in the wider contextual and place-related effects on health. While the health effects of different levels of shelter and housing have been researched, this section primarily presents literature relating to poor quality and temporary housing and the effects of homelessness on health.

Poor quality housing contributes to physical and mental health problems, and this association is seen as independent from other social and economic deprivation (Howden-Chapman & Carroll, 2004). Furthermore, as Smith and Robinson (2005a) state: ‘Households that have stable, secure, affordable housing do better across a range of socio-economic factors’ (p. 2). The social, physical and economic characteristics of neighbourhoods are also linked to residents’ physical and mental well-being with both short- and long-term consequences.

Bratt (2002) proposes three main ways housing can impact on well-being: physical attributes; how the housing relates to occupants; and the neighbourhood conditions. Dunn and Hayes (2000) and Thorns (2004) similarly note the materiality of housing, meaningfulness of housing, and spatiality of housing area effects to be significant in residents’ health and well-being.

Physical attributes of housing for health

There are a number of New Zealand studies that demonstrate a link between the quality of housing and health outcomes. Much of this research focuses on crowding, and some on the physical quality of the physical structure, such as impacts of retrofitting with insulation and types of indoor heating (Howden-Chapman et al. 2007; Howden-Chapman et al., 2008). These studies generally do not include temporary structures per se, nor dwellings that are not intended for permanent habitation, such as caravans.

Temporary dwellings do not meet standards outlined by building regulations for permanent dwellings. The Centre for Housing Research, Aotearoa New Zealand (CHRANZ) (2008) defines substandard housing as unsafe, and links this to a lack of basic amenities and facilities. New
Zealand and international research suggests that temporary housing is associated with increased health and safety risks (NHC, 1998; PHAC, 2002; CHRANZ, 2008; Gray, 2004). It is understood that poor structure and maintenance of housing increases susceptibility to disease, injury and death (Howden-Chapman & Wilson, 2000) and research mostly focuses on pathological causes and effects. For example, there is substantial literature linking poor health to indoor pollutants, mould and dampness; crowding; physical hazards, such as fire; pest infestation; and inadequate sanitation (Howden-Chapman & Carroll, 2002). Statistical associations are made between housing conditions and physical health problems such as respiratory problems, infectious diseases, injuries and falls, chronic illness (Blackman, Harvey, Lawerance & Simon, 2001; Keall, Baker, Howden-Chapman, Cunningham & Ormandy, 2008). Mental health problems and heightened psychological distress have also been linked to poor standards of housing, including depression and anxiety (for example, Phillips, Siu, Yeh & Cheng, 2005). Bratt (2002) suggests that physically inadequate housing and a lack of availability of alternatives is problematic and conversely that better quality housing lowers levels of psychological distress. She links inadequate housing to a household’s ability to access opportunity so that security is compromised. Bratt (2002) notes that people’s housing is associated with feelings of self-worth and beneficial aspects of ‘the human needs to feel potent and to fully realise one’s capabilities’ (p. 20). People’s capability to function and to deal with everyday personal problems is lessened through poor dwelling conditions (Bratt, Stone & Hartman, 2006). This research is consistent with the view that good quality housing not only provides shelter but also contributes more generally to the well-being of households and individuals.

Temporary housing has been linked to the lack of availability of affordable, adequate housing. An inadequate supply of housing accessible to low income households has been highlighted (Housing New Zealand Corporation, 2006), and for certain groups, such as Māori, men (Smith & Robinson, 2005b), and mental health consumers (Peace, 2002). These authors link pathways into homelessness and resulting poor health outcomes to lack of alternative suitable housing.

**How housing relates to occupants**

Bratt (2002) suggests adequate housing provides ontological security, opportunities for people to experience a positive sense of self and empowerment. On the other hand, a lack of stable and secure accommodation can undermine people’s ontological security, and their ability to maintain health and well-being (Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Bratt, 2002). Substandard housing conditions may lead to social isolation and dislocation from informal support mechanisms (through aspects such as crowding, reluctance to invite guests into housing, and lack of communication resources such as telephones) (Letiecq, Anderson & Koblinsky, 1998). Somerville (1998) links inadequate
housing to social exclusion where ‘housing processes … deny certain groups control over their
daily lives, or … impair enjoyment of wider citizenship rights’ (p. 772).

Living in poor quality housing can expose certain groups to further marginalisation,
discrimination and poorer health outcomes. Kearns et al. (1993) found substandard housing as an
additional stressor for those on low incomes, and that quality of housing was associated with
mental health of those with psychiatric conditions. Peace (2002) also links inadequate
accommodation with exacerbation of mental health problems. She identifies factors such as lack
of privacy, safety and security concerns, exposure to noise and crowding to further depression
and anxiety, and increases probability of rehospitalisation. Furthermore, she links such living
conditions to an inability to access or sustain safe, stable, and secure housing and may result in
higher residential mobility.

Affordability (cost relative to income) of housing is linked to health. An insufficient supply
of affordable housing has an impact on the quality of housing and homelessness and can result in
limiting expenditure on other expenses (such as food) and contribute to unstable housing through
forced mobility and situations of forced mobility (Anderson et al., 2003). Unaffordability also
limits ability to access better housing. Grimes, Kerr and Aitken (2004) and Smith et al. (2005b)
discuss tenure transition and suggest that low-income households may become trapped in
deprived neighbourhoods.

Housing tenure has been also been associated with a range of health measures, such as
renting with mortality and with psychological problems (Macintyre et al., 2003). Housing tenure is
often used as a proxy for social and material deprivation (Macintyre et al., 2003). Attention has
also been given to the health effects of homeownership. Homeownership is widely regarded as
having positive effects on health both at an individual level (stability, educational achievement,
well-being), and at a community level (increased social capital and neighbourhood stability)
(HNZC, 2005; Smith et al., 2005a). However, there is very little knowledge of how temporary
accommodation structures health outcomes, especially where there is little or no security of tenure
and housing is illegal. For example, those providing and living in accommodation in camping
grounds are not covered by legislation relating to tenancy rights and obligations.

Neighbourhood conditions

Neighbourhood conditions – ‘area’ or ‘place’ effects – are related to housing, and a large body of
evidence links risks to health to living in a disadvantaged area (for example, Macintyre, Ellaway &
Cummins, 2002). Stead, MacAskill, MacKintosh, Reece & Eadie (2001) suggest five different
explanations for the associations between poor living conditions at an area level to poor health
outcomes: lack of facilities or services in disadvantaged locations; lowered employment prospects;
exposure to environmental stressors; fewer opportunities for social interaction and participation, and; exclusion, stigmatisation and segregation.

Firstly, Stead et al. (2001) state disadvantaged communities often lack facilities and services that can promote health, through inadequate housing, and insufficient planning or investment. Other studies show place plays a mediating role in people’s access to health services, recreational facilities, transport, and justice and legal services (McIntyre, 1993; Anderson et al., 2003; Malmstrom, Johansson & Sandquist, 2001; Law et al., 2005; Raphael et al., 2001). People experiencing homelessness also often have limited access to primary health care (Shank, 1992; McNaughton, 2008). It is argued that geographic proximity to primary health care services does not always equate to accessibility, but that there are system-related barriers for people in deprived communities to accessing health services (Wellstood, Wilson & Eyles, 2006). Jackson, Kelsall, Parr and Papa (1998) and Barnett (2001) similarly discuss barriers to accessing primary health care as central to the association between urban deprivation and avoidable hospital admissions in New Zealand.

Secondly, the availability of employment opportunities is affected by living in a deprived community (Stead et al., 2001; Anderson et al., 2003). In turn, this can result in increased physical and mental health risks. Peace (2002) links employment to improved income, access to better housing, and self-esteem.

Thirdly, research has shown place influences health through heightened exposure to environmental stressors, such as pollution, crime, violence, noise and crowding (Kearns & Parkes, 2003; Anderson et al., 2003; McIntyre, 1993; Stead et al., 2001). These authors suggest people living in deprived areas experience increased psychological distress and unhappiness due to the poor quality of the wider physical environment in which they live.

Fourthly, Stead et al. (2001) suggest deprived areas offer fewer opportunities for social interaction. Anderson et al. (2003) state many disadvantaged communities have less social cohesion. Social connectedness and participation in social networks has health benefits, for example, through less likelihood of social isolation (Putman, 1995; Stead et al., 2001).

Lastly, Stead et al. (2001) link residence in disadvantaged areas with feelings of social exclusion, stigmatisation and segregation. McIntyre (1993) similarly describes how the social position combined with socio-cultural characteristics of neighbourhoods can be harmful to residents’ mental health, and negatively affect their sense of place and identity.

Overall, research suggests that the places where people live can have an important effect on their health. These contextual place-effects – the social and physical conditions of an area – are believed to have an impact on health independent of other variables such as socio-economic status, income and education (McIntyre, 1993; Stead et al., 2001; Sacker, Wiggins & Bartley, 2006;
Grimes et al., 2004). As Sacker et al. (2006) state: ‘Where and when you live also predicts whether you will have poor self-related health. Living in a more privileged area in a time of prosperity is beneficial for health even if one’s own circumstances are not so positive. Conversely, living in a disadvantaged area is detrimental to one’s health even if one’s personal circumstances are adequate’ (p. 289). Inadequate housing can result in poorer health outcomes for those with chronic or mental health conditions\(^4\) (Peace, 2002). In addition, there is evidence of reverse causation\(^5\); that is, people’s health can affect their ability to access and sustain secure and stable accommodation (Victor, 1996; Greifinger, 2007; Peace, 2002; Smith et al., 2005a). Greifinger (2007) describes how the poorest people who face the most marginalisation and discrimination are more likely to live in substandard housing. People experiencing homelessness experience more physical and mental health problems in comparison to those adequately housed (Victor, 1996). These health problems can be seen to predispose individuals to further homelessness, to be exacerbated by homelessness, and as a result of homelessness. The relationship between homelessness and poor health is multidirectional, both cause and consequence.

This section has shown that living in inadequate housing is directly associated with health risks from the actual dwelling and indirectly from the surrounding area. Literature reviewed provides clear evidence on relationships between housing and health, but specific mediating mechanisms remain unclear. Housing attributes play a significant role in determining people’s health, their day-to-day functioning, and their ability to sustain health. In addition, housing shapes the health of communities. It has been acknowledged how inadequate (unsafe, unstable, insecure) housing can negatively effect the mental and physical health of individuals. It is also widely documented that household-level health outcomes collectively contribute to health outcomes at community and national levels (CHRANZ, 2004). The health consequences of inadequate housing can thus undermine healthy communities and generate inequalities. Housing and homelessness have significant implications for public health.

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**A CONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

Drawing on the above literature, housing can be seen to incorporate the dwelling, local environment, and socio-political context. Recognising that housing is not merely a physical

\(^4\) Social causation

\(^5\) Social selection
structure, but a social space and place in which people live, calls for a perspective which focuses on how people experience (physically and socially) their housing and health. As Baum (2002) states: ‘Researchers are increasingly noting that in addition to the socio-economic compositional explanations for the relationship between place and health, other factors such as perception of neighbourhood, and the nature of social relationships that occur within different places and localities, affect health’ (p. 351). Looking at individuals within place, space, community, and over time\(^6\) can help to unravel the various and overlapping effects of housing on health. Housing cannot be viewed in isolation from other aspects of people’s lives (Grimes et al., 2004).

**PLACE**

‘Place’ is a complex concept relating to the physical environments and how it is interpreted and used. Massey (1995) describes place as ‘the location of particular sets of intersecting social relations [and] intersecting activity spaces’ (p. 61). She argued that places are socially constructed and that people actively engage in place making. Tilley (1994, p. 15) defines places as ‘centres of human significance and emotional attachment’. Gieryn (2000, p. 465) similarly notes that places are ‘interpreted, perceived, felt, understood and imagined’. ‘Ideas of place are intertwined with ideas of community, collective memory, group (and individual) identity, political organisation and capital flows’ (Easthope, 2004). Furthermore, Massey (1995) and Gough and Franch (2005) emphasise the constant shifting and fluid nature of place. Massey (1995) states places are ‘not bounded, coherent and stable, but nodal points within a complex web of social interaction’, and Gough et al. (2005) state: ‘Places are both concrete and symbolic, and thus by their very nature are contested, fluid and uncertain’ (p. 150). It is argued that relationships between people and place influence both individual and collective identity (Casey, Thiede & Klinger, 2001; Easthope, 2004; Massey, 1995; Tuan, 1980). Place has particular relevance for housing, it enables housing to be seen through physical and social attributes of location and meaning (Hartig & Lawrence, 2003). Viewing camping ground residence as ‘place’ will enable an integrated approach beyond the individual, and give insights about how living in a camping ground residence shapes residents’ health and identities. Literature pertaining to place attachment and home is now discussed.

\(^6\) Through attention to housing pathways.
Place attachment

Places are meaningful (Gough et al., 2005) and the meaning of place is seen as the outcome of social relations (Mazanti & Ploger, 2003). Drawing on Massey (1995), Mazanti et al. (2003) suggest that to understand meanings of place, attention must be given to people’s use of place, and how they conceive and experience the places where they live. People give places meaning through reflection, and interpretation, producing and reproducing meaning and significance attached to place. Mesch and Manor (1998) define place attachment as ‘a positive emotional bond that develops between individuals or groups and their environment’ (p. 504). ‘Sense of place’ is similarly defined as an ‘appreciation of place’ (Tuan, 2001). Mazanti et al. (2003) state that sense of place is related to individual and collective experiences and memories. Bonds and positive evaluations of place are increasingly seen as resulting in valuable health outcomes for residents (Hargreaves, 2004). Place attachment can generate place identification and fosters social and political involvement, and higher levels of place attachments can result in the development of social norms and effective informal social control (Mesch et al., 1998). Sense of place also generates benefits such as residents’ feelings of belonging and being part of a community or neighbourhood (Hargreaves, 2004). The development of connections towards place is associated with meanings and experiences of place (Mesch et al., 1998). Mazanti et al. (2003) describe this approach to the relationships between place and health:

‘Individually, people make sense of their place of residence by participating in its discourses and reflecting on the public opinion of the place. Experiences are stored as memories in the minds of residents. This storage process occurs in the background of the negative and positive experiences connected to the use of the neighbourhood (for example, urban qualities, social relations). Thus, experiences give researchers access to the underlying understanding of how and why a given place/neighbourhood is used and conceived of in a particular way’ (p. 312).

Mesch et al. (1998) describe people’s evaluations of the physical and social aspects of place. Where a place meets an individual’s needs, and its qualities fit expectations, positive bonds and sentiments, such as attachment to place and a sense of place, develop.

However, Easthope (2004) describes how constructions and meanings of place are commonly disputed. Gough et al. (2005) describe places as sites of conflict, which are associated with power relations. Individuals and groups continually engage in laying claim to places, by including some people and excluding others (Massey, 1998). With respect to the existence of multiple meanings, boundaries and exclusion are essential characteristics of place formation (Gough et al., 2005). Massey (1995) suggests that through globalisation and in an unstable and uncertain world, ideas about place as stable and secure are disrupted. Indeed, meanings of place are always temporary, uncertain and in development (Massey, 1995; Perkins & Thorns, 1999). In this way, place can also be used as a framework to examine conflicts of place. For example, outside constructions of deprived neighbourhoods often afford a negative place identity and
stigma, through a focus on problems such as unemployment, crime, poor housing, and an absence of social networks and social cohesion (Mazanti et al., 2003). Research by Mazanti et al. (2003) and Airey (2003) on disadvantaged communities show residents actively involved in challenging discursive constructions and reconstructing meaning and developing place attachment and identity through their own ‘inside’ experience of the place in which they live.

**Home**

The concept of home has been defined in a multitude of ways by sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, and geographers. Various interpretations of the meaning of home frame home as a contested concept and there remain multiple and contingent meanings of home and homemaking. Defining home is contentious, and defining aspects vary: home as a site of constancy, control, security and safety; home as places that hold social, psychological and emotive meaning; places of ontological security and identity formation; and home as a secure base for daily function (Easthope, 2004). Three aspects of ‘home’ are common to all interpretations and approaches to home.

Firstly, home is considered a particularly significant type of place; secondly, home is more than a physical location or dwelling, but situates individuals in space, time and society; and thirdly, home can mean different things to different people at different times (Easthope, 2004; Perkins et al., 1999; Kellett et al., 2003; Clapham, 2002; Somerville, 1998). As Kellett et al. (2003, p. 123) argue: “Being at home is more than having adequate shelter, and is as much about being placed in a particular social world’. King (1996, p. 35) holds a similar view of housing, as ‘a means of fulfilment that allows other human activities to take place’.

**SOCIAL CONNECTIONS, HOUSING & HEALTH**

Researchers have placed considerable attention on the effects of the social environment as a determinant of health, for example, the effects of social deprivation on mortality and morbidity. In contrast to the majority of epidemiological studies of individual risk factors, there is increasing interest in the characteristics of communities and what these mean for the health of individuals, and for public health. This section will firstly outline the ideas of social networks and support, which have been conceptualised as important in shaping the health of individuals. Secondly, three terms that conceptualise societal structure will be outlined: social capital, social cohesion, and sense of community. The role of housing in social connectedness will then be covered.
**Individual level mechanisms:**  
**Social networks and social support**

At the micro-level, participation in social networks is believed to affect an individual’s health (Letiecq et al., 1998; Subramanian, Lochner & Kawachi, 2003). Hall and Nelson (1996) define social networks as ‘the structural aspects of a person’s support system, such as the number and type of network members’, and social support as ‘the functional aspects of a network, including the various type of support that are received and given’ (p. 1743). An individual’s connection with others in social networks can provide social contact, resources and opportunities. Letiecq et al. (1998) state that even perceived (as opposed to enacted) social support – where people think they are surrounded by potential sources of support – is beneficial to one’s mental health. Conversely, a perceived disconnection from social networks, or where social needs are not met, can result in problems such as depression, substance abuse and poverty (Hyde, 1999; Letiecq et al., 1998). ‘In general, social support is believed to enhance an individual’s subjective well-being, buffer the negative effects of stress, facilitate positive coping, and strengthen family well-being’ (Letiecq et al., 1998, p. 415).

In New Zealand, social connectedness has been defined as ‘the state where people feel part of society, family and personal relationships are strong, differences among people are respected, and people feel safe and supported by others’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2002, p. 81). A person’s level of social connectedness both directly and indirectly has an impact on their health, such as the positive effects of physical activity, mental health, recovery from illness and cardiovascular health, and reduced crime and economic benefits (PHAC, 2008; Kawachi & Berkman, 2000). However, further work is required to establish specific pathways between housing and health (Statistics New Zealand, 2002).

**Social connections at the community level**

Attention must be paid to social aspects at the community level as well: ‘People do not live in isolation; they live in groups (neighbourhoods) that may influence their lifestyle, health and health-seeking behaviour’ (Ali, et al., 2005, p. 2). Social capital, social cohesion, and sense of community are aggregate variables, considering social aspects beyond the characteristics of individuals. These collective dimensions of communities are features of the social structure and overlap with each other (Lindstrom, Lindstrom, Moghaddasi & Merlo, 2006; Lochner, Kawachi & Kennedy, 1999).
Social capital

Social capital is a complex contextual construct resulting from people’s collective experiences (Subramanian et al., 2003; Lochner et al., 1999). Putman (1995, p. 664) defines social capital as ‘features of social life – networks, norms (including reciprocity) and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives’. The quantity and quality of social relationships is commonly used in public health literature to link the social environment to the health of populations. High levels of social capital are strongly associated with better health, and a community with high levels of social capital is more likely to have effective informal social control, and positive collective action (Lochner et al., 1999; Cattell, 2004).

Sense of community

A ‘sense of community’ overlaps with indicators of social capital, but focuses on the experience of community, rather than structure, function and setting (Lochner et al., 1999). McMillan and Chavis’ (1986) definition remains the most widely accepted. They define sense of community as ‘a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members’ needs will be met through their commitment to be together’ (p. 9). When people are members of a community they can feel emotionally secure, they feel personally integrated into the community, and they feel a sense of belonging and identification with their community (Lochner et al., 1999; McMillan et al., 1986). A positive sense of community has been associated with perceived safety, control and purpose, greater community participation, and strong interpersonal relationships (McMillan et al., 1986).

Social cohesion

Several definitions of social cohesion exist, and this concept is also linked strongly to social capital. Beauvais & Jenson (2002) state that a socially cohesive community has positive attributes of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition, and legitimacy, in contrast to variables such as isolation, exclusion, non-involvement, rejection and illegitimacy (or absence of social cohesion). Hyde (1999) describes communities with high levels of social cohesion as ‘more prosperous’ and with fewer social needs than those with less cohesion.

Role of housing in social connectedness

The health implications of housing cannot be viewed in isolation from the social implications of housing. Social capital, social cohesion and sense of community all interrelate as useful mechanisms for considering the interactions between housing and social health outcomes. As has been suggested, communities with higher levels of social capital, social cohesion, and a positive
sense of community experience better health for individual members, and the community as a whole. There is also evidence that adequate housing functions as a base for this social connectedness. Permanent, secure housing, and neighbourhood stability, are thought to enable high levels of social connectedness and resources (Hyde, 1999; Grimes et al., 2004). On the other hand, poor housing has been associated with low levels of social capital and cohesion, and a negative sense of community. Grimes et al. (2004) link poor quality housing, and a lack of investment at the community level, to the poor social health of individuals and communities. Poor physical design and structure of housing plays a role in stigmatisation, high residential turnover, and social exclusion, which in turn can prevent full participation in society (Grimes et al., 2004; CHRANZ, 2004; Viggers & Howden-Chapman, 2007). Furthermore, research suggests that those experiencing homelessness also experience a lack of social networks. Homelessness can work to limit social support through less contact with others, and limited access to help (Letiecq et al., 1999). Housing can either enhance or limit people’s ability to be socially connected. The nature of housing (or lack of) can mean, especially for people experiencing homelessness, that they are more vulnerable to continuing homelessness.

THE SOCIO-SPATIAL NATURE OF HOUSING

Housing theorist Jim Kemeny (1992) argues that ‘space is the salient characteristic of the physical dimension of dwellings in relation to social factors’ (p. 156). Massey (1993) also notes space is constructed of social relations, and ‘is, by its very nature a complex web of relations of domination and subordination, of solidarity and cooperation’ (p. 156). Lefebvre (2000) conceptualises space as produced and reproduced and therefore representing the site and outcome of social, political and economic struggle. Following from this, Kemeny (1992) uses ‘residence’ to frame the socio-spatial nature of the internal dwelling and the external locality factors of housing. ‘Residence in the sense of residing in a dwelling in a particular location therefore focuses on the socio-spatial significance of housing’ (p. 156). Residence gives an understanding of the household in combination with urban form and social structure. The relationship between a household and their dwelling is at the centre and includes aspects such as life stage, socio-economic status, type, size, condition and amenities. Beyond this is the relationship of ‘household-in-dwelling’ to society, and this covers issues such as access to work, services and other facilities. Kemeny (1992) maintains that the household-dwelling relationship is interrelated with wider social factors, and these determine patterns of use and social integration of the household. Kemeny (1992) states:
‘At a more structural level is the relationship of the household-in-dwelling to the larger institutions and organisations of society that impinge directly and indirectly in issues of residence … Housing is not just embedded in locality as a socio-spatial structure. It is also embedded in the institutional structure of a society: the mesh of organisations and other institutional arrangements that have been evolved over extended periods of time to handle the financing, building, allocation, administration and maintenance of dwellings in the profuse variety of forms of provision that have been developed in any given society … Residence is embedded in social structure in … complex and strategic ways, profoundly influencing the social organisation of localities, and strongly affecting planning by both state agencies and other interests’ (p. 159).

Kemeny (1992) contends that the state maintains a considerable level of power in (re)defining social relations of residence in a wide variety of forms and contexts, such as social welfare and health service provision, and local and central government planning and policy. Conceptualising camping ground housing in this research in terms of residence will enable an understanding of the socio-spatial nature of the housing, its importance for the organisation of social structure, and the ramifications for residents socially, economically and politically.

**Social exclusion in housing**

Mandanipour, Cars & Allen (2003) and Peace (2001) emphasise social exclusion as a socio-spatial phenomenon. Mandanipour et al. (2003) suggest space forms a site for where different forms of access are made possible, limited or denied. Social exclusion enables attention to be given to ‘relational processes (space) that contribute to inequality such as impoverished networks that lead to material and cultural poverty’ (Arthurson & Jacobs, 2003, p. 2). Somerville (1998) holds similar views and notes variation in the way different groups experience social exclusion, however, ‘what all these groups have in common, and what lies at the heart of all processes of social exclusion, is a sense of social isolation and segregation from the formal structures and institutions of the economy, society and the state’ (p. 762). Mandanipour et al. (2003) operationalise social exclusion as access to decision-making, resources and common narratives that enable social integration. In this way, social exclusion is exclusion from spaces of inclusion (Peace, 2001), and ‘denotes a set of factors and processes that accentuate material and social deprivation’ (Arthurson & Jacobs, 2003, p. 2).

Social exclusion is seen as manifested in economic, legal/political, social, and cultural space. Economically, social exclusion relates to participation in labour markets, and is based on the premise that employment enables access to resources, and that unemployment leads to absence of opportunities in production and consumption’ (Mandanipour et al., 2003). Secondly, politically

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7 Levitas (1996) criticises this meaning of social exclusion as it ignores the importance of unpaid work. He does, however, acknowledge that access to the labour market in capitalist societies can be essential for wider social integration and inclusion.
and legally people may be excluded through lack of power and access to participate in decision-making. Arthurson and Jacobs (2003) include structures and processes that can prevent people participating effectively in their community. Thirdly, Mandanipour et al. (2003) define social exclusion in cultural space as marginalisation from a shared set of symbols and meanings. This type of social exclusion results from denial of access to common cultural practices and includes community effects and network poverty (Arthurson & Jacobs, 2003). Last, exclusion in social space relates to a lack of citizenship rights (Somerville, 1998; Mandanipour et al., 2003; Arthurson & Jacobs, 2003). The focus here is on ‘processes of stigmatisation and restrictive or oppressive legislation and law enforcement, and forms of institutional discrimination which can prevent access to, for example, social services, health and rights to an adequate standard of housing (Somerville, 1998; King, 2003a). Mandanipour et al. (2003) maintain that boundaries are fundamental to social life; however, a negative situation appears where there is a lack of balance between exclusion and inclusion.

Housing contributes to social exclusion through location, physical condition, security of tenure, crowding, sustainability and access to other services (Arthurson & Jacobs, 2003). Additionally, where people are dislocated from society, this may result in situations of poor housing and homelessness (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001). Different groups experience variations in degrees of exclusion; some may experience inclusion in some spaces, but exclusion in others (Mandanipour et al, 2003). Arthurson and Jacobs (2003) give examples of the consequences of social exclusion related to housing: poor health, homelessness, non-participation in communities, poor social networks, lack of access to opportunities and resources, and insecurity of tenure. Social exclusion can alienate individuals and social groups, diminishing ability to actively participate socially, and can work to keep people on the margins of society. Mandanipour et al. (2003) directly relate sense of freedom and well-being to options available in spatial practice. Restricted social opportunities reduce spatial options, and the more excluded people feel or become (Mandanipour et al, 2003).

**HOUSING PATHWAYS**

Housing pathways, as defined by Clapham (2002) are ‘patterns of interaction (practices) concerning house and home, over time and space’ (p. 63). In contrast to previous approaches, which have focused on housing, economics and physical geography, this framework of analysis takes into account social, political and discursive context (Clapham, 2002). ‘The concept of a pathway is offered as a way of ordering the housing field in a way which foregrounds the meanings held by households and the interactions which shape housing practices as well as emphasising the dynamic nature of housing experiences and its interrelatedness with other aspects.
A housing pathways can be shaped by a household’s constraints, resources and opportunities, demographics, globalisation, socio-cultural developments, the role of the welfare state, rights and legislation (Ozuekren & Van Kempen, 2002), and the social meanings and relationships tied to housing (Clapham, 2002). Furthermore, it is essential that housing moves are not seen in isolation from one another, as Winstanley, Thorns & Perkins (2002, p. 825) state: ‘Mobility trajectories arise out of narratives about self and the relationship between housing, location and identity, making it impossible to create predictive models that capture unique conditions and circumstances’. The housing pathways approach takes account of the physical nature and quality of housing, meanings and patterns of interaction within households and the surrounding community and environment (sense of community and identity), and tenure. As previously discussed, housing is seen to provide more than a roof to its occupants, so a pathways approach is useful in taking into account the dynamic nature of housing, and how people interact with their housing in different places over time.

This section has outlined the multifaceted nature of housing, homelessness and health. A contextual approach to viewing housing through place, community, socio-spatial processes and housing pathways has been presented. The following section looks at existing knowledge of camping grounds in New Zealand, Australia and other countries.

CAMPING GROUNDS IN NEW ZEALAND & ELSEWHERE

CAMPING GROUNDS IN NEW ZEALAND

The Camping Ground Regulations (1985)

Camping grounds in New Zealand are regulated under the Camping Ground Regulations (1985), made under the Health Act. These regulations define camping grounds as:

‘Any area of land used, or designed or intended to be used, for rent, hire, donation, or otherwise for reward, for the purposes of placing or erecting on the land temporary living-places for occupation by 2 or more families or parties (whether consisting of 1 or more persons) living independently of each other, whether or not such families or parties enjoy the use in common of entrances, water-supplies, cookhouses, sanitary fixtures, or other premises and equipment’.
Further, ‘temporary living-places’ is defined as:

‘A cabin, caravan, vehicle, tent, or other building or structure intended for human occupation for periods not exceeding 50 days in any continuous term of occupancy’.

There are currently over 600 camping grounds registered throughout New Zealand, a mixture of privately managed on freehold land, privately managed on public land, and local council-owned and managed (Department of Conservation, 2006). Camping grounds have a spectrum of forms within New Zealand. Camping grounds accommodation is usually owned by the user, who pays a short-term rental on site that includes access to ancillary services (Collins & Kearns, 2010). Collins and Kearns (2010) outline two main categories of camping grounds in New Zealand. Firstly, basic camping grounds managed by government bodies and are located on public reserve land with rudimentary facilities. Commercial camping grounds form the second category, and are usually referred to as motor camps, caravan parks and holiday parks. These camping grounds are most often located in popular tourist locations, and differ from public basic camping grounds by way of facilities offered. Typically, commercial camping grounds offer a communal kitchen, laundry and ablution are provided, and increasingly TV/games rooms, shop, and internet access are standard (Collins & Kearns, 2010). Cabins, caravans, campervans and motor homes are the most common type of accommodation within camping grounds, with tent sites accounting for a small proportion of accommodation options (Collins & Kearns, 2010). The camping grounds included in this research were all commercial, and covered a range of accommodation options.

Camping ground operators must register their camping grounds with the local council, and must adhere to these regulations that generally cover site requirements, building and health standards. Where there is non-compliance, local authorities can revoke certificates of registration. The legislation also regulates standards of camping grounds and their design, facilities and usage. According to this legislation, camping grounds can only be used for a limited period of stay, unless dwellings are located within a registered ‘relocatable home park’. Relocatable home parks, as defined by the Camping Ground Regulations (1985), are completely self-contained, have reticulated water supply and sewerage, storm water drainage, and comply with building regulations. There are five relocatable home parks registered in New Zealand.

Long-term residents of some camping grounds also breach the Reserves Act 1977, Section 44(2), which states:

‘Except with the consent of the Minister, the owner of any vehicles, caravan, tent, or removable structure shall not permit it to remain on a reserve for a total period of more than four weeks’.

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8 See participant camping ground vignettes p. 45.

9 Participant accommodation type included in Appendix 1. p. 255.
Where camping grounds are located within reserves\textsuperscript{10}, this section of the Reserves Act must be observed by the camping ground manager. Under this Act, the only person who can live permanently on a reserve camping ground is the caretaker. Here permanent occupation is defined as more than 28 days.

\textbf{The Residential Tenancies Act (1986)}

The Residential Tenancies Act (1986) excludes accommodation provided in camping grounds as ‘the accommodation services is of a temporary or transient nature and so is not seen as ‘residential’ (Department of Building & Housing, 2005, p. 20). The Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill (2009), currently before Parliament, seeks to amend this legislation, and to extend coverage to boarding houses. Camping grounds, however, are to remain excluded. The Select Committee Report (2009) states:

\begin{quote}
‘We consider that the principal Act should apply to long-term tenancies in camping grounds, but that temporary living-places should be clearly excluded from the Act’s coverage. We are advised that, should the Act apply to temporary living-spaces, a conflict could arise between the [Camping Ground Regulations 1985] requirements and the notice provisions under the principal Act. Also, bringing temporary living-spaces under the principal Act would result in occupants having long-term tenure rights to types of accommodation that are inappropriate for permanent occupation’ (p. 6).
\end{quote}

The Select Committee recommended that dwellings in camping grounds remain excluded from the RTA, and that relocatable homes that provide temporary or transient accommodation are not to be covered. Given the very low number of relocatable home parks in New Zealand, it is fair to say then, that the vast majority of camping ground residents have no legal tenancy rights to security of tenure in New Zealand. Both the Residential Tenancies Act (1986) and the Camping Ground Regulations (1985) have the effect of depriving permanent camping ground residents of any rights as tenants, so it is important to ascertain how many people live in these housing situations.

\textbf{New Zealand census data}

The New Zealand Census defines a dwelling as ‘any building or structure, or part thereof, that is used (or intended to be used) for the purposes of human habitation. It can be of a permanent or temporary nature and includes structures such as houses, motels, hotels, prisons, motor homes, huts and tents’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2009b). Dwellings are classified as either private or non-

\textsuperscript{10} None of the camping grounds included in this research are sited on public reserves.
private. Private dwellings are not generally available for public use. Non-private dwellings provide ‘short or long term communal or transitory accommodation, and are generally available to the public for reasons of employment, study, special need, legal requirement or recreation’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2009b).

Dwellings in a motor camp are further defined as:

‘Any caravan, campervan, house bus, cabin, unit, tent or improvised dwelling in a motor camp that has personal residents and is therefore not generally available for public use’ (Statistics New Zealand, 2009b).

There are two codes for dwellings in motor camps:

1311 Dwelling in a motor camp
This includes ‘permanent’ residents, and managers’ dwellings, and is classified as private

2213 Motor camp / camping ground
This includes tourists (not usual residence) and is classified as non-private.

In 2006, there were 1215 private dwellings in a motor camp, 0.68% of total private dwellings, in which 2391 individuals lived.

The procedures for enumerating dwellings in camping grounds relies on the subjective assessment of Census collectors, who are required to issue and collect forms from ‘permanent’ residents. The Census Collector’s Guide (2006, p. 13) states:

Permanent residents of motor camps and caravan parks are those guests living long-term at the camping grounds who occupy their caravan, cabin etc. as a regular residence and who have no other address. Short-term holiday visitors to the camp, i.e. those with a home address elsewhere, are classed as temporary residents.

Discrepancies and difficulties in enumeration

Statistics New Zealand (2009a) states that the enumeration of homeless living situations is reliant on access: ‘the likelihood is that people in these living situations, temporary housing and sharing accommodation, may only be able to be measured when in contact with a provider, agency or researcher’ (p. 6). While this may be the case particularly for rough sleepers and the ‘roofless’, dwellings and individuals in motor camps should be adequately counted though the Census. However, discrepancies are apparent. For example, there are 621 registered camping grounds in New Zealand, and 5 relocatable home parks. The 2006 Census counted 1215 private dwellings in a motor camp, and 270 non-private dwellings. These figures are much lower than expected, especially when manager’s dwellings are extracted.
Other research has attempted to estimate the prevalence of homeless living situations, including those living in camping grounds. When Census data are viewed alongside other information, such as media reports which suggest that most camping grounds have ‘permanent’ residents, and that some have in excess of 200 residents, and anecdotes from social service providers, it raises concerns as to whether the Census does accurately count the number of dwellings and people living in camping grounds. For example, Peace (2002) reported that an estimated two percent of mental health consumers in New Zealand were living in boarding houses, hotels, motels, and caravan parks, equating to 8000 people. While this is a crude estimate, she states it is likely an underestimate, and it only includes people currently receiving mental health treatment. CHRANZ (2008) estimate between 14,000 and 20,000 New Zealand young people (aged 12-24 years) live in unsafe and/or insecure housing11. Grimes et al. (2004) suggest that unmet housing need amongst mental health consumers has led to ‘heavy use’ of boarding houses and camping grounds. Kearns (1991) suggested that ‘many thousands’ of New Zealanders represents an ‘incipient homeless’ population, which include ‘people temporarily living in the homes of friends and relatives; in places they cannot afford; in dwellings from which they are in danger of being evicted; and in spaces that are not adequate dwellings, such as caravans, cars, garages, sheds and even boxes’ (p. 369).

The perceived under-reporting in Census data may be related to the distribution and collection of census forms in camping grounds. Firstly, the terms ‘permanent’ and ‘temporary’ rely on individual collector’s interpretation. Secondly, the illegal nature of ‘permanent’ residence in camping grounds, and stigma associated with these housing situations, may also contribute to a lack of identification of people living in camping grounds. Statistics New Zealand (2009a) suggests that the extent of homelessness may be more prevalent than is normally assumed, and that this is related to social and cultural characteristics, such as a tendency to share accommodation, and (continued) occupancy in housing of substandard quality.

To date, there has been no research examining the nature of camping ground residence in New Zealand. Little is known about the characteristics of people living in camping grounds, their experiences, or the quality and nature of camping ground housing. Media accounts suggest that camping grounds offer a financially accessible dwelling, but often claim detrimental health and social impacts, such as crime, antisocial behaviour, and poor quality dwellings. Both Peace (2002) and Grimes et al. (2004) question the appropriateness, adequacy and sustainability of temporary housing for vulnerable groups, such as the mentally ill. A health impact assessment of the Ranui community by the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (2008) reports a camping ground in Ranui housing over 200 people in 100 dwellings. These residents were described as both single individuals and families, many of whom were on Housing New Zealand Corporation waiting lists.

11 Based on service provider contacts (CHRANZ, 2008).
Others had lived at the camping ground for several years. Housing in this caravan park was described as unsafe and insecure, but ‘serving a purpose’ of cheap rental accommodation for those who lacked alternative options (for example, through high debt unable to access private rentals). The report identified benefits of the caravan park for residents as ‘good access to amenities, existing social networks despite transience, and reasonable levels of community support’ (p. 30).

Camping grounds in New Zealand have also been described in terms of their cultural and social importance. Collins & Kearns (2010) consider the importance of coastal camping grounds in New Zealand as sites of public access to coastal environments and as holding ongoing social and emotional significance. Proximity to areas of natural beauty and natural landscapes (Collins & Kearns, 2010) provide simplicity and health benefits of what Gesler (1992) terms therapeutic landscapes. The meaning and significance of camping ‘evoke strong feelings of attachment, and close connections are routinely made between such landscapes and national identity’ (Collins & Kearns, 2010, p. 60). Often family groups have developed emotional ties to particular camping sites over many generations (Collins & Kearns, 2010; DoC, 2006). DoC (2006) and Collins & Kearns (2010) both examine the closure of camping grounds – properties at risk of sale and development and conversion in relation to their status as prime real estate and driven by escalating land values. Collins & Kearns (2010) reflect on high levels of public concern and comment on camping ground closures – meaning of coastal camping grounds. Camping ground residents in New Zealand can thus be seen as a group living in places which carry connotations of impermanence – they are living permanently within places of pleasure and leisure. Collins & Kearns (2010) identify the displacement of this group as an effect of closures of camping grounds, but further this by concluding that the long-term consequences of the loss of camping grounds in New Zealand ‘include lost opportunities for future generations, the destruction of a sense of community and a loss of place attachment’ (p. 74). Camping grounds here can be viewed as places of homelessness and places of last resort – they are both representational of homelessness in New Zealand, and provide a solution or alternative to rough sleeping.

AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH ON CARAVAN PARKS

Unlike New Zealand researchers, Australian researchers have paid considerable attention to the provision of housing in caravan parks. Chamberlain (2005, p. 6) notes state variability in caravan parks, and categorises Australian caravan parks into four groups:

1. Parks of high quality that are used exclusively for tourist accommodation, or that cater for niche markets such as retired people who own their caravans.
2. Parks that are used for tourist accommodation in summer, but caravans are rented to poor people in the off-season.
3. Parks that have mixed clientele all year round (tourists and permanents). Permanent residents may be located in a separate area ‘out the back’.

4. Parks that are used as permanent accommodation for poor people.

Wensing, Holloway & Wood (2003) in the comprehensive report *On the Margins? Housing Risk Among Caravan Park Residents* identified three main groups of residents in Australian caravan parks:

1. People who choose to live in a caravan park. This group largely consists of older, retired people who made lifestyle moves into caravan parks.

2. Itinerant or seasonal workers. This includes lower-paid workers who live in caravan parks due to easy mobility and the affordability, and may move between caravan parks.

3. People with no other housing options. This group includes resident for whom caravan parks are a last resort, following a lack of access to the mainstream housing market and financial or personal crises. Many of this group are unemployed or on sickness benefits. Chamberlain defines this group as ‘marginal residents’.

The 2006 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census counted 12,448 permanent residents of caravan parks, many of whom were elderly and/or low-income people.

Australian research has outlined the diversity of those living in caravan parks (from very wealthy to the most marginalised and socially excluded), and several researchers have also noted that caravan parks are used as temporary, permanent and crisis accommodation (Wensing et al., 2003; Stuart, 2005; Hunt & Wegener, 2005). It is widely accepted that there is a concentration of deprivation and social problems in caravan parks, and that these parks often function as sites on the intersection between homelessness and the provision of adequate, affordable housing (Wensing et al., 2003; Stuart, 2005; Reed & Greenhalgh, 2004; Newton, 2008; Brooks, Hernandez & Stuart, 2005; Evans, 2005; Greenhalgh & Connor, 2003).

Wensing et al. (2003) outline the inherent housing risk (and risks of further homelessness) of caravan park residence, in terms of tenure and housing insecurity, poor standards of housing and access to amenities and services. Benefits and satisfaction of living in a caravan park have also been recognised (see for example, Wensing et al., 2003; Newton, 2008).

**Tenure and housing security**

Wensing et al. (2003) refer to the nature and context of caravan park residence and a lack of security of tenure in Australia. In response to an awareness of the vulnerabilities of caravan park

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12 Marginal residents in caravan parks in Australia are defined as people for who the dwelling is their usual address, they are renting their caravan, and no-one in the dwelling as full-time employment (Chamberlain, 2005).
residents, some states improved tenancy legislation to cover this housing (Chamberlain, 2005; Lazarus, 2005; Harrison, 2005; Walker, 2005; Evans, 2005). However, despite improvements, some literature still suggests the precarious nature of caravan park tenancies; residents remain vulnerable to eviction and owners maintain high levels of discretion (for example, through favouring older residents or those with fewer needs), inadequate standards, and unclear legal status (Newton, 2006, 2008; Wensing et al., 2003; Chamberlain & MacKenzie, 2008; Proudley & Wylie, 2001). Tenure is shaped by the rules and management styles of individual caravan parks and their managers, and little is known about the housing of those evicted from caravan parks.

A decline in the number of caravan parks is linked to the closure and redevelopment of caravan parks, especially ones located on coastal land. This has raised concerns about access to low-cost accommodation available in caravan parks. Wensing et al. (2003) states residents are particularly vulnerable to park closures and changes in the housing market. This housing insecurity and potential displacement heightens the risk of homelessness for many residents (Wensing et al., 2003; Lazarus, 2005; MacDonald, 2005; Evans, 2005; Newton, 2008).

**Housing standards and access to amenities and services**

Several Australian researchers have commented on the inadequacy of housing and poor access to amenities and social services for those living in caravan parks. Wensing et al. (2003) concludes that ‘for most people living in caravan parks, either as a lifestyle choice or against their will, live in very basic conditions with minimal facilities and amenity compared to conventional forms of housing’ (p. 57). Poor standards were linked to the persistence of problems faced by marginal residents, in particular families with children. Characteristics such as unemployment, poverty, poor health, domestic violence, drug and alcohol use, mental health issues, crowding, lack of privacy, social isolation, discrimination, area effects, noise, crime, and poor management, are seen to have an impact particularly on vulnerable residents, and hence caravan parks are argued to be inappropriate housing and heighten the risk of eviction and homelessness (Wensing et al., 2003; Proudley & Wylie, 2001; Shelter SA, 2004; Bostock, 2001; Lazarus, 2005; Stuart, 2005). High costs are also deemed problematic (Eddy, 2001; Chamberlain, 2005; Wright-Howie, 2005). The use of caravan parks as crisis housing is dependent on the willingness of owners to accept people with high needs (Newton, 2008), but is generally regarded as inappropriate.

**Benefits and housing satisfaction in caravan parks**

In contrast to the potential problems of living in caravan parks, several Australian studies have highlighted the positive social aspects of caravan park residence, reporting ‘sense of community’, ‘social support’, ‘satisfaction’, and ‘social networks’ as valued aspects to residents. For example, Greenhalgh & Connor (2003) describe caravan parks as sites conducive to the development of strong social networks and the provision of informal care. Lack of privacy and space was
reconciled with the proximity of support. ‘Home Among the Gum Trees’ a report by PAVS\textsuperscript{13}, strongly outlines the high value placed on caravan park communities by older residents, and concern about closures and housing insecurity for this group. Secomb (2000) assessed life satisfaction of 778 retired residents of 34 caravan parks in New South Wales. She found 94\% of residents were satisfied with their dwellings and environment, associated with the sense of community in the caravan parks. Newton (2008) described the emotional attachment of caravan park residents to their housing, linking residents’ positive evaluations and development of ‘home’ to strong relational networks, perceptions of security, and desire to stay in their housing. Lazarus (2005) identified creation of supportive environments in caravan parks as important in preventing social exclusion and isolation, and linked to perceptions of better safety and security for residents. A 2008 study of crime in NSW caravan parks (Barclay & Mawby, 2008) highlighted that crime was not a major concern, due to the positive role of managers, and the community characteristics of caravan parks (such as high levels of social capital). These studies show that alongside social concerns about caravan park housing, there exist positive features.

**OTHER COUNTRIES\textsuperscript{14}**

A few European researchers refer to the ‘permanent’ use of ‘temporary’ accommodation, such as caravans, hotels and bed and breakfasts (for example, Cloke, 2000). Meert et al. (2005) note the scarcity of academic literature addressing permanent residence in holiday parks, citing only two other studies\textsuperscript{15}, but a lack of systematic or statistical overview of this housing. Their study involved three permanently-inhabited holiday parks in Belgium, and focused on the geography of pathways, residents’ housing prior to, and following, living at the holiday parks. They noted the illegality and insecurity of this housing, the lack of basic amenities and crowding, and view these housing situations as homelessness. This work highlighted the concealed nature of temporary housing (Meert et al., 2005). Using a pathways approach they suggest evidence for residents caught in a cycle of deprivation, where the residents of these holiday parks became trapped in poor housing conditions. Secondly, the authors state the housing pathways of permanent residents in, through and out of the holiday parks was shaped by changing social networks, and linked with broader socio-economic processes. Meert et al. (2005) conclude with reference to a

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\textsuperscript{13} PAVIS Parks and Village Service provides advice and advocacy for residential parks.

\textsuperscript{14} Literature on trailer parks in the United States and gypsies, nomads and travellers in Britain was briefly reviewed, but not pursued further for the cultural aspects and context of this housing was not deemed relevant.

\textsuperscript{15} These studies, from France and the Netherlands, were not accessible.
lack of local planning in the areas where the holiday parks were located, an insufficient supply of housing, and stigma lessened residents’ ability to access alternative affordable housing.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter has reviewed the literature of housing and health, with particular attention paid to inadequate and temporary housing. Housing is complex and multidimensional, and has both positive and negative influences on health and well-being. Existing literature from public health, sociology and geography identifies housing as a prerequisite for health, through connections to health on many levels, from individual and physical dwelling to neighbourhood, place and contextual effects. Examples have been used to illustrate the ways in which features of poor housing are thought to influence people’s health. Current definitions of homelessness have been discussed. Homelessness and inadequate housing result in poor health outcomes, undermine the health of communities and generate inequalities. Consequently, in this thesis, the term ‘healthy housing’ is used synonymously with the public health approach to housing, which is it should provide and promote the health of individuals, households and communities. Healthy housing meets the needs of occupants, and the physical nature of the housing creates no risk to health.

An overview of the key ideas crucial to understanding connections between people’s health and their housing has been provided. It has been shown how place, community, socio-spatial processes and housing pathways are all relevant to housing research, especially for those living in marginalised housing. Determining the way housing shapes residents’ health requires a focus on the relationships between people and place, space, time and community. This literature gives a lens through which people’s interactions with their housing and health can be viewed and located within the social, political and cultural environment. Viewing housing through place enables a picture of how residents use, experience, and conceive their housing, and is essential for an understanding of how identities are formed through housing. Whilst recognising that places are not static, but are constantly being produced and reproduced, place is described as a site of contest and conflict. Place attachment in particular can foster positive individual and community health outcomes. Ideas of place and the socio-spatial nature of housing are thus essential for understanding the roles of community in housing and health. Social exclusion has been outlined as a particular way in which housing can socially exclude people, for example through tenure. Taking into account spatial aspects of housing, such as social exclusion, allows the broader aspects of social integration and rights to be included. The social connections of people are also
seen to be central to their experience of housing, as places – including home – are nodes in networks of social relations. The quantity and quality of social connections is linked strongly to the health of communities. In addition, an understanding of people’s pathways in, through, and out of housing, through looking at the ways people use and interpret their housing is useful in seeing the ways in which material and meaningful aspects of housing and context relates to health. The current research uses these ideas to look beyond the physical characteristics of camping ground dwellings to take into account different individual and collective meanings and experiences, and to locate camping ground residence within socio-political context.

A lack of research around camping ground residence has been discussed. Although there is a lack of empirical evidence for these housing circumstances in New Zealand, it is clear that many New Zealanders do not have access to adequate housing. Similarly, there are no useful statistics or available research on which to identify components or characteristics of camping ground residence that may influence health. It is apparent however, that this housing is subject to different regulations and legislation than mainstream housing. Australian research has found that many people living in caravan parks face social and material deprivation. Several studies have associated high housing risk to these living situations, including housing insecurity, poor physical standards and access to amenities and services, which occur alongside positive social aspects and high levels of housing satisfaction. This research, informed by the literature reviewed, in thus is response to the lack of research into the health and housing experiences of New Zealand camping ground residents. It adopts the New Zealand Definition of Homelessness, and will look beyond traditional housing to develop an understanding of the experience of living in temporary housing in camping grounds, and the implications for health. The research methodology is discussed in the next chapter.
The literature reviewed in the previous chapter outlines the relationships between health and housing, and with space, place, housing pathways and community. It indicates there has been little research that has focused on the experiences of living in temporary housing, residential mobility, and health. Furthermore, few studies have provided an opportunity for people to discuss their experiences, in order to inform research and policy in this field. In particular, there is no available research focused on those living permanently or long-term in camping grounds in New Zealand.

This research uses narrative analysis, a comprehensive and exploratory qualitative methodology, to inquire into the experiences of people living in camping grounds in New Zealand. The field of narrative analysis provides no definitive or single approach (Baumgartner, 2000), but is based on the stories of participants, focusing on how individuals or groups make sense of events and actions in their lives. This chapter outlines the rationale for using narrative analysis in this research context, the key characteristics of this methodology, and the specific research techniques used in the study. Narrative analysis is employed as both theory and method here to understand the meaning and experiences of camping ground residents. How these methodological elements were used in this research is outlined together with the actual methods of the research process. The chapter discusses this conceptual design, structured in terms of the research context, the narratives, and the participants, ending with how the experiences and meanings are elucidated through the analysis of the narratives collected. Central to this research is an emphasis on the physical and social spaces and places, the contexts within which camping
ground residents live, and the participants themselves, and their narratives. It is these three markers that are discussed here in the context of the research process and its underpinnings.

**METHODOLOGY: WORKING IN THE NARRATIVE**

Researchers and philosophers have contributed to the theory of narrative inquiry by drawing on knowledge from a variety of disciplines, rendering it a complex area to review concisely. Redwood (1999) describes the methodology as valuable in giving participants an opportunity to share experiences, but recognises variances in method, where 'the form of the analysis often appears to be a largely intuitive process' (p. 674). Presented here is an understanding of the nature of narrative as it applies and is relevant to this study: what constitutes, and is fundamental to, narrative and its analysis.

**WHY NARRATIVE ANALYSIS?**

**Narrative analysis: A relationship between process and product**

Narrative analysis was chosen as the research methodology with respect to the topic under investigation, and the nature of understanding and emphasis sought after (Dew, 2007). This study aimed to gain insight into camping ground residence and to understand the characteristics of this housing, and experiences and pathways of the participants. A deep understanding of the meanings of these experiences as told by camping ground residents was desired, fitting within a broader context of the relationships between housing and health.

Narrative analysis emphasises the role of the subjective, the expression of lay knowledge in drawing attention to and understanding the participants within their social contexts. It allows insights into the processes and structures that exist in shaping their housing circumstances, and in creating and maintaining their health, offering a vantage point of the relationships between individuals, their communities, time and place, and wider socio-spatial processes.

The narrative research process enabled the drawing out of multiple, contrasting, and sometimes contradictory views and experiences of camping ground residents. As a methodology, narrative analysis was able to capture the inseparability of the individual camping ground residents
with their housing and the broader social world. Through this, the multidimensional nature of interactions between and within the personal and social spaces and places and the complexity of the participants' experiences can be fully represented.

**Narratives: The nature of stories**

Narrative analysis in this study focuses upon camping ground residents' experience of their housing as expressed in the stories they tell. 'Language is telling - not simply of acts and facts, but also of views and values, and of feelings, priorities, and involvements' (Charmaz, 2004, p. 988). The narratives collected provide a picture of the participants' personal experiences and social worlds from their particular position(s) and points of view, and incorporate the key element of time. Through their accounts and anecdotes, the participants give rich insights; they tell stories and draw on a variety of narratives to illuminate the complexity of their housing events.

The narratives that are presented throughout the thesis are those both spontaneously occurring and elicited through the research process. They work as both analysed information and as verbal pictures – illustrations of participants’ experiences. The chosen research approach gave participants a chance to tell their stories, through which each participant provided narrative versions of their housing experiences, almost invariably from within their wider life story.

The words people use illuminate the ways in which they understand the world. The ways camping ground residents spoke of their housing circumstances was often very personal and showed the meanings they attached to this. While narratives enable people to convey their perceptions of their housing, through sharing stories people also process their experiences and identify the significance elements to them. Frank (2004) identifies the interwoven nature of people's use of narrative to show how they understand their world and the use of narrative to explain what is going on in the world in which they live. Stories are both defined and defining (Frank, 2004).

Narratives facilitate the ability of individuals and groups to realise their voice, express their knowledge and understandings (Gabriel, 2004), and to both represent and shape people's actions (Somers, 1994). Gabriel (2004) emphasises the relationship between stories and experience where people can have contrasting experiences of an event of similar nature, or conversely experience different events in very similar ways. He states ‘experience is shaped by emotions, desire, perceptions, and interest, all of which have a direct bearing on the stories we tell and our responses to the stories we hear (or refuse to hear)’ (Gabriel, 2004, p. 169). Narrative analysis permits an exploration of some of the various ways in which people describe how they came to live in a camping ground, and how they currently live in a camping ground, and how these stories relate to their health.
Dimensions of narrative and the multilayered nature of talk

Narratives provide rich personal information about individuals and groups, and contain patterns and themes of the social, cultural context in which the narratives are situated. Narrative researchers need to be aware of the many-layered narratives at work. Fundamental to narrative inquiry is a consideration of these different levels of analysis and the various explanations they can provide. Riessman (2005) depicts the move beyond the dominant personal level of narrative to look at things ‘outside’ the story: ‘analysis in narrative studies interrogates language – how and why events are storied, not simply the content to which language refers’ (p. 392).

Narrative analysis examines the content of texts, at levels ranging from individual phrases to distinct stories to larger 'stories' encompassing long and multiple stretches of talk, image or action (Wiles, Rosenberg & Kearns, 2004). Narrative analysis also gives consideration to the context of storytelling: to the real and assumed audiences of narratives, the micro-contextual co-construction between tellers and listeners (Mishler, 1986), and the broader social and political contexts of the narratives (Wiles et al., 2004). The research analysis used in this study draws on the work of Elliot Mishler (1986; 1999), and looks for the patterns, narrative threads, tensions, and themes within or across individuals’ personal experiences, recognising that the realm of experience can only be described and researched through the contextual window in which the story takes place.

Mishler (1999) offers ‘narrative as praxis’ – a typology of narrative analysis that considers the ‘work that stories do’. This theoretical perspective is based on three assumptions, each having implications for research: that personal narratives and life stories are: socially situated actions; identity performances; fusions of form and content (Mishler, 1999).

Narratives as socially situated actions

Mishler (1999) writes of narratives as ‘socially situated actions’, that narratives are co-constructed through the dialogue and process of research interviews. Here, the ‘doing’, the construction, of the stories is emphasised, a process in which the interviewer takes an active part. Narratives thus do not strictly ‘belong’ intrinsically to the speaker, but are topics of conversation negotiated between researcher and participant, and are located ‘within an ongoing stream of social interaction, the unfolding scene of talk within the context of interviews’ (Mishler, 1999, p. 19).

Narratives as identity performances

Mishler writes: ‘we express, display, make claims for who we are – and who we would like to be – in the stories we tell and how we tell them. In sum, we perform our identities’ (Mishler, 1999, p. 19). It is through telling stories that people build notions of who they are; it is this relationship between narrative and identity that allows researchers to understand the way people make sense of their lives through narrative. Attention is given to the ‘how’ and ‘why’ pieces of narrative are
assembled to make a story for the listener(s) to hear. Mishler (1999) states contradictions in people’s life stories show how identities are negotiated in interview conversations.

**Narratives as fusions of form and content**

Here Mishler (1999) refers to the telling of individual and collective stories. Stylistic attributes, features of speech, and the interaction between interviewer and participant are examined. This also describes the informational content of the words people use (Wiles et al., 2004).

Mishler's narrative as praxis shows an interpretation and understanding of narrative processing. This research draws most prominently on the first two traditions of Mishler, which provide a bridge to broader contextual ideas provided by Ricoeur and Somers by aiming to look at the narratives of camping ground residents in their many layers. As Wiles et al. (2004) state: 'The larger social context of what people say is also important for narrative analysis, and the social discourses and politics that frame narrative must be included in any interpretation' (p. 92).

Doise (1986) examines stories larger than event narratives, extending to full biographies and wider narratives which exist across stories and individual participants. He emphasizes the aim to understand narratives’ meanings within lives, through four specific levels of analysis. Murray (2000) summarises these succinctly: ‘the psychological or ‘intrapersonal’ level, which is concerned with how the individual interprets the world; the ‘interpersonal’ level, which considers the character of the interaction between individuals who are considered as interchangeable partners in the situation; the ‘positional’ level, which considers the different social positions of actors in situational interactions; and the ‘ideological’ level, which considers the broader belief systems’ (p. 339).

Margaret Somers (1994) also views narratives as existing in socio-cultural contexts. She argues that: 'social life is itself storied ... and stories guide action; [and] people construct identities (however multiple and changing) by locating themselves or being located within a repertoire of emplotted stories' (p. 613).

In Somers' argument, narratives are for the most part not the creation of individuals alone, but are woven and mediated by the social and relational settings in which individuals find themselves. Somers' perspective is that people formulate and enact stories drawing on a range of available social, public and cultural narratives. She characterizes narratives at work in four main dimensions: ontological, public, meta, and conceptual.

**Ontological narratives** are focused on the individual and immediate context; they are personal stories people tell about themselves. People make sense of who they are (and their choices and actions) through ontological narratives or stories, forming a sense of identity and connections over time.
Public narratives exist larger than the individual, stories that circulate among social and institutional formations. There are numerous and competing public narratives which portray cultural and normative ideas occurring at ‘public’ levels, transcending the individual, such as family, education and religious institutions, political groups, the media and the nation.

Somers defines conceptual narratives as those constructed by social researchers: the concepts and explanations used by academics in their inquiry. These scholarly narratives may or may not have an impact wider than the immediate disciplinary field.

Meta-narratives, or master narratives, are those by which history and society are detailed. These narratives, for example globalisation, are sustained and promoted through many means, and cut across geographical and national boundaries, permeate the individual dimensions and groups in every sector of society.

The application of Somers’ dimensions of narrative requires, for example, taking into account the authority that meta-narratives circulating in public health and housing have on the ontological private narratives that are told and those that are silenced (or not told) due to the imposition of the dominant narratives.

**Narrative Analysis as Research Method**

**The Research Questions**

The overall research question was used as a parameter to explore the nature and context of the experiences of camping ground residents. This question was designed to address the issues identified through the literature review. The following overall research question was developed to frame the research:

What is the nature of camping ground residents’ experiences of living in camping grounds, in relation to their health and in the context of individual, local and national spheres?
The specific research aims were designed to draw out the narratives of research participants and to fully understand the characteristics and significance of their housing in relation to wider social environments. The specific research aims were to:

- Describe the housing pathways camping ground resident participants;
- Describe ways camping ground residence structures access to opportunity, community, and local services;
- Describe sources that contribute to detrimental health experiences and sources that help residents move towards health and well-being in such housing arrangements.

The research was reviewed and gained ethics approval (Proposal involving human participants (Category B)) by the Department of Public Health, University of Otago in March 2006. Data collection was carried out between April and November 2006.

**INTERVIEWS: SOURCING THE STORIES**

Attention has been drawn to the theoretical approach designed to give justice to the participants' experiences. In-depth interviews were carried out to collect these experiences, and to provide camping ground residents with an opportunity to share their stories and perspectives. The interviews were designed, in response to the research questions, to acquire insight into the complexity and interactions in order to see the ways in which their housing has an impact on their health. These issues have been neglected in research to date.

In using narrative as a method of inquiry, the intention was to guide interviewees to tell their stories, and to encourage reflection and analysis, without restricting their focus. The use of semi-structured interviews allowed general themes and ideas to be discussed (Dew, 2007) in whatever ways the participants wished. The focus of the interviews was on camping ground residents, their housing pathways, their current housing and how this relates to their health, and the ways in which their housing shapes their access to resources and community. The interviews were designed to draw out descriptions of the experiences of camping ground residents and their health experiences, within the context of their lives and community as a whole. The interviews unfolded in a conversational tone, allowing lines of inquiry to be followed as they emerged. This loosely-structured dialogical style aimed to create a relaxed environment where participants could freely share their stories by reducing the effect of the traditional power relations between researcher and participant. This approach - using talk as a way of accessing experience - generated a range of stories. The research then became informed by the voices of camping ground residents, and

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16 See Appendix 4 Interview guidelines.
camping ground owners/managers, and various community workers and social service providers working with and having an interest in camping ground residents and their housing.

The first set of interviews with 18 key informants (camping ground owners/managers, non-government organisations, and government agencies) had the purpose of collecting some background knowledge of camping ground residence in New Zealand. The variety of key informants interviewed in two locations\(^{17}\) provided insight into providers’ experience and views of camping ground residence. In Taone, interviews were carried out with three camping ground owner/managers, a social policy manager, two community advocacy workers, a Work and Income NZ case manager, and a Housing New Zealand Corporation manager. There was considerable difficulty in engaging with potential key informants in this city, with many social service providers contacted by telephone having no contact with, or in fact knowledge of, long-term camping ground residents in the area. Some even showed that they did not know of any camping grounds in Taone.

In Takutai, interviews were carried out with four camping owners/managers, two staff from a local iwi\(^{18}\) health and social service provider, a senior member of the police, a mental health drop-in centre coordinator, a management staff member of the local council, and a Work and Income New Zealand case manager.

These interviews focused on the context within which New Zealand camping grounds operate, characteristics of camping ground residents, their health and housing pathways, and the structural contexts of housing (including local and national elements). The review of the literature, observations during fieldwork, and information gathered during these interviews contributed to a broad contextual framework, enabling the composition of a well-targeted schedule outline for interviews with residents. The open-ended interview format then developed for camping ground residents themselves, which also had the advantage of allowing the participants to raise new issues and concerns that had not been conceptualised as pertinent at the earlier stages.

After initial direct contact with community key informants, a snowballing technique provided opportunities to speak with camping ground residents. Both camping ground residents and community key informants introduced potential camping ground residents for inclusion in the research. The camping ground residents themselves also often spoke of one another, and introduced and referred others for interviews.

The intent in the subsequent interviews with 22 residents was to encourage participants to talk about their housing. Two broad, open-ended questions were used to open the interview by

\(^{17}\) Taone and Takutai were selected as communities experiencing high levels of deprivation and transience in a related FRST-funded research project.

\(^{18}\) Iwi: Maori tribe.
focussing the participant’s housing pathway and on his/her experience of living in a camping
ground. The participant was not interrupted as s/he told the story.

- How did you come to be living in this camping ground?
- Can you tell me what it is like to live in a camping ground?

After the participant exhausted their response to these opening questions, they were prompted to
explore the following areas if they did not discuss them, or discussed them superficially, in the
initial response. Narratives were constructed in response to further specific questions about
aspects of their health in relation to their housing, their access to services and resources, pathways
in and out of camping grounds and their mobility, and aspects of day-to-day life in camping
grounds and relationships, community and social capital. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes
to over two and a half hours, and were audio-recorded. All recordings were transcribed verbatim
by the researcher and supplemented with field notes.

At each interview, an overview of the project19 was provided in writing and discussed with
the interviewee. Potential participants were asked to sign informed consent20. All participants
provided written informed consent under principles of full disclosure and were given a copy of
the information sheet. Standard principles of protection, including the right to refuse, withdraw,
or stop an interview were be implemented21. At the completion of the research, a letter
acknowledging the participants’ involvement in the research was sent to all participants with a
final summary of the research findings.

What emerged were residents’ stories richly contextualised and interwoven with personal
biographic aspects, showing their own understandings of the relationships between the spaces and
places (physical, cultural, social, and political) within which they live, their health, and
opportunities.

**ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER**

The initial ambition of the research was to be able to provide a window through which people
could view the stories of camping ground residents (Dew, 2007). In collecting and analysing these
narratives - providing insight and explanation - the role of the researcher cannot be dismissed. In
line with Mishler's (1999) stance on the co-construction of research narratives, the thesis contains
the researcher's perspectives. In establishing connection with the camping ground residents, I

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19 See Appendix 2 Research information sheet.

20 See Appendix 3 Participant consent form.

21 Participants and locations have been given New Zealand native tree and bird names as pseudonyms throughout the thesis.
often shared my personal interest in camping ground residence - that my in-laws had owned and managed a small town camping ground for ten years, and that I had several friends who had lived in camping grounds. In giving out this information, the participants may have made assumptions about my experiences and views, which may have in turn shaped the narratives they shared with me. In similar ways, the narratives of the camping ground owners, and community key informants would have chosen the narratives they presented to me, as an academic and someone both sharing their interest in housing issues, and wanting to hear their views as knowledgeable local figures. Wiles et al. (2004) describe the effect of having similar experiences shaping 'the way in which the narrator is able to tell a story, the kinds of stories they tell, and how easily they can convey their point or persuade listeners that they are competent or correct' (p. 93).

CONTEXTS: RESEARCH IN PLACE

This research was based in two North Island areas: Taone, an urban centre in the North Island, and Takutai, a rural coastal town. Two Taone camping grounds were included in the research, and four camping grounds in Takutai were included. Both communities experience very high levels of deprivation. The residents of a total of six camping grounds shared their experiences:

Camp Tahi

Camp Tahi is in Taone, and was originally a children’s camp set up in the 1930s. It is run now by the trust board of a charitable organisation, and caters for school and family groups as well as providing accommodation for 15 long-term residents, and people needing emergency accommodation. Residents range in age from mid-20s to around 60 years, with the longest having resided at the camp for five years. Accommodation is provided in cabins, and owner-occupied motor homes and caravans. Interviews were carried out with the manager and assistant manager of the camp, who have been at the camp for 12 months and three and a half years respectively, and two residents.

Camp Rua

Camp Rua is a small privately run camping ground in Taone with six permanent residents started in 2000. Long-term residents live in caravans, a mixture of owner-occupiers and leased caravans. The camping ground has had long-term residents (mid-20s to 90 years old) since the opening of the camp. The site is well-maintained, with native tree plantings, and tidy ablutions and communal areas. Interviews were carried out with one of the owners, and seven residents.

22 The NZDep scales deprivation from 1 (least deprived) to 5 (most deprived); ‘Takutai’ and ‘Taone’ are both Decile 5 (White, Gunston, Salmon, Atkinson & Crampton, 2008).

23 ‘Camp Tahi’ etc. are pseudonyms.
Camp Toru

Camp Toru is in the small town of Takutai, and with six long-term residents living in caravans both owned by the camp and owner-occupied. The oldest resident at the camping ground was 83 years. The camping ground owners manage the camping ground leasehold from the local council and have done so for the last 11 years. Many of the residents had been living at the camping ground prior to these owners’ arrival. This camping ground is currently on the market. Interviews were carried out with the two owners, and with five residents.

Camp Wha

Located on the coast nearby Takutai township, Camp Wha is a small camping ground with two permanent residents (aged 18 and 30), living in caravans. An interview was carried out with the owner of the camp who had taken over the camp from family members several years previous, and with one resident.

Camp Rima

Camp Rima is close to the Takutai township, on the beachfront. This camp has developed an area of land with relocatable homes. The dwellings are owned by individuals and families, many of whom live permanently on site and the majority of whom are retired. The leases are for five years, and the owners have a policy that caravans, and caravans with rigid annexes, are replaced with relocatable homes when leases are renewed. An interview was carried out with one of the owners of the camping ground, who had purchased the camping ground a few years prior from family members. Three residents were also interviewed.

Camp Ono

Camp Ono is 20 kilometres from Takutai, located across the beach from a main road. The camp has eight permanent residents, living in both relocatable homes, and caravans with annexes. Interviews were carried out with four residents of the camping ground.

Interviews were carried out in places of work of the key informants and the residences of the participants. These interview locations gave a chance to connect face-to-face and observe participants in their own place, with no time pressures. This research site generated a sense of the physical, and the 'feel' of the dwellings, and also allowed observations of the day-to-day living and often the social interaction and relationships between residents within the camping grounds. Interviewing people in their homes required the development of relations with the research participants, to establish a consideration of place and become sensitive to the dynamics at work within the context, including the researcher/participant partnership. In reality, the building of relationships with camping ground residents was characterised by them inviting me into their homes - the sharing of food and drink, inviting me spontaneously to look around their homes.
without request, showing their photos, memory keepsakes and other belongings, and wanting to 'show me around' providing tours around the camp sites - and insisting on a return visit.

**PARTICIPANTS**

Although not necessarily representative of all people living in camping grounds in New Zealand, this research included all camping grounds in both communities that had residents living there at the time of the study. Talking to individual camping ground residents and owners, and community key informants, enabled a clear understanding of different people's experiences and perspectives, recognising that people may have similar or different views, alongside an appreciation for the structural similarities that may lie behind camping ground residence. That is, while the unique experiences of individuals are collected, they also converge with the shared positions of disadvantage and exclusion for many camping ground residents, and for others of choice and lifestyle.

The conversations with key informants provided important information on local housing conditions, dynamics, and issues. In some instances, the narratives of these community members appear incompatible or contradictory to that of the camping ground residents themselves. However, together they represent a diversity of perspectives and the range of positions that constitute the heterogeneous nature of the housing and account for the different ways in which camping ground residence is lived and interpreted. In some ways, the divergent views and counter-positions aid in the illustration of the relationships and (dis)connections at each level of community and narrative.

**Hard-to-reach population**

Stories function in narrative research as forms of politics, broadcasting voices that are excluded from, or neglected within, dominant political structures and processes. In this research, interviews provided all participants an opportunity to tell their stories not heard in other contexts, giving a certain values to their stories by allowing expression. Narratives of temporary housing are a kind of marginal story; it became apparent through the research process they are rarely articulated and rarely told. Only recently has media highlighted people living in temporary accommodation in New Zealand, and furthermore camping grounds are often represented in relation to redevelopment and holidays. The relative invisibility of camping ground residents was further highlighted in the Taone urban area where lack of knowledge or acknowledgment of many community key informants showed that these stories remain hidden. The personal narratives collected and put forward in this research may be effective in bringing the unseen into view.
The narratives presented remain, however, the stories that participants themselves chose to tell. Dew (2007) recognises this assumption of qualitative studies: 'that we can only, ever, get a partial view of the world' (p. 433). In telling their stories, the participants make choices, selecting and including episodes, descriptions, and events to convey to the researcher their 'point' and meaning (Bailey & Tilley, 2002). Goffman (1959) describes narratives as representations, constructed to make a point and provide judgment, and to allow whatever 'presentation of self' is sought.

How the process of narrative analysis – ‘the challenge of interpreting and understanding layers of meaning in interview talk and the connection among them’ (Wiles et al., 2004, p. 90) - was undertaken is now described.

ANALYSIS OF THE NARRATIVES

Interviews with camping ground residents collected their individual experiences of their housing, constructed through stories they shared. The analysis of their narratives focused on the meaning they create through their words. McCormack (2004) describes this process as exploring individual's stories and day-to-day accounts 'in the context of their everyday lives while simultaneously looking to the wider social/cultural resources on which people draw to help make them make sense of their lives' (p. 220). This accounts for the 'how' and 'what' of people’s stories (Wiles et al., 2004). By bringing these elements together, the responses of the participants could be brought together in a complex, coherent whole. The analysis of the narratives commenced during the interviewing stage, and continued through to the completion of the thesis.

The analysis of narrative in this research proceeds from the methodological theory basis discussed earlier. That is, the approach is focused on the constructions of narratives that express the experience of the participants, by examining the language and stories that they use to represent their selves. The nature of narrative inquiry enables research participants to tell their stories, in their own way, and for the researcher to gain access to the ways they understand, make sense of, and represent their experiences. Analysing these narratives facilitates us in learning about the ways camping ground residents talk about their housing. McCormack (2004) outlines the process of narrative analysis as a series of reconstructions. Firstly, the story is told by the participant, detailing their experience in the interview setting. This story is then reconstructed through the transcribing, analysing, and interpreting on the part of the researcher. How the audience of these presented stories interprets and reacts to the stories is yet another level of the reconstruction of the narrative.

The narratives of camping ground residents represents particular views and reveals their experiences. Wiles et al. (2004) highlight the need to examine the several aspects or layers of
narrative, and narrative analysis provides an appropriate vehicle for doing so. Through this means the stories are studied in a ‘richly textured and sensitive’ way (Wiles et al., 2004, p. 97). This aids the deepening of the understanding of how the particular stories collected were created and how they sit in/beside wider narratives. This is useful as the study fulfils an exploratory purpose, and also moves from simply describing themes to integrating the narratives of the participants and the interconnections between the different factors that shape their housing situations, both individually and as a group.

As each participant’s story was re-presented in the interview, their experience at that time was composed (McCormack, 2004). These personal narratives gave space to fully examine the ways in which the camping ground residents negotiate(d) their opportunities and constraints of their housing. An examination of the participant stories identified in the transcripts also highlighted the need for consideration to be given to the ways their housing shapes and is shaped by their own personal circumstances, characteristics, vulnerabilities, strengths, and experiences.

In the interview accounts, residents given the chance through the leisurely interview form gave stories of their housing and housing pathways. Some of these are ‘classic’ stories, with markers such as “Well, what happened was…”. Throughout the thesis many of these stories are retained as whole narrative units. Other stories in the transcripts remain nested in the whole narrative or within other stories. That is, they are pieces dispersed throughout the text of the interview, constructed and interpreted from within each participant’s personal narrative.

Furthermore, considering Wiles, Rosenberg and Kearns’ (2005) proposal that ‘examining what individuals have to say … provides us with useful insights into social and spatial processes and events’ (p. 90), the analysis of the stories required thinking about the whole transcripts as stories. They became accounts that were not simply reflections of the participants’ lives, but rather ‘social actions embedded in social worlds’ (Plummer, 1995, p. 17). Recognising that talk is used strategically to communicate and describe people’s own understandings of social and spatial organisation, this explanatory framework seeks to consider the surrounding social and structural features of camping ground residence. The narratives are set in context by doing so; the narratives provide accounts of experience, and they can be bound together in a coherent whole, maintaining the integrity to this embedded, situated nature of stories (Baldwin, 2004).

The analytic approach utilised the stories the participants (individually and collectively) told to make sense of their experience – to create meaning and gain access to how they construct meaning. The meaningfulness of camping ground residents’ experiences is captured and accordingly, facilitates the process of describing and examining their housing. Narrative analysis gives entry into the participants’ experiences of housing over time. How the camping ground residents came to be living in a camping ground is important for a pathways approach, and understanding these pathways, as well as how it affects their health. That is, attention to the temporal nature of personal stories enables the researcher to learn about the individual’s past,
present, and some perspective on their future housing. This analysis serves to unpack the narratives focusing on the dynamics of narration, the process of production, and speculate on possible meanings. Through this the analysis of narrative reports on context.

Attempts were made to extend past the content of personal stories (Dew, 2007) and build up an understanding of connection between events and experiences. Taking this perspective, the ways the participants storied their lives came to be viewed as constituted by their selves and their experiences in relation to wider discourses. Considering the narratives in this light promotes and makes possible more attentiveness to the context of the participants, as Wiles et al. (2004) describe the narrative analysis approach in comparison to thematic and other forms of qualitative research as a ‘move from treating the elements of interview talk as discrete units to be codified, counted and depersonalized, to a more contextual analysis and understanding’ (p. 97). Keeping in mind the ideas of Mishler, Ricoeur, Somers, and Plummer’s (1995, p. 24) stance that stories are joint actions produced in local contexts within the bounds of a wider negotiated world, the participant, his/her narratives, and context was centred on while rereading the interview transcripts as narratives. This left a large set of personal stories and a wider set of narratives extending beyond the personal, to obtain the experiences of camping ground residents within thick description and richly complex analysis.

The participants’ narratives were thus used to inform the thesis, not through identified common codes or dominant themes (Dew, 2007) but through identifying narratives and fragments of stories and connecting these salient events to provide an overall account of camping ground residence. Table 1 gives examples of some of the particular ideas and structures that were used to identify the salient points, ideas and implications emerging from the transcripts, but is not intended to be comprehensive.
Table 1. Narrative analysis: Structure and markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Layer</th>
<th>Concepts</th>
<th>Generic markers</th>
<th>Markers specific to this thesis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Story of the story</td>
<td>• Context and Collection • What is said and how • Cultural values and norms • Historical context/Immediate environment • Stories told/Stories silenced • Relationships to wider meta- and public narratives</td>
<td>• Legislation, Regulations • Interview / Anecdote • Private / Public • Exclusion • Public understandings</td>
<td>• Adequate housing, Homelessness, Housing rights • CG Regulations, RTA, Illegality • Images/views of CG, How CG envisioned, Illegitimacy • Census data / Media reports, Govt documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The story</td>
<td>• Structure, end/ beginnings • Time • Place/Space • Actors • Identities • Non-human actants • Plight</td>
<td>• Binary oppositions, Us/them • Transitions, Here/there, Then/now • Upward/downward comparisons • Doing and performing • Contradictions and complexities • Tensions and conflict • Poverty and deprivation • Inscription devices</td>
<td>• Pathways • Sense of community, Social connections • Health • Dwelling, Physical environment • Marginalisation, exclusion, Stigma • Access, Resources • Place attachment, Home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stories within the story
A final layer of analysis occurred when interview material was grouped to form the chapters of the thesis. Nonetheless the narratives are by no means discrete. In this process of making relevant groupings particular care was taken to ensure that the nature and complexity of individuals’ stories (both in part and in whole) were not lost. The analysis endeavours to honour the interwoven form of the stories, the multifaceted sets of experiences, intentions and circumstances that cannot be estranged either from each other or from broader contexts. However, in doing so, given the sheer amount of narrative collected, there has been a necessary selection process in the choice of illustrative stories presented. These narratives are used to bring to light key narratives and provide a broad understanding of camping ground residence.

**CONCLUSION**

The underpinnings of this research methodology and method described here aimed to develop an understanding of the complex interplay of factors and housing pathways leading to camping ground residence. Narrative analysis applied as theory and method was used to explore the experiences of those living in camping grounds, and their health, moving beyond a description of why people live in camping grounds to a fuller picture of the nature and dynamics of this housing through collection and analysis of narratives.

As Wiles et al. (2004) state ‘talk is messy’, and operates at many levels simultaneously, revealing 'a great deal about the speaker and their social and historical background as well as about their explicit topic' (p. 92). Ricoeur's and Mishler's approach allows the specific experience of participants expressed in their interview talk to be seen within broader ideas of society, space and place, and in relation to norms and values and knowledge. In addition, applying Somers' ideas of narrative allows for complexity and interconnections of context to be realised in the research. Somers' ideas will enable the experiences of camping ground residents to be linked with wider series of changes. For example, the ontological personal stories of health can be seen in relation to public narratives of identity and notions of ‘acceptable’ housing and homelessness, and adjoined to existing contemporary meta-narratives of determinants of health, and inequalities in health.

By taking into account the work of Mishler, Ricoeur, and Somers in order to analyse the camping ground residents' stories, the research uses a narrative framework that serves as a screen through which these housing stories may be examined. It should be noted here that the different theoretical key stones described here should be seen as intertwined, and only categorised and listed here as a way of showing the complexity and the ways in which the theory applies to this
research. The overall aim therefore is to begin with the narratives of camping ground residents and to analyse what becomes apparent and visible in relation to these different dimensions and contexts.

Taking the perspectives of camping ground residents goes some way to give significance to their marginalised lay understandings of health and housing. The research aims to provide the personal stories of camping ground residents, in which may lay some key ideas of how these are told in relation to wider, more public narratives. Winstanley (2002) states ‘We need both biography and context to demonstrate the complex interaction between neighbourhood, house and home, other and self’ (p. 823). Narrative analysis tasks the researcher with bringing together all varying perceptions in an overall understanding of the dynamics of camping ground residence. Firstly by examining individual accounts, and then by locating these narratives within broader socio-political narratives.

The narratives were analysed with regard to content, theme, and structure, which helped me to interpret them in complex ways. I paid attention to how things were said, including the linguistic devices the participants used to convey what they wanted to convey, as well as to what was said. Coherence between these two areas strengthened the interpretation of the residents’ stories. I analysed narratives individually and compared them to each other, resulting in a description of individual life stories as they related to the larger social group and its socio-cultural context. The following four chapters present the narratives collected.
PATHWAYS

INTRODUCTION

‘... It is hence not just a matter of finding the link between the quantitative and the qualitative but also between individuals and the social structure and between what is rational and variable in human decisions. Thus housing choice and the social structure of urban space become more intelligible in their proper time and space... The decision to change dwellings, which in principle belongs to households, hence brings into play a multiplicity of factors from chance to necessity, both freeing and constraining, and remains as mysterious in its resolution as in the connections between its initial conditions and the character of its conclusions. (Lelievre & Levy-Vroelant, 1992, pp. 14–15, cited in Strassmann, 2001)

‘It’s a place where they can stay’ (Matai, service provider)

One's housing is continuously affected by social, economic, cultural and environmental changes of, and within, society. The housing provided within camping grounds is no exception. Moreover, the movement in and out of housing is not a discrete event, but can be seen as affecting and affected by previous and future moves. Here the housing pathways of camping ground residents are discussed: How do camping ground residents come to live in camping grounds? This question is placed within the broad housing sector, and draws attention to the complexity of mobility processes and housing decision-making, as acknowledged in the literature review (Hartig et al., 2003; Clapham, 2002).
Housing pathways show people’s interactions with housing over time and space, and how movement between one dwelling or location to another is linked to the decision making (and capability), experiences, and preferences of each household (Clapham, 2002). Here the housing pathways of camping ground residents are discussed, within the context of their significant life course events, and features of the housing market that constrain and or enable. Discussion of pathways, is not then to identify the 'cause' of camping ground residence, but to describe the ways in which social processes and structures can contribute to this housing pathway.

The trajectories into camping ground for some are 'forced'. For some, this was in relation to affordability, or disruption or dysfunction in family and social networks. For others, they moved into a camping ground as a direct reaction to an inability to access other housing or when faced exclusion from mainstream housing. Either way they confronted some level of social exclusion, through a lack of social or economic capital. This set of narratives is in contrast to a second set of neoliberal narratives that focus on choice and lifestyle, and movement into camping grounds is described as a preferred housing pathway. These latter patterns of movement are most strongly centred on cultural capital and life events, such as retirement.

What is noted next is that, regardless of whether movement into a camping ground was linked to specific culture or lifestyle choice, or as an outcome of external forces, once in the camping grounds residents stressed the importance of the camping ground environment and lifestyle. That is, while economic necessity may require a move into a camping ground, or the movement was shaped by an inability to access mainstream housing, the cultural and social aspects of living in a camping ground environment were for most no less enjoyable or satisfactory than for those 'choosing' to live there.

Camping ground residents also spoke of future movement, highlighting their circumstances continuing within their whole life, rather than a snapshot view of their housing. Pathways out are influenced by their opportunities and constraints and show an interdependent interaction between locational choice and personal need, preference and ability. For some there was little present intention to move on, or actual limited options of mobility. However, the temporary nature of the housing gave many residents a sense of being able to move if and when desired or required.

This chapter emphasises a variety of combinations of trajectories into camping grounds, and how this housing may influence future movement. The narratives of residents, service providers, and owners provide illustration of the exclusion experienced by many residents in their housing pathways in, through, and out of camping grounds. Social and institutional exclusion limits residents’ participation in society and their access to housing resources.
**PATHWAYS INTO CAMPING GROUNDS**

‘It’s not a quick road to a camp, but it’s a hard one’ (Totara, service provider)

**FORCED PATHWAYS**

Castles (2003) provides a useful framework in his analysis of forced migration where larger forces (economic, social or environmental) make people move. Forced movement here is considered a social process, and is explored in terms of human agency and social networks, where a lack of human agency results from lack of affordability or low income, and there may be disruption or dysfunction in social networks. The narratives of camping ground residents, owners, and social service providers give attention to the forced aspects of pathways into camping grounds. These can be analysed with particular regard to family and community roles in shaping movement, the economic dynamics of housing pathways, and how social capital, cultural capital and social networks factor in dynamics of the mobility of camping ground residents (access and exclusion). These factors can be enabling for residents or they can be restrictive and socially exclude people.

Camping ground owners spoke of ‘plenty’ of people ‘forced’ into camping grounds. Owners spoke of the demand for housing within the camping grounds, where they may receive several phone calls a week with people requesting accommodation. Takapu spoke of the sites being usually occupied: ‘We don’t have a waiting list, but ah, when one leaves it usually fills within the week by someone enquiring’. Prior to moving into the camping grounds, some residents had been living with friends and family, some in other camping grounds, or in caravans at other people’s places. Several had lived in different camping grounds in the past.

Three particular examples of forced pathways were prevalent in the narratives: affordability, disruption and dysfunction in social relationships, and difficulties in accessing and maintaining housing. These are all associated with a lack of options and social exclusion, where people ‘resort’ to living in a camping ground, or are placed there by others. These narratives echo Australian literature which emphasises that many people use caravan parks when in need of emergency accommodation, and more long-term accommodation where there is nowhere else to go, and usually for people who face social and material disadvantage (Bostock, 2001).

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24 A minority had moved from private rental accommodation and homeownership. These were generally people who ‘chose’ to live in the camping grounds cross-reference section on ‘choice’.
Affordability

Many residents moved into camping grounds in an attempt to find cheaper accommodation, as owner Hoiho describes: ‘They’re living in what they can afford basically’. Narratives described camping grounds as low-cost housing, accessible to those on low incomes. Furthermore the simplicity of housing costs was highlighted; camping grounds are convenient and gave initial and ongoing flexibility in costs to residents. In these ways camping grounds were understood to meet a need for many residents. Narratives of affordability were given in relation to individual characteristics of residents, and then to the characteristics of the housing market.

Characteristics of individuals

Service providers identified that many residents had not been able to access or sustain mainstream housing due to personal capability.

Tawa: Mental health issues and drug addiction seem to pop up fairly regularly in these situations. The people that come to us are having trouble acquiring accommodation, but there’s a whole lot of other issues going on. Income, they might need counseling, and there’s a whole lot of other services they need to access. So their accommodation is just one part of the picture of their situation.

They described people driven to camping grounds, and camping grounds as places for outcasts.

Totara: They’ve just run out of options, run out of money to borrow, or burnt their bridge where they’ve been staying.

Rata: There are some people who come out of institutions, they’ve gone back to family and family can’t cope with them, so they’re moved out. In some cases they’ve moved them into caravan sites. They’ve either lost their houses, mortgagee sales, or they’ve been kicked out. Their choice becomes camping grounds. And it’s not necessarily just family that’s forced them, perhaps they’ve ticked the landlord off, and they’ve ended up there.

Totara (service provider), Tieke (resident) and Takapu (manager) all spoke of other social issues affecting residents, including high debt levels and substance use and abuse, which in turn can mean residents have no other actual housing options.

Totara: A lot of the clients that are going to the camping grounds are drug users, alcohol abusers, and there are clients who couldn’t get bond to go into a house, and who had exhausted all advances from their benefits … so we were recommending to go to these places [camping grounds] ‘cos they’re cheap.

Takapu: It’s not a choice, it’s a necessity, just somewhere to live and it’s cheap. Until they find their feet again, and get established and pay their bills off … A lot of them come in with a lot of debt, and always seem to have a lot of debt collectors hanging around … If they weren’t here they’d be homeless.
Tieke: In a town camp ground you do get the ones who can't afford to be in town or they've had a lot of messy bullshit go on in their lives, and they're messy themselves or they're alcoholics or bloody, you know, major druggies and this sort of thing.

Camping ground residents, service providers, and owners all had similar sentiments about the socio-economic deprivation faced by residents. These narratives frame pathways into camping grounds as complex, and describe the complicated and interconnected sets of problems that many camping ground residents face. Bratt, Stone and Gleeson's (2006) stance of the intense difficulty in dealing with issues whilst experiencing homelessness is relevant here:

‘Housing is also crucial because many of the other problems that may contribute to, exacerbate and prolong homelessness – joblessness, substance abuse, mental illness, physical abuse, family break-up – are both far easier to withstand when housed, and are more likely and more damaging when housing is unstable or lacking and the downwards cycles of homelessness have set in … Once an individual or family becomes homeless, an extra layer of problems is created on top of whatever led to the homelessness in the first place, including the search for temporary shelter, declining health, depression, threat of loss of children and loss of documents and resources. Exiting homelessness becomes more difficult as the need to simply satisfy daily basic needs, intensified and vastly complicated by homeless status, interferes with job training, education and job or housing searches’ (p. 326).

Other narratives centre on individual responsibility and seem less sympathetic to residents’ plight, such as Kowhai: ‘Lack of money, but they may be unwilling to spend money on a rental’. Takapu neither offers any acknowledgement of the barriers to accessing housing:

Takapu: We get a lot of enquiries from families, trying to place families, but, um, I see it as their own problem because if they get seven weeks notice to move out of a place, they've got seven weeks to find a place, then they'll say "Oh, we have to be out of our place tomorrow", well, why haven't they done anything about it earlier?

He portrays a reluctance to look at the macro-level in which people's lives are subject to various structural-historical constraints, such as an economic recession or regional down-turn. This stance was also reflected in narratives that focused on the characteristics of individuals as shaping the possible ways people come into camping grounds. These two narratives centre on individual responsibility; Kowhai and Takapu offer no acknowledgement of the barriers of accessing housing. However, the line between ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ people is not quite distinctive for some owners and other residents.
Weka: For some people it could be a case that, it's not a matter of shortages, of getting housing, it's probably because they've breached their contract more than once, that they're stuck here, that could be the case, 'cos the alternative is to go for private rental, but then again you need to be recognised as a tenant, and if you don’t have any referencing as a good tenant, or a tenant at all, then you’re going to be thrown in the heap.

Weka, a resident, sees others less fortunate than him living at the camping ground, and is quick to point out their indiscretions and mistakes that they have made, errors, poor choices and behaviour, and that they become trapped in a situation, in the camping ground. Alternative options are few.

**Characteristics of housing market**

Other people in social agencies discussed some individuals’ inability to maintain accommodation as the path into camping grounds, but their narratives more often reflect system barriers, such as bond payments. This is in line with Peace’s (2002) view that many mental health consumers are pushed into unsuitable housing as a result of low income and high costs of suitable housing. Some lose entitlement through behaviour such as not paying, or antisocial behaviour, but social service providers view this through a social exclusion lens in that they do not see these to be ‘legitimate’ reasons for people not being able to access housing.

The decision-making behaviour of individuals is tied up with available options, and so attention must be paid to the context (economic political social) of people's housing pathways (Ozuekren et al., 2002; Kearns et al., 2003). Moving into a camping ground is related to the situation within which the decision is made, which often constrained the choices of people. Matuhi’s narrative is reflective of a ‘nowhere else to go’ phenomenon. He does describe his and his girlfriend’s move into the camping ground as their ‘choice’, but it was made within a context of limited options.

Matuhi: This was just like, oh we'll come here and sort something else out. We didn't want to be where we were so, it's a last minute decision. But it's not like we got kicked out or nothing, we didn't have arrears. We just got sick of it. Oh it's a long story, but ah, yeah we had a house in Lower Hutt, and sort of things went missing and that, so we left, and we looked for something else, yeah, wasn't the best place to be.

In this, he talks of a situation developing over a long period of time. They were forced out of previous accommodation by unsatisfactory social relationships and then faced an inability to secure any other housing. They were keen to demonstrate that they had options, they could rent if they wanted to. However they described how hard it is to get a flat, with limited resources, limited money, and the discrimination faced: no one wants to take on a young couple, and both on
unemployment benefit. Matuhi’s narrative and others’ showed how housing choice decisions are embedded in wider social processes and structures. His choice is constrained within his own opportunities and preferences, and there were also structural factors that determined these. Mandic (2001) states 'It has not been established how housing opportunities and 'housing choice menus' are structurally determined by particular structures of housing provision, other than those of the market' (p. 58). However, Matuhi’s narrative shows his judgments about his choices and possibilities occur within his social world and his resources. While not an ideal move for many, that is, a forced move, they make adjustments in recognition of constraints. Service providers also recognise that housing choices for people similar to Matuhi are subject to restrictions and pathways are often ones of limited resources, tying in ideas about ‘choice’. Mandic (2001) states dynamics of forced choice work both in this individual/local sphere, as well as wider levels: ‘In the broadest sense, even the national (or local) housing stock, with its characteristics such as size, age and the tenure composition, may serve as an indicator of individual choice and housing opportunities’ (p. 58).

Both Karamu and Rata talked of economic and system barriers in entering into, and sustaining private rental accommodation.

**Rata:** They can't afford the market rent that's out there currently, rent has become so expensive, because it’s all market rent, so people just don't want to go there, and they just find the cheapest, easiest ways, 40 bucks a week or whatever it is for a caravan, and that's it.

**Karamu:** In general terms, more often than not, it's low income, the dole obviously … there's a big issue with market rentals and what they've done, in the past 12 to 18 months they really have gone beyond the reach of a lot of people, even with assistance from WINZ in the form of accommodation supplement, I'm finding more and more people are approaching us [Housing New Zealand] because one of the issues that is going on in their lives is that they cannot afford to either sustain private rental, or actually access it in the first place, so sure there's other issues going on in their lives, but that's a big part of it.

Karamu, a Housing New Zealand manager, recognised that an unemployment benefit, or low income, was often an insufficient income to uphold rental accommodation, and he recognised a both significant and increasing number of people pursuing other accommodation options.

Housing costs have increased dramatically nationally\(^25\) which was recognised by the social service

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\(^25\) Housing affordability (renting and buying) has declined since the 1980s, and the problem has intensified since the start of the housing boom in the early 2000s (HNZC, 2008).
providers as making camping ground dwellings a very affordable alternative. This is the case, especially in coastal areas (such as Takutai) and in urban areas (such as Taone).

Ease and convenience

The affordability of the camping ground was also related to the short-term nature of the accommodation and the transient community, and to convenience. Several residents pointed to the ease of setting up within a camping ground.

Kokako: I think it comes down to a matter of economics, I mean how much to you have to pay to rent a flat? Two weeks in advance, bond, electricity ... It’s convenience as much as anything else.

Karaka, a WINZ case manager, was also aware of the difficulties faced by residents in accessing private market rental housing, and linked the inability of many to allow for the costs of establishing a house.

Karaka: Bonds are at least $600, and rent is $150. They just can't come up with that money. And then they've got to get furniture, the power on, the phone on, all that sort of thing, and they just can't afford it. So it's mainly financial. [In camping grounds] they don't need to have all their appliances, they don’t need to find furniture.

The low initial and ongoing costs of camping ground housing was an incentive for many. Costs associated with ‘normal’ housing, such as furniture, connection fees, and rent advance or bond payments were noted as negligible in the camping ground setting, making the housing far more accessible to those without such resources. These straight-forward up-front costs made entering the camping ground easy and desirable to those who did not have any financial reserves. The majority of camping grounds did not require up-front payments, and residents often held the view that they were fortunate having all costs covered. All residents paid one low weekly payment, which covered the dwelling, electricity, and access to utilities (including local telephone, washing machine, ablutions, and kitchen facilities).

Rata: They've got no lawns, no rates, no nothing. Nothing to worry about really eh. So that is becoming a better option for a lot of people, a better option in that regard.

Kereru speaks of being ‘lucky’, and how her housing costs are limited, indeed ‘free’:

Kereru: We consider ourselves lucky here really, considering our rent covers not only free power, but it's free washing machine, a free local telephone. We're pretty lucky really, good showers, bloody good showers, and only $2 for the drier. You know, we're pretty lucky.
Many residents framed the low costs in camping grounds as positive, and it created a financial disincentive to private rental. The flexibility of the arrangements with ground owners compared to private landlords allowed a sense of freedom in regards to costs.

Hihi: We still pay $100 a week, which is what we first paid when we came in. And, if we go away, even though [truck] might still be sitting here, we don’t pay for that week. Because we’re not here, we don’t pay. You try telling that to a landlord, "I’m not there, so I’m not paying my rent" [laughter].

Hihi describes her escape from the constraints of the house, and the higher level of flexibility she has now. She is proud of the financial gains she experiences from living where she does, and sees the discrepancy with private rental. There is a sense that she feels she is getting a bargain, and only paying for what she receives. Matuhi was in the process of trying to find a private rental.

Matuhi: Everything’s all there, part of what you pay, just got to get on there when no one else is on there. There’s a TV lounge, so it’s not too bad, it’s not flash … but it’s a set rate. That’s how it should be everywhere mate, not plus expenses. $120 plus expenses, so you’re looking at $240 a week sort of thing, nah.

After experiencing straightforward budgeting at the camping ground, he was disheartened by what he considered hidden costs in the private market.

Matuhi: It sort of was a last resort, we tried looking for a house for a while first, it was just, ‘Oh fuck’. It’s nearly impossible to get a house these days, you got to have so much shit together … or they just won’t take us, don’t like the looks of us. People think young people are rowdy, and fucking loud, and party people, where some of us aren’t. It’s just one of those things.

Matuhi and his girlfriend highlighted that renting is becoming an increasingly complex transaction, and like others perceived age and class discrimination. For some living in a camping ground meant they had the ability to own instead of rent (own their own bus, truck, caravan).

Tui’s decision to move into the camping ground was made with financial constraints, but he also focuses on the positives even with his limited options.

Tui: I had a toss up, get a flat or buy the caravan. I preferred to spend $25,000 on this, instead of going and living in someone else’s flat, paying an x amount of dollars. I think this is a better atmosphere here, than a bloody flat up in [suburb], fucking Taone.

Tui considers that his economic trade-off in purchasing a smaller dwelling, meant he was able to enjoy better surrounds and greater autonomy. The long-term benefit he saw was not having a landlord making money out of him. Kereru made a similar calculation.
Kereru: How did I come to living in a camping ground? I got divorced, and I had three children at the time. We moved around house to house, I think we moved five times in five years. Then when the children left home I had enough money to get a cheap house, a very cheap one. And I thought, well the only places I’m likely to get a house is the back of Taone or somewhere like [small coastal area], somewhere miles away from where I wanted to be, or in a bad area.

In the trading of location for space, Kereru also adapted to her needs and ability at the particular stage of her life. Tui’s and Kereru’s narratives illustrate that camping grounds provide accommodation not only for low income buyers and renters, but for those with more resources seeking less maintenance and property costs. They have moved 'down' the housing market to reduce their costs of living, suggesting that directions of mobility or pathways into camping grounds are most likely to happen when faced with strong incentives, in these cases within in a period of change and with limited economic resources.

Winstanley (2002) applies a similar economic rationality argument to how people assess the amenities within localities. In the cases of Kereru and Tui, they rationalised their existing assets against the perceived risks in renting or buying in the mainstream market, and have gone on to make considered decisions - moving to camping grounds - to maximize gains. In contrast to the implication made by current economic rationality models and housing career literature that people work to progress themselves 'up' the housing market (Winstanley, 2002), these narratives show movement against the minimisation of risk and upgrades in housing. They do however still maintain an active role as housing consumers in moving to the camping ground, but defy the traditional sequential and upward mobility. They are attempting to better their housing situations with the expectation of financial gain, however in a way against the assumption of mobility frameworks that ‘progress in standards and quality of housing … is often a normative public goal’ (Abramsson, Borgegard & Franson, 2000, p. 2). Moves into the camping ground therefore may be dependent on affordability. However, as Kereru and Tui showed, it cannot be assumed that camping ground residents are passive or always without choices. Even with setbacks, they remained active in decision-making about their housing.

Employment was another characteristic of a forced pathway. This pathway can be regarded as a strategy to secure income and to improve work chances, and does hold benefit for these residents, both immediate and long-term. Residence at camping grounds was a housing adjustment that allowed economic opportunities in different locations, especially for seasonal and contract workers.

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26 No seasonal/contract workers residents fitting into this category were available to be interviewed, although owners and service providers referred to them.
Tawa: Seasonal workers in some parts of the country, every year at a certain time of the year [move in to camping grounds]. They have an income, but because they're not from the area they find it very difficult to find somewhere to live, and employers don't necessarily provide accommodation on site. There may not be many other options for these people.

Toroa: One is here for about eight months while she’s at tech. The other guys are working down here on contract. They could be here for a year or two. ** and ** were doing a lot of the earthworks and that across the road here, and they were here until their contract terminated, and then they got another contract down south. So they’re down there and apparently they’re back here next year, for another two-year contract, and they’ll come and stay, they live in a bus. I think for a lot of them, their work itself is pretty fluid. If their contract ends or terminates they’d like to be able to just up and move on to the next job, and be able to just move around and for that sort of people campgrounds are ideal, it just works out for them.

This set of narratives however can be viewed as not entirely ‘free rational choice’ as Lundholm, Garvill, Malmberg and Westin (2004) explain: ‘People’s decisions to migrate are determined by structural conditions and imperative constraints … Labour migrants, for example, move to regions of economic growth because they are forced to move (or to stay) due to various structural conditions’ (p. 61). These narratives show employment-related motives (either getting work or changing employment) as a pathway into camping grounds. For seasonal and contract workers, the propensity to move is increased where long commutes are not wanted, and camping grounds are used as temporary or long-term accommodation in order to increase job mobility. As Turner, Hewitt, Wagner, Bin and Davies (2004) state that long-term employment security is no longer prevalent, as globalisation and deregulation of labour markets have altered the nature of employment in many sectors. These contract workers show how causal and contract appointments place emphasis on mobility and flexibility, and that camping grounds as housing can match this lifestyle. Narratives demonstrated partial displacement into camping grounds, as they involve a change in residence, often in response to potential exclusion from labour market.

These narratives of affordability and economic reasons in relation to movement into camping grounds are not stand-alone explanations. Other triggers are those associated with life events, social networks, and social capital.
Disruption and dysfunction

Tawa: It’s more about people who had come out of a situation where they had been in reasonably secure accommodation with their partner, or they’d come out of prison, or they’d left home, they were a young person kicked out of home for whatever reason, and they were on the cusp of becoming homeless or rough sleeping, rather than going the other way, but I’m pretty sure that we would deal with people in all sorts of situations on the cusp of one or the other.

Disruption and dysfunction in social networks, particularly familial, precipitated movement into camping grounds for several residents. As Dieleman (2001) states, there are key interrelationships between one’s movement through housing and significant life events and situations. These interrelationships can be seen in some residents’ pathways into camping grounds, with several examples of how divorce and family dissolution, domestic violence and downward social mobility preceded camping ground residence.

Family break-up

Changing demographic patterns, including a high divorce rates, results in a changing pattern of housing use (Winstanley, 2002). Feijten (2005) states marital separation has both immediate and long-term negative consequences for housing. Being separated, and to a lesser degree being widowed, leads to lower housing quality; this effect lasts over the life course (Feijten, 2005).

Titoki: Here in Taone I know of an older person, he's retired, he lives in one of the camping grounds in his bus, and my understanding is that after his wife died, he had a fall out with family members. He couldn't afford a place on his own so he has taken his bus and is in one of the camping grounds, and he's been there for considerable time actually.

Titoki speaks of Kokako’s move into the camping ground which followed a need to adjust his housing situation. Like others, he faced housing upheaval due to personal circumstances, and an inability to resolve family disagreements within a household. Kokako speaks himself of the re-evaluation of life after his wife died.

Kokako: Oh my wife passed away, seven years ago, and we were living in a place I didn’t want to be anyway, and then family things happened … I had a caravan for a while, then bought a bus, and somehow I got here [laughter] and I stayed here, and ah, I’m quite happy here.

What started out as a temporary solution to a housing need resulting from relationship ending of a relationship, turned into a new lifestyle, and Kokako’s default decision was to stay. This was a common scenario for male residents that had left the family home to find a new life and then
after the fact rationalised living in camping ground long-term. While these narratives were typically from men, Totara gives an example of a woman moving in to a camping ground following a family crisis.

**Totara:** Some of them are clients who there's been a big change in their situation, like one client had lost custody of her children. She ended up, oh she stayed for years up at the camp, absolute years. She'd lost custody, and she'd lost the house, and she ended up moving up to the **one.** She was up there for such a long time … It depends on the person's circumstances, how they've ended up there. Some do it because it's the end, it's rock bottom, you know.

Following from this, narratives suggested that the camping grounds were used as the only affordable option until these residents could 'get back on their feet'. Hoihoi described the camping grounds as a retreat for these men.

**Hoihoi:** There's those young fullas down in the cabins, they are there 'cos it's cheap and they're saving money … These ones are single fathers, or divorced fathers now. Some of them get psychologically very battered from the divorce and how they're treated, and the kids, and access concerns. They got pretty beaten down in all respects and it takes them a while just to recover and start planning and deciding what the hell they are going to do with their lives.

Tieke is an example of such, and talks of the camping ground as a retreat to recover.

**Tieke:** I had a marriage break up in Taupo. I was, you know, just to stay for a week, temporary … I didn't leave … For the past three years I was quite happy not to, after the marriage break up and that, you seem to get a bit shell-shocked … It wasn't a messy divorce or anything like that, but it was, you know, not nice as such, and this is the best place I could have come. I remember after my week was up, I was sitting here thinking ‘Oh shit, do I really need to go anywhere?’

Furthermore, one service provider highlighted that men were reluctant to seek outside help, and often faced further isolation.

**Titoki:** The biggest problem is men, it's not a derogatory comment … [laughter] … It's the fact that men don't want to tell anyone what's happening. They don't feel like they can do anything, so if you don't do it for them, they get lost in the mist somewhere.

Others use camping grounds as a place to distance themselves from their family, as Takapu describes.


Takapu: They’ve probably got issues with their family, a few do. One’s got family locally that live in Taone, but she chose to live in a caravan by herself, so that’s her choice. It probably gives her the freedom, she might be hard to get on with, I don’t know.

Parekareka and Korora similarly spoke of Kakapo's dysfunctional family relations, and his escape to the camping ground.

Korora: His kids ended up freeloading. He was in a flat, in the end he couldn’t stick it, so he ended up moving out. He doesn’t mind his own company. He left them in his flat, ‘cos with kids and grand-kids all moving in. It was the typical whānau situation in that he was expected to provide accommodation for everybody.

The owners of one camp spoke of frustration at the inability of local families to cope with their own, and trying to place problem youth at the camping ground. Several key informants spoke of 17- and 18-year-olds being kicked out of home, after family disputes.

Korora: We sometimes get mums coming in saying, ‘I can't stand the kids’, my 17 year old daughter.

Parekareka: And that’s reasonably frequent, mothers coming in and trying to get rid of their children, offspring.

In this set of narratives of family breakdown, camping grounds provide new opportunities for these residents. For some, it was actual provision of housing as opposed to rough sleeping, and others a retreat or space to recover from personal crises. The role of camping grounds in housing – with regard to relationship disruption and dysfunction – appears to be gender patterned, where narratives framed men as more likely to use camping grounds following the end of relationships. They suggest that men in these situations have fewer options to secure housing elsewhere. However, another set of narratives shows that women and families also use camping grounds as housing in response to relationship problems.

**Domestic violence**

Social service agency workers told of their knowledge of women escaping domestic violence, leading to them living in camping grounds. Kowhai, a social service provider, describes camping grounds as a source of emergency accommodation when women are in these situations.

Kowhai: Domestic violence situations. We don’t have a refuge here, so we have been known to place the woman temporarily in camping grounds. The kids go to somewhere else, to whānau. It’s usually an emergency situation where we don’t want the partner to find her.
In both locations, a lack of formal emergency accommodation linked women experiencing domestic violence with camping grounds. Kowhai admitted her service placed women in the camping grounds, but stressed it as a short-term solution. Kakariki, a resident, also spoke of her experience of domestic violence, where the camping ground was her last port of call. For her the move was stimulated by violence and a change in the relationship meant she felt pressure to change housing.

Kakariki: I’m living in a caravan in a caravan park, and I love it. I don’t have to worry about my ex-husband tracking me down, he’s a loopy fucker, real loopy … I mean he was violent, every Friday and Saturday night I’d end up in hospital somewhere, and it wouldn’t be through sickness, it would be through getting a hiding. He’d give me a black eye, or a blood nose, or something like that. I just wanted to go to bed and let him go, but the cops would drag me down there, ‘We’re going to do him for assault’. Every time it came to a week before the court case I would drop the charges. The last time, I didn’t drop the charges. It was like “Nah, forget it, you can be charged” … And of course ever since my ex-husband got out of prison, it’s been like, ‘When I track you down, I’m going to get you’. It’s not so much that I’m on the run, it’s that I prefer him not knowing where I am. Because if he does track me down, I know what he’s capable of doing, and no matter how hard [present husband] might try, he won’t stop him, because he’s Mongrel Mob27.

Staying in the camping ground initially provided Kakariki with a refuge from her violent husband, and staying there gives her a sense of anonymity, and has meant that her ex-husband cannot track her down. Like other women, her pathway into the camping ground was a way of escaping family violence.

Totara, a WINZ case manager, also cites family violence as a pathway into camping grounds, giving an example of a man's pathway.

Totara: We had one guy come in who had gone to the camp, and he was sitting at my desk, and he’d just broken up from a relationship. He had two children, and he was a young guy, early 30s, Māori. He had been violent to her, and knew that, and was just devastated, bawling at my desk. As far as he was concerned his life had ended, you know, the day she finally kicked him out, and he’d be sitting in his caravan thinking about all the things that he didn't have, and he said every time he thought about his daughter it broke his heart … But he ended up, he lives by himself in a caravan. And that’s what it’s like, when you end up in a place like that, you’re gone. That’s your rock bottom, that’s it, you’ve hit rock bottom.

27 New Zealand gang
Totara’s narrative is illustrative of not only the pathways into camping ground for people through family violence, but also of downward mobility, where camping ground residence is the lowest point.

Similarly, camping grounds were seen to act as emergency accommodation. These emergency situations often turned into long-term stays. Tawa links high levels of mobility to people being forced from accommodation, and barriers to accessing permanent housing.

Tawa: In some parts of the country there actually isn’t any formal emergency accommodation and that limits what we are able to do to help, and that’s where you get workers contacting camping grounds to see if they can find a bed for this person … if they don’t have accommodation and they need it, and one of the options for them might be camping grounds, or if they’re living there they’d come to us because they don’t want to be living there. Often there’s a need for emergency accommodation because they may not have the support of extended family, or the resources if the family are stretched to capacity anyway. So people find themselves in situations where they’ve got very few choices.

In her study of women living in mobile homes in New South Wales, Manderson, Kelaher, McLaughlin and Sandberg (1998) similarly found pathways into the parks (from more permanent accommodation) were shaped by critical situations such as substance abuse, domestic violence, or as a response to economic difficulties. Tawa widens these pathways in identifying a lack of social support structure for many residents.

**Downward social mobility**

Some residents’ pathways were framed as a ‘necessity’. Despite initial reluctance to move into camping grounds, these residents were faced with financial hardship and were unable to sustain their previous housing. Where they had previously lived in a less deprived area, their comments often conveyed a sense of shame. Many residents and key informants held perceptions of camping ground residents as ‘down on their luck’.

Kea’s story is one of progressive downward social mobility. He got 'rescued' by his sister, and moved to Takutai for a period of restoration. His story typifies the deterioration of a man, once successful, and he relays with sadness how, after several life crises, he 'ended up' in the camping ground.

Kea: I’d had a pretty rough time down home. I’d been separated for ten years already, then I just started to go downhill. My sister who was living in Takutai said, ‘Well, I booked you a seat on a flight tomorrow morning’. The very next day I came up, got a job in no time actually, and so just decided to stay. It was the ten years before I came up here that were a bit rough, oh bloody rough actually, yeah.
Kea speaks of family dysfunction as the 'telling point' of his move into the camping ground. He tells of estrangement with his wife, and four children.

Kea: I've got four children of my own, oh they're adults now. I saw one in Gisborne, he wanted to get his car out of the garage, and I'd just won a $1200 race, and he says, 'You wouldn't have 400 bucks, would you Dad?', to get his car out, and I said, 'Well if I give you the 400 bucks, just don't forget where I live' … that was nine years ago, and still haven't seen him. I wasn't worried about the 400 bucks, it was just that, you know … [Daughter], she got married, she's a school teacher, and somebody sent me the local paper from Motueka eh, and it hurt badly. Her wedding was on the front page of the local paper, a big colour photo of him and her. I've never met him, I didn't even get an invite to the wedding. But I've only got myself to blame for that I expect. No, living here I only have to answer to myself.

Kea spoke of living at another camping ground after his marriage broke up, losing his job as a middle manager in industry, and then spending four months at Hamner Springs residential rehabilitation centre for his alcohol addiction. His feelings of rejection and being taken for granted were heightened at his last residence prior to moving to his current camping ground.

Kea: I was helping a joker out over in Nelson, and he said 'I'll pay you 60 bucks', plus free board, and I thought, 'Oh yeah, it'd be better than nothing'. But I never got paid once, so I went and got a cabin at another motor camp. When I went back to get all my belongings, there was tall boys and a chiming clock that my mother left me, and they'd shot off to Aussie. They'd sold everything, all my stuff, I haven't seen them since.

Kea’s story shows his pathway into camping ground relating to him steadily losing assets, and prey to theft. His downward social mobility both resulted in him living in the camping ground and loss of positive family relationships. Kea appeared to have had no communication with his family at the time of the interview; living in the camping ground meant he was cut off from his family, and his pathways into the camping ground was shaped by this family breakdown. The owners of Kea's camping ground described his life as a 'progression down hill', and a 'series of backwards steps'.

In summary, it is highly likely that one of the main reasons why there is an increase in the number of people living in camping grounds is increasing rates of separation and family breakup, when coupled with other economic factors such as housing affordability. Often households are motivated to move, and more frequently, in response to these types of life changes (Nordvik, 2004). For this group of residents, housing upheaval was experienced due to personal circumstances. Moves into the camping grounds were often movements down the housing hierarchy.
Access and exclusion

Riroriro: They find it hard to find a place to stay. People won’t have them.

Kaka: These people are seeking refuge in camp grounds.

So that’s what they are? Refugees?

Kaka: Oh my God, they’re refugees, you’ve got social welfare refugees. In fact all of us here, we’re all kind of refugees. There are lots of tragedies, lots of tragedies.

Several residents moved into camping grounds after unsuccessfully trying to access the mainstream housing market and state housing. In their narratives they attribute this to perceived shortages in the housing market, and a competitive environment. These narratives are connected to narratives of affordability, but are more focused on the constraints arising for residents in the availability of alternative housing, and also how housing is allocated. This was particularly marked for mental health consumers and those exiting institutions. In addition, there was an overt reliance on camping grounds to provide housing, both short- and long-term, in Taone and Takutai. The private market and camping ground owners, alongside state planning and policy and housing allocation were seen to act as gatekeepers and shape the residents’ access to housing. This lack of options, reliance on camping grounds and emergency accommodation, and barriers to access mainstream and state housing is an expression of social exclusion (Somerville, 1998).

A lack of accessible and appropriate housing, at the right time, forces people into camping grounds. Service providers describe those moving into camping grounds as running out of options and unable to access any other housing, as Totara and Karamu reiterate;

Totara: We have a lot of people looking for accommodation in Taone. And with Housing New Zealand having such a long waiting list now, and clients don’t want to go and stay at the hospital hostel [boarding house], it’s a breeding ground for blimmin druggies. There’s some clients who may have a disability, but aren’t into drugs and alcohol, but still can’t find a place to live. There’s emergency housing, Salvation Army, but that can be full.

Karamu: It’s a real issue in the fact that it is often a last resort, absolutely. It’s that or it’s sleeping on the street basically. So even as a temporary housing solution it is very much as last resort. They have to go there because there’s just nowhere else to go. They might have an application with Housing New Zealand and haven’t yet been housed, or they’ve tried to access the private market and for whatever reason haven’t been successful. So there’s just nowhere to go. If it’s a male, obviously they are not eligible for the Refuge, or Salvation Army may be full up.
These social services providers identified that for some residents camping grounds were the only choice. A lack of access to both emergency accommodation and more permanent housing led some to live in unhealthy environments, or in places where they did not want to be, as Totara explains: ‘It’s a roof over their heads. I don’t think you could possibly choose to live there. They’re not ecstatic that they’re there’. Ultimately, this group of residents were living in camping grounds through no choice of their own.

Some providers and owners identified those exiting institutions and those with mental health issues as particularly vulnerable and unable to access and maintain permanent housing. This is consistent with New Zealand research which suggests many people coming out of institutions use temporary accommodation such as camping grounds (Peace, 2002). Matai told of the difficulties for mental health consumers in sustaining accommodation.

Matai: It’s actually quite hard for them. We’re working with the local real estate agents, and they have seen that we support our people well, and that they pay their rent. They’re reliable as long as they are well. When they become unwell, they go into the unit, but nobody from the Community Mental Health team actually looks into what happens to the cat, what happens to the washing on the line, or food still in there. And mostly, if they are staying too long in the unit, they lose their accommodation, and that’s the hard part, very hard.

Matai displayed her frustration at a shortage of housing and social support to meet the needs of mental health consumers during times of inpatient care. The urgency of moves into hospitalisation and durations of stays, coupled with a lack of attention to sustaining housing, meant her clients were very vulnerable to homelessness. As Peace (2002) states: ‘Many people who experience mental illness need to live by themselves for recovery reasons, but a lack of suitable, affordable, single accommodation makes this independent option impossible. Living alone is also the least cost-effective living arrangement and few consumers/tāngata whai ora can afford it’ (p. 11).

Karamu also links poor access and housing security to deinstitutionalisation and a lack of state and service intervention.

Karamu: We’ve got a situation here locally where they closed down a lot of Taone hospital, and a lot of the patients were put into the community, with so-called support services in place. I think it’s common knowledge that it didn’t work terribly well for an awful lot of them. There’s a large number of people who have been involved in mental health services at some stage out there trying to access housing, and often they’re very itinerant.

Karamu spoke of the low incomes of many mental health consumers, and how their marginalisation in the housing market made them more vulnerable to structural pressures, and more likely to reside in camping grounds. A lack of family support and inadequate community
mental health care were also identified as by other service providers as significant factors in mental health consumers’ pathways into camping grounds. Tawa and Kauri identify similar barriers for people exiting prison.

Kauri: One of the main scenarios is that they come out of prison and they have nowhere to go. So it seems like an easy option for them to go to camping grounds. They usually end up there through one of the services that they’re been through, Probation, Corrections or other service providers trying to help people out with accommodation.

Tawa: It seems to be very difficult for workers to really sufficiently assist people coming out of prison. You’re often facing barriers from prospective landlords, flat mates and other who may know the background of that person and not want to take them on. So where do they go?

These service providers showed concern about the adverse effects of the inability to access housing, and provide narratives that suggest socially structured pathways to less-preferred dwellings in camping grounds. The housing of people in these circumstances is viewed as contingent on social service provision and the accessibility to housing in camping grounds, to help them achieve what should be a basic task of sourcing housing.

Camping ground owners spoke of receiving people placed by social service providers, including Work and Income New Zealand, Department of Corrections (and Probation), Child, Youth & Family, and mental health services.

What about the ones who get placed with you? Where do they come from?

Parekareka: Jail [laughter].

When faced with obstacles and a lack of resources, all these government agencies, and non-government agencies, referred people to camping grounds. Totara spoke of referrals to camping grounds as both emergency accommodation to meet immediate needs, and to provide more permanent ongoing housing.

Totara: We refer directly, or they’ll sit at our desk and we’ll dial the number to see if they’ve got any vacancies, especially if they’ve been kicked out of somewhere else. And, we get people who turn up, “I need somewhere to stay”. That happens frequently, that’s huge. So we’ll say, “Right, here are the options. There’s the ** camp, and there’s the motor camp there”.

Totara described a situation of direct placement of people. Residents were often put in place by people in positions of authority as a solution to the problem that they were excluded from other places. This group of residents was described by providers as ‘problem clients’ and ‘hard to house’. Gurstein and Small (2005) describe the ‘hard to house’ as challenging for service providers given the multiple issues (and combined effects of) faced (such as addiction, mental illness, lack of
social skills), and emphasises the complexity in life trajectories precipitating housing problems. Narratives here show camping ground residents who have had difficulty in maintaining housing and were at risk of further homelessness. People exiting state institutions are often housed in camping grounds driven in part by policy that requires accommodation to be found. When asked if people rely on access to accommodation in camping grounds, there was general consensus from service providers.

Tawa: Yeah I'd say so, definitely. 'Cos some parts of the country there's nothing else, there's literally nothing else.

Rimu: In Takutai yes, I'd hate to think what we'd do if we didn't have the camping grounds. We'd have nowhere to put people.

Nikau: I look at the guys up there, if they didn't have that roof over their heads, yes, they would be under the bridge.

Karamu: They certainly serve a purpose, absolutely, there's no two ways about that, and without them [laughter] we'd be even worse off.

Totara: Oh yeah, yeah, you need it, definitely. Where else do they go? If they don't have camps, that's it, they're on the streets, no two ways about it.

These providers refer to camping grounds as providing a service to residents. At the very least, the camping grounds give these residents an opportunity of housing, and one that they can sustain. Owners talk of referrals as frequent, and perceive it as an easy option for services.

Parekareka: We are a dumping ground from government services, which really, really gets us going.

Korora: They really think that a camping ground, where you've got holidaymakers and kids, is the best place to provide care in the community.

Parekareka: To get rid of their crap.

Takapu: We are used for emergency accommodation, but we don't advocate the fact. It used to be, ‘Oh, emergency housing, come and stay at Camp **’. We used to get social services ringing us up, ‘You got emergency accommodation? We've got a family in trouble’. We've had problems. Most of the emergency people are the down-and-outers who are on the streets, and somebody's picked them up and said, ‘Oh, we want to help you’, and then try and lumber it on us … But we do still take people for emergency.

While these owners recognised that there are limited options for many residents, they see themselves as dealing with the consequences of such placements. The camping grounds in these circumstances for a place for people who fall between services, and the normalcy of these pathways was deemed problematic.
Forced pathways as social exclusion

The forced pathways of many camping ground residents were shaped by an inability to access services and mainstream housing, demonstrating their marginal position. The stories presented in this section show how housing fits with narratives of social exclusion, and that pathways into camping grounds are often a symptom of the social exclusion residents face. Somerville (1998) defines social exclusion in housing as where housing processes work to 'deny certain groups control over their daily lives, or to impair enjoyment of wider citizenship rights' (p. 772). He views social exclusion as socially constructed, explaining social exclusion as a product of economic, social and political processes that result in 'a sense of social isolation and segregation from the formal structures and institutions of the economy, society, and the state' (Somerville, 1998, p. 762).

Similarly, Cattell (2004) uses social exclusion to link place and space to deprivation, and how housing problems can be a symptom of systemic issues, resulting in 'dislocation from mainstream norms'. ‘Social exclusion involves inadequate participation - social, economic and political - integration, and power’ (Cattell, 2004, p. 946). Cattell (2004) explains social exclusion through the dimensions of culture, values and behaviour (or agency), and secondly, structure and resources. In the stories of camping ground residents, it becomes visible how structure and culture interact in social processes that occur to exclude people, leading them to live in camping grounds.

Furthermore, residents were often described as experiencing uneven opportunities in housing. They were forced into temporary accommodation and faced limited choices in housing. Aside from the issue of insufficient resources, there are three main ways gate keeping formed a barrier and influenced the opportunities of people to access ‘normal’ housing. The state, the private rental market, and camping ground owners all act as gatekeepers.

Firstly, government agencies, such as Housing New Zealand, act as gatekeepers to social housing. Narratives point to housing being unevenly allocated, both through discrimination, and individuals’ difficulties in fitting required criteria. Service providers identified that some were not able to access mainstream rental properties, and were unable to negotiate their way around the housing sector. Key informants described the ‘failure’ of mental health policies. A result of legislation is a group who have been returned to communities without the adequate support and services to meet their housing needs.

In the case of mental health consumer housing, this group also faces social exclusion at the national level and through housing policy. There is an apparent lack of planning and policy to allow for access to appropriate housing for this group, which often leaves them unable to access housing apart from the camping grounds, which often are substituted for more permanent housing. Failure in policy design means that these mental health consumers are further isolated and reliant on camping grounds for accommodation because there is continued exclusion that
they are unable to secure a dwelling. One owner did believe that a physical shortage of housing, and the distribution of such, for mental health consumers led to them having a high number of people seeking accommodation at their camping ground. There were some doubts expressed about the transparency of the process.

Korora: It doesn’t seem to be very equably distributed, I don’t know how they seem to decide who gets the housing.

Housing New Zealand allocates state housing resources, and as seen in Karamu's narrative below, it is often based on 'their own implicit goals, values, assumptions and ideologies' (Ozuekren et al., 2002). A Housing New Zealand manager, Karamu, placed the onus back on individuals to obtain rental dwellings. He focused on individuals’ inabilities and incompetence as reason why they may not have been successful.

Karamu: A lot of them come in here seeking our assistance but again just because someone might be sleeping in their van say, again doesn’t necessarily mean that they can’t access the private market. It depends on their circumstances and who they are, and their background. Someone may have recently separated from a partner, and a partner has evicted them from the property, and just at this time of their life they have nowhere that they can stay. They've been trying to rent privately but just have had no luck, so they've decided to sleep in their car for a couple of weeks. Just because someone comes to us and says, 'Oh, I'm sleeping in my car, I need a Housing New Zealand property', doesn't necessarily mean that they are going to be a high priority applicant. We need to look at it holistically. We need to take into account a lot more than just the fact that they've come in here and said that they're sleeping in their car. But having said that, there are a lot of genuine cases where someone is sleeping rough because they have attempted all avenues, and the last resort is to sleep under the stars [laughter] and we would attempt to house them. His narrative implies there is a qualification for state assistance in housing. Individuals must show that they are worthy through effort and self-help. In his view, only cases categorised as 'genuine' are processed. Karamu’s narratives also show social division and exclusion in terms of income and wealth and housing option, or are those who are expediently highlighting their hard luck. Even when individuals cannot access market rentals, state housing provision structures can work to also exclude them if they are deemed not worthy of assistance.

The needs of some groups are disregarded or unnoticed, despite the criteria required for government assistance in housing being based on need. In particular, the narratives of service providers identify single people, especially men, those unemployed, those coming out of institutions, and mental health consumers as the most likely groups to experience such difficulty in accessing housing, or housing assistance. Karamu’s narrative illustrates how some groups may be thought of as not deserving state assistance.
Karamu: We do have quite a number of single males approaching us for assistance and it’s extremely difficult to help them. One, they are only allocated a one-bedroom property and they are very difficult to find anyway, and two, even if we do get one bedroom properties become available a single male is not normally urgent enough to warrant being housed in that property. A single male is going to be a pretty low priority applicant. So often they just will not get housed with Housing NZ. They really have to find their own way out there. And unless there’s some fairly major psychological issue going on in their lives, they can generally access the private market in some form. A single male has no commitments, and there’s no reason why in New Zealand why anyone hasn’t got an income. So they are generally going to be a low priority applicant, and often they are not going to get housed at all [by HNZC].

Karamu outlined a hierarchy of need, where men’s needs are not a priority and considers men should be able to fend for themselves. In these ways, men are further excluded from social housing by the informal rules that say that men are less vulnerable than women. Single men are more likely to be are excluded to the point of having to access temporary accommodation in camping grounds, where tenure is far more insecure. While these service providers must work within the frameworks and statutory policies - and resources - they are gatekeepers to state housing with personal ideas that may shape their actions and decision-making, such as assumptions.

Secondly, the private rental market also works to potentially exclude some people; camping ground residents' narratives tell of discriminatory practices encountered, where vacant dwellings were made available for more ‘suitable’ applicants. This has the consequence of these people being forced into housing that is of lower quality or not of their own choice. Because many of the residents had very low incomes and social disadvantages of one kind or another, they are effectively excluded from the private rental market.

Tawa: Workers have mentioned that they called this place, and this place, and this place for a tenant, and they were either all gone or, you know, didn’t want to have the client, for some reason.

Karamu also showed his awareness of these issues.

Karamu: They may not have the social skills to access the private market, anyone can apply, ring up a phone number they see in the paper regarding private rental, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that they’re going to get it. They may lack the skills, the negotiating with a prospective landlord. They may have real difficulty accessing the private market. They may have been staying with family and friends but that has gone sour, and there’s really no where else to go, and that’s the problem.
Karamu then acknowledged that resources such as respite care are becoming scarcer, but is more pragmatic in his approach. With no other options available for people to take, people ‘just have to’ move into camping grounds, ideal or not.

**Karamu:** Landlords can use their discretion, they have every right to, and these people are just not going to get the properties, so where do they go? Ah, whereas before they could maybe have respite care at the hospital, now that’s more and more difficult to access. They’ve got to have somewhere to stay, a roof over their head, and for these people it’s a real problem, a real issue, and often they just have to sleep rough or in camping grounds.

Karamu recognised the right of private landlords to select ‘desired’ tenants and exclude others. Kowhai, in her role as a district council manager, shares a similar black and white view of camping grounds as providing a ‘roof over heads’. She denied that there is a shortage of rental properties in Takutai, contrary to what other service providers stated. She diverts attention from discriminatory practices in the private rental market, placing blame on ‘the victim’.

**Kowhai:** No, there are adequate rental houses here. [Camping ground residence] is a choice and it could be a social choice, or it could be a financial choice, um, um … Paying rent means that you might have to share, and it's better to live in a camping ground, in a caravan park than share for some people … Mmm, maybe they don't want to [find other accommodation]. We do have a lot of rental houses here, and you can usually find something. There are houses available, they get advertised. There's quite a few people that choose to have that individuality. I don't know, I'm not sure. I wouldn't ever want to live in a camping ground [laughter] … I guess you have to say it is a choice, because if you say it's not a choice then you are saying that income support is not adequate. And if it is a choice, then it's a choice they're not supposed to be making anyway [laughter]. It shouldn’t be an option for them.

Kowhai focused on what she believed to be the individual choices of ‘some people’, that people choose not to use available opportunities to secure rental accommodation. Furthermore, her narrative suggests that they are being contrary in making choices to live in the camping grounds. Matuhi’s experience tells of a different reality.

**Matuhi:** Oh it's hard you know. You've got to get along with the people that want to rent it to you. They've got to approve of you, but, I don't know, if you look at enough places, and you're not too fussy, you know, you can get something.

He speaks of first-hand experience in trying to rent a property, which shows he faces limited choice in housing, and is dependent mostly on others. Furthermore, ‘choice’ is problematised; housing accessibility increases with a decrease in quality.

Camping ground owners at the local level told of a not-in-my-backyard syndrome where strategies were also employed by private landlords (and some camping ground owners) to make
sure ‘undesirables’ or people with mental health issues could not enter private rental or camping grounds, regardless of whether they have any alternatives available. This segregation results in further exacerbation of social isolation and exclusion.

Thirdly, camping ground owners and managers also play the role of gate keeping. They have developed informal exclusionary policies, as well as more formal rules where eviction may occur. Owners feel able to exclude residents if they do not meet the obligations on their part living at the camping grounds. They lose the benefit or option of living there if the rules are not upheld. This is discussed further in Chapter 5: Camping ground communities. The lack of tenancy protection for camping ground residents is discussed further in Chapter 7: Place & home.

Totara’s explanation of the housing issues faced by many residents sums up forced pathways, drawing on the ideas of affordability, dysfunction and disruptions, and access and exclusion.

Totara: I think there is a shortage of cheap accommodation, there's nothing, I mean rents have just skyrocketed … Places that were reasonably cheap, now clients just can't afford to move there. So they're living in areas where its not always safe, 'cos the cheaper the housing may be surrounded by quite a few gang members etc. There's all those sort of risks involved in that. We had one client recently she had two children in her care, and she just can't get accommodation, and has moved to [camping ground] living in one room. She's got custody, and I mean I know all the other clients that are up there, and some of them are quite messy, and there's a little girl of about four, and a little boy of three in this blimmin one room. It's horrid, it's awful, you know. They are all blimmin, you know, clients.

The inability financially within the current housing market to gain a private rental house meant that this grandmother and children were forced along a housing pathway that is abhorrent to this WINZ case manager. She pointed to her knowledge of the grounds and other residents, and understood this housing pathway to be unacceptable in terms of the living-space and amenities, especially for children, and that they are surrounded by the anti-social behaviour of other residents. This raises the issue that while they may be forced by financial hardship, or necessity, to move into such housing, there are unavoidable tradeoffs in other areas. Through systematic reduction of opportunity to live in affordable housing, many residents experienced social exclusion through the housing system. The price of alternative mainstream housing remains out of the affordability range of some people, such as many camping ground residents, and is a feature of the planning and production of housing (Somerville, 1998). This means that fewer opportunities are available to them in compared to other groups.

Social exclusion through housing occurs here with continual housing shortages, exclusion from mainstream housing, and the actual provision of housing in camping grounds. These housing circumstances reflect and further reinforce the socio-economic deprivation and the exclusion that results from these housing pathways into camping grounds. Even though they may
follow a social exclusion pathway into camping ground, it cannot be taken for granted that they remain socially excluded inside the camping ground. In some ways this exclusion is mediated by other aspects of the housing in camping grounds as will be discussed later, and in Chapter 5: *Camping Ground Communities*.

**PATHWAYS OF CHOICE**

There is a second set of narratives, although substantially smaller, in which human agency is assigned the central role. In contrast to these earlier narratives of forced choice and social exclusion, the narratives of a few camping ground residents stressed themselves as active decision makers where their pathways in the camping grounds were intentional processes. This is in line with what Elder (1999) describes as the principle of human agency: 'Individuals construct their own life courses through the choices and actions they take within the opportunities and constraints of history and social circumstances' (p.15). In this section, the focus of the narratives is on the freedom of those choosing to live in camping grounds.

Weka identified that for some, moves to the camping ground are shaped by external factors, whereas he makes it known that *his* was an individual preference. In doing so he distances himself from the 'other' group of camping ground residents.

Weka: I choose to come here. Some people probably don’t have a choice, they probably have nowhere else to go and this is it … I think for someone like that, it’s a real issue. They are here because they have no choice. That’s different to who I am, I mean, I’ve got a house, my own house, you know, swimming pool, and I choose to be here.

The awareness of others’ plight was common. Hihi similarly did not fit herself into a ‘forced’ category: ‘We chose it for a lifestyle, not because we had to’. This group of camping ground residents, usually older, claimed that their movement to the camping ground was voluntary – they moved because they wanted to. Others recognised that pathways into camping grounds were not always shaped by low socio-economic status.

Tarupunga: Like Karearea and Mohua, they’ve got lots of money, but they chose to live here, because they like the lifestyle and locality. There’s lots that live here and can’t afford to go anywhere else, but there are others who choose to live here because they want to.

Tui: A lot of older people who have caravans have all these pot plants and flowers, and their canary and what have you [laughter]. Quite happy, don’t have to rush around doing housework, and even the rich settle down in caravans. But they have bloody nice caravans too some of them, hundreds of thousands of dollars, every mod con.
Kokako and Kereru, neighbours, shared an enthusiasm about their pathways into their camping ground. They were positive about the choices they made.

Kokako: It was a lifestyle choice.

Kereru: Where else would we have sea views for a pittance a week? It was a deliberate choice of lifestyle to sell up that, the house, the bungalow somewhere.

Kokako: And live at the beach. These people they've got the big caravans with the annexes, things like that. They're not destitute, they have still got a choice.

They use place comparisons to positively evaluate their lifestyle, and rationalise their housing economically. Tieke draws attention to camping ground residence as an increasingly popular lifestyle choice.

Tieke: Living in camping grounds permanently is becoming more and more trendy. Like these sections along here, they're already booked out, people wanting to build [relocatable homes].

Knowledge of others moving into camping grounds provided some with links into such housing places where the campers get access to permanent sites. There is a degree of social capital which is tapped into, and flow of information and support, as Kereru experienced.

Kereru: Some of my friends were living in a caravan, and they were saying, ‘This is the life’. And when I thought about it, I thought "Hell, yeah" … So that’s why I decided.

These camping ground residents see themselves as more free in their decision-making than others who may have little control over wider structural circumstances. This does not mean that the economic and structural societal factors are insignificant to this group, but rather that they had more opportunities and choices in whether they stayed or moved. They had sufficient resources to enable them to make positive decisions that were not forced through financial necessity. Takapu talks of a sense of freedom stemming from this.

Takapu: Some in the caravans and campervans and buses it's a choice that they want to do, it's a lifestyle. They just want to roam and be free, and have no power bills, no rates to pay, you know things like that. It's hassle free.

For some, the move into camping grounds was a long process involving many considerations. Others who undertook the process shifted on a whim, with a 'why not?' attitude.

Hihi: We were actually on holiday in Mahia, and it was so lovely and peaceful and quiet and we sort of talked and it was something that we always wanted to do … We really enjoyed it, and we talked about how we'd always talked just uprooting and travelling the country. So we decided that we were going to live in a caravan, and travel round, but we haven't got the traveling bit, got the caravan bit [laughter].
The choice factor in moving was linked to the motive for moving. These were usually centred on retirement or lifestyle escape. With this reasoning behind them, the moving was easy to make happen. One common motive for making this pathway was nostalgia. Miromiro's story sees him aiming to recapture the past, and there is a clear element of choice in his approach.

Miromiro: I worked in Takutai for the power board for a number of years, and all the time I was living there I used to come down here fishing. Even when I used to come home from Australia for a holiday I used to come here. I used to park out there, go fishing. And then when I decided to retire, I thought, ‘Oh well, I'm going back to my favourite spot’.

Miromiro's pathway into the camping ground entailed coming back to his roots, similar to Whio.

Whio: 'Cos that’s my whānau home too, that marae up that hill. That’s our home too, yeah at Opape, yeah I feel at home out there.

While Miromiro is offered a place where he feels at home, Whio belongs - it is his turangawaewae. The camping ground is Kaka's time out:

Kaka: I was exhausted, and my mother was now dying, so I came to Takutai to relax, ‘cos I'd been here in 1978, that’s when I founded the New Zealand life, this association, right here. I thought, ‘Well, there’s a great place, I'll go there and relax’, so I came to the backpackers, stayed there for a couple of months, and then I met Parekareka, and I came to this camp ground. So instead of one month, I'm here now over a year and a half.

The narratives show some historical patterning to their housing choices, where their current lifestyle is a manifestation of and supported by previous experiences and strategies. For some these strategies were through the attainment of home ownership and development of capital. Others were more romantic, such as spending their time at the beach they used to visit. They are now ‘living the holiday’ of the past. One couple spoke of coming on holiday with the children for so many years, and when they retired they decided to move there permanently. This narrative is a fairly common pattern of part-here, part-there living. For Karearea and Mohua, their weekend retreat/holiday place became their permanent residence. After owning a caravan for 27 years on site, used for holiday accommodation, and being homeowners in another town, they moved to the caravan for years. At this point they then invested in a relocatable home at the same camping ground. Their pathway is one of movement up the hierarchy of housing within a camping ground from a caravan to a relocatable home. Prior to renting out their house they had been living part of the year in a caravan in the camping ground: this was a slow transition to permanent living.

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28 Turangawaewae: One’s home area, literally ‘a place to stand’.
Mohua: Well the camp's closed in June, July, and August, and opens in September so we stayed here from September right through to May … It was hard packing up to go home for the winter, yeah, but never mind it was only for June, July and August, and back down again, and then this place came on the market, so we bought it … A lot of people here have started off in a caravan, in the camp, like we did, and a place has come available or a section and they bought, and they're here.

The demographic and social characteristics of this group is important in understanding the context of their moving into camping ground decisions. The majority were retired, and talked of being in a stage of life where they placed emphasis on relaxation and the reduction of pressure after a hard working life. Their pathways into the camping grounds were part of their life cycle and preferences of the household, and their values and attitudes.

Takapu: Some of the people we have living here in the caravans it's a step towards their retirement and enjoyment, peace of mind and no worries. They can do with their money what they like instead of people fighting over properties and whatever.

Tui: Oh well, I had the house, I had a two storey house, dog, huge lawns, and I was always repairing the house, mowing lawns, cleaning up dog shit. I thought "Nah, I've had enough of this", sold the house, bought a caravan, now I've got no lawns, no dog … There's a lot of freedom in a caravan, feels like you're on one permanent holiday … It's easy to keep this place, the caravan tidy, than it was the two storey house, and everyone using your house for a party house, oh, no sleep and mess in the morning, I said, 'Right, I'm outta here' [laughter] … I'm getting old too, it's like a retirement village living here, no lawns, no rates, only have to feed yourself and do the dishes … Older people just dump the house, and just live in caravan.

For Tui, the constraints and responsibility of living in a house was problematic. He compared the camping ground favourably to home ownership, and now is not limited to 'where'. Other residents also chose not to buy into materialism and mortgages. They linked their decisions to wider constructs, where aspirations and ideals of home ownership are the New Zealand norm. They made decisions as rational actors, after weighing up benefits and disadvantages.

Toroa: Some people that come in here are living in caravans by choice. They can certainly afford houses, they just don’t want houses, they don’t want that tie … The likes of Kereru, she didn’t want the burden of mortgages and houses at her age, so she decided to buy a big caravan and live in that.

Kereru herself confirms the focus on life stage for her, as does Riroriro.

Kereru: For a woman my age, on my own, the camping ground is great.
Riroriro: This has sort of been our dream for years. We've had about six houses during our time, and we just wanted to do something different. We're getting to an age now, shit we're stuck in one home. I mean, you've just got your local friends around you, never see New Zealand you know, so we talked it over. So we sold our house and bought this. My wife at the moment is looking after our grandson in Wellington, so that's why I'm staying here.

These pathways are characterised by a sense of adventure. Hihi's story also centres on her lifecycle. Hihi saw herself as a rational actor in that they have selected the course of action that is feasible now. The decision to move into a truck and potentially travel around was one that they were able to make now at this stage in their lifecycle where the benefits outweigh the costs.

Hihi: It was just a lifestyle choice … We had our kids when we first got married, so that this is our time of life now. It was hard bringing up the kids, 'cos we never had money … It's not something you can sort of do while you're raising your kids, the kids need space, they need a lawn, can't always guarantee that if you're moving around.

For this couple, the stability and regularity that once was central daily life is not quite so important anymore. This set of narratives focused on choice and highlighted the preference and satisfaction of camping ground housing for these residents. What is apparent however, is that there exists housing satisfaction for many regardless of the pathway into the camping grounds. Lifestyle aspects of the camping ground as housing was important whether it was forced or chosen. It cannot be taken for granted that a voluntary choice to move into a camping ground results in a positive interpretation of the housing, nor that an involuntary choice reflects a negative interpretation of the housing. The process and conceptualisation of home and attachment in camping grounds is further discussed in Chapter 7: Place and home.

**PATHWAYS OUT OF CAMPING GROUNDS**

On the whole, camping ground residents did not appear to make decisions necessarily with a view of the future circumstances - this was out of the reach of many. The majority of residents felt they had limited potential to move out of the camping ground, or had no active alternative. Many decide not to move on because no better alternative existed, and their present dwelling satisfies need.
Constraints, and feelings of being stuck, continue for some of the residents, where socio-political processes work to bar them from regarding parts of the housing market as opportunities or possibilities. Parekareka and Korora describe resident Kea's situation:

Parekareka: Kea, he's just found his little niche, and he won't be going forwards. He'll be carted out in a box, he won't be going anywhere ... unless he becomes incapable of looking after himself ... We're sort of a stepping stone you could say, they'll either slowly improve or they have to go on and get referred for more care. We don't just kick people out in the street, I mean we try and help.

Korora: Kiwi's got no living relatives, and he's 82, but fiercely independent, he doesn't want to go into a home, and I think it would probably kill him if he did. I don't think he'd last a year actually in a home, 'cos he'd give up.

Kiwi similarly describes his own circumstances:

Kiwi: I can't change as I am now, I mean there's no good me going anywhere else now. I'll just stay doing out my time.

Kiwi used an army/prison metaphor ‘doing out my time’ to describe his housing mobility. While he made the choice to move in, he now cannot leave the camping ground and is resigned to the fact. His narrative shows the interaction between personal and house lifecycles. Some elderly people may be locked into staying in an old and deteriorating housing, leading to health and other potential problems (Grimes et al., 2004). Many other residents spoke of pathways out in terms of death and dying.

Toroa: Kokako will be here until he's carried out in a casket, he's not going to be able to leave now.

Kea: Oh hell yeah, in 17 years I've seen at least five come out by hearse.

Residents also spoke of a situation where there was nothing to gain from moving. The decision to stay was in line with their satisfaction with the camping ground lifestyle. Lundholm et al. (2004) explain this trend: 'Incentives to move weaken the longer a person lives in the same place and the more his or her social network grows' (p. 70). Tarapunga spoke of residents' sense of acceptance of their housing. Many residents accept that they have come here, and will die here, as a natural progression of events.

In sum, intentions were not always followed through, especially if length of residence is substantial. For many this was related to an inability to muster the resources needed to relocate, or find alternative courses of action, such as buying a bigger caravan and setting up permanently. Mandic (2001) maintains that non-moving behaviour 'is indicative of the nature of the housing system and of the processes within it' (p. 54). In his research he also showed that older residents, and those on low incomes were less likely to move - this pattern is similar in camping grounds.
Narratives suggested older camping ground residents had a lower propensity to move out of the camping grounds.

Kereru: I do worry about my future, I'm not a rich lady. I never want to go into a retirement village, nah … My only fear is what happens when I can't maintain my own caravan?

While Kereru displayed anxiety about money, she makes a light-hearted attempt at a serious consideration for her about her future. When she becomes dependent on others, unable to any longer physically provide for herself, she will then consider moving on. A few of the residents were concerned about ageing or infirmity, particular the elderly residents. As with people living in mainstream housing, many would prefer to stay in their own homes. High levels of residential satisfaction meant residents were not so impelled to move on.

Kakariki: I swear mate, never again will I live in a house.

Tieke: Why be stressed in town, you know, and do the usual shit that people do? I'm just not where that's at now, having experienced this … As long as you've got enough money to get your cigarettes, to pay your bills, and to be happy. I mean shit, you can't take it with you when you die.

Kea: I enjoy it here, very much. I don't think I'll be going anywhere else, nah. I can't see any reason to move on. No, I like it.

For these residents, the camping ground equals settling down, as Mohua says, 'Now we're here, it's permanent'. The options are still open to some, where if all else fails they can go back to a house. There is a reluctance to leave a familiar place now, where they have grown accustomed and attached to the way of life and resources amenities.

The cycle of mobility continues for some residents; some keep being transient.

Toroa: Sure, some have gone back into houses, or else they just move to another camp.

Titore: Two of them have only just moved, they have just gone to jail [laughter], and most of the other people follow the work. I think that's basically where these two fullas are at. They would be, not so much on the street, but just living with someone until they get kicked out from that house, and then they'll go and stay in another one. So it's pretty much the same, and then having no fixed abode. They'll probably lose their benefit, and then they'll be even worse.

Other residents appear trapped in this type of housing, with little option to move, as Totara describes.
Totara: Normally they have no money by the time they get there … There's no where for them to go afterwards either, 'cos you know, that's it. That's where they stay, you know, there's nothing else. Apart from a trip to the police station, or a trip to the hospital again, or back to prison [laughter].

The failure to move again may be attributed to a number of constraints faced, namely a capacity to find, obtain access, and sustain other housing. This is a continuation of the lack of full control over their moving behaviour and constrained choice that shaped their pathways into the camping grounds.

Pathways out of camping grounds are coupled to pathways in to camping grounds, through the inability to sustain mainstream housing. This also worked to limit their chances of being able to secure more permanent accommodation than the camping ground. Key informants spoke of camping residence as a recurring cycle, that's why they're there in the first place, 'regardless of desire'.

Nikau: I think a lot definitely would want to move into permanent accommodation, but they can't get the bond together, they can't get the rent together. Work and Income will only do so much, they don't have any furniture, we can get bits and pieces for them, but on a benefit of $150, $170, you've got your power, you've got your food, you've got your accommodation, so…

Kauri: They would like to live in more permanent accommodation, but they don't have the skills to sustain it. I think a lot of them now are so used to that lifestyle, that if you put them in permanent accommodation, they'll be right outside their comfort zone. It's again another sad situation, certainly with help and sustaining, consistent help, maybe they could break their cycle eh. But again that comes down to funding and resourcing and who's available, who wants to do it. So it's not just a case of saying, 'We've got a permanent place for you, you go in here and you'll be fine'. It's like a fish out of water.

Pathways out were also linked to the shortage of appropriate housing locally, especially for mental health consumers and single people.

Matai: The local iwi provider is now getting on top of it to find houses, to find accommodation. But New Zealand has not been prepared for single flats. It is mostly two-, three-bedroom houses, or we have the pensioner flats, but you have to be over 55, and if you are 30 or 35 you cannot move in there.

While in residents' narratives they stress that they have the desire to move and travel, and several used it as a reason for moving into this type of housing, however have never moved once placed. Camping ground owners spoke of residents, having once moved dwellings on site, never moving again. The usefulness of flexibility in housing was important to many.
Tui: I'm gypo, can go anywhere, wherever, not a problem.

Toroa: A lot of them like that lifestyle where they can actually just up and go and there’s no ties. They can just pack up, drive out the gate, and they can head off. Yeah, the majority of our permanents are that way inclined … Some of them might take a little bit longer than a couple of hours to pack up … but the majority of them, you know, within a week they can actually get the vans up to scratch and off they go. They move to another camp or travel round the country or do what they like, another job.

The physical characteristics of their dwellings gives them the ability that if they did have to move, they could just move. Residents' actions do not always match their mobility intentions; mobility thoughts need to be separated from actual moves (Parkes & Kearns, 2003).

**Forced relocation**

The individual's ability to move was seen as mediated by external events, such as eviction, and development. These produced forced relocations which become unfair when councils decide to enforce regulations about permanent residents, an increasingly common situation. Local councils’ enforcement of the Camping Ground Regulations (1985) are essentially reactive, and most often occur in response to an identification of a problem.

Parekareka: They’re becoming more so, absolutely, most definitely, In [neighbouring town] they've kicked them all out of there, and the council camping grounds have pressure on them to do the same. They're in the same situation as us … [Another town] is the same, [Neighbouring beach] they’ve kicked them all out there too.

*What's the council's reasoning behind that?*

Parekareka: Who would know? Because it's lowering the tone of the neighbourhood probably.

There is also factor of seasonality where owners may take permanent residents over winter months, but require that they move on before summer tourist season.

Matuhi: See how it is here, it's already been booked out for December 1st. So it's going to be hard, we're cutting it close. Oh, it's going to be tight, but we usually manage. We've never been stranded yet, but we'll sort something out. Still got a couple of weeks, should be able to sort it out by then. Yeah, depends on the situation really, up the creek mate, yeah.
Pipipi: Well, we probably would have stayed longer but he's booked out all the time, like pre-bookings from how many fucking months ago. If the worst came to the worst, we could go to our parent's house. Fuck, it's not what we'd do, but … Yeah, I'm not a silly cat, got friend's houses as well.

Pipipi and Matuhi told of his frustration at the system, and time working against them. In this circumstance the insecurity of tenure proves stressful.

**CONCLUSION**

This chapter has endeavoured to uncover the determinants and mechanisms behind moves into and out of camping grounds. The narratives of camping ground residents, owners and service providers confirm that housing pathways in are not purely about the (previous) dwelling (i.e. dissatisfaction and unfulfilled need) but the whole situation, precipitating events, and external factors. The housing pathways of camping ground residents result from unique conditions and circumstances of individuals and households, where one move is not independent of another, nor free from wider social structures and processes. The stories included here show a diversity of experience in housing and location.

Forced pathways into camping grounds can be seen as a response to circumstance. The narratives of residents show multiple processes associated with their housing pathways; and these pathways are not exhaustive, nor mutually exclusive. The narratives of camping ground residents outlined circumstances prior to moving into camping grounds, and showed trajectories where the process of social exclusion results ultimately from an inability to access mainstream housing. This happens through affordability, disruption and dysfunction in social networks, and through a lack of access to alternatives. The economic resources of many are limited. Situations where people found themselves unable to financially access or sustain a house through lack of money (and the situations that created this) were identified. Critical life changes and how residents participated in social networks were precipitating factors for many, leaving them no option but camping ground accommodation. Gate-keeping by the state and private housing market also affected their opportunities and housing conditions. Mental health was used as an example of how political resources are related to rights of accessing adequate housing. These all factor into the (in)ability of residents to secure housing elsewhere, in a context of constraints, behaviour, and limited resources.
The narratives show that there is social exclusion faced particularly by those on low incomes, unemployed, mental health consumers, single men and those exiting institutions, that work to exclude them from the mainstream property market. This leads them into camping grounds. For many it is an inevitable route into the camping ground; they experience a lack of control and impaired rights through the structure of the housing market. The narratives demonstrate, as Ahrentzen (2003) suggests similar to home sharing, that this movement is 'more multifaceted than the perception that such living arrangements are simply a last stand before entering a homeless shelter' (p. 552). It is the pathways into camping grounds that are socially exclusionary - not necessarily the housing itself, as Somerville (1998) suggests 'housing does not give rise to distinctive bases of social exclusion but rather expresses, in different ways, the exclusionary effects arising from labour process organisation, legal and political structures and action, and ideological formations' (p. 778). In addition this set of narratives has shown that pathways into camping grounds are affected by housing options, for example, the difficulty of many in accessing homeownership and private rentals. If they did manage to access private rental accommodation their ability to sustain this is low, due to restrictions of economic, social and political processes.

Lifestyle and choice play roles alongside this social exclusion for other camping ground residents. The discussion of choice and importance of lifestyle illustrate the range of backgrounds of people moving into camping grounds. They reflect a range of ages, life stages, socio-economic status, and household composition. A smaller proportion of camping ground residents point out their own 'choice' in moving into camping grounds. Their camping ground residence is shaped by their relatively higher socio-economic status, and this chapter has described their actual considerations, motives, preferences, and life situations that have affecting their housing decisions. Moving into a camping ground is often caused by and timed in accordance with events, especially retirement choices and increasing flexibility in the times of children leaving home, or the death of a spouse.

Residents of camping grounds develop processes of community formation, once it is clear that they will remain permanently. There are various social, economic, demographic life stage variables that act as facilitators of, or constraints on, moving that remain. Where residents participate and invest time in creating home the propensity to move is lessened\textsuperscript{29}. However attachment and links with(in) the camping grounds and wider community are indicators of the possibility of future mobility of camping ground residents. These community aspects are discussed in the following chapter.

\textsuperscript{29} See Chapter 7 \textit{Place \& Home}. 

This chapter looks at the relationships between residents’ housing and community. In creating a picture of how camping ground communities 'work', it considers the role of social networks and social capital in camping grounds. Community and neighbourhood have become key dynamics in contemporary housing research and policy. As described in the literature review, characteristics of community and social connectedness have implications at the individual and community level, and housing functions as a basis for social connections. Research shows that permanent, secure housing fosters high levels of social connectedness and resources (Hyde, 1999; Grimes et al., 2004). On the other hand, poor housing is associated with a negative sense of community, and low social capital and cohesion (Anderson et al., 2003; Grimes et al., 2004). Poor physical design and structure of housing is also linked to stigma, high residential mobility and social exclusion (Grimes et al., 2004; CHRANZ, 2004). Other research explains that those experiencing homelessness and temporary housing often have a lack of social networks, resulting in less contact with others and limited help (Letiecq et al., 1999; Stead et al., 2001).

Through their narratives, camping ground residents make sense of their place of residence by narrating and engaging in reflection of their experiences of the social aspects and social processes at work in camping grounds. Based on the narratives of camping ground residents, the creation and maintenance, or not, of community within and outside the camping grounds is looked at. Residents and owners tell numerous stories of the social aspects of their housing, particularly in relation to the development and functioning of community, and the effect of place and the physicality of the camping ground. The camping grounds are not static places; the flux and transition of these communities is highlighted. The camping grounds are seen as communities affected by social structure, which in turn shape residents’ experiences of social and community
Residents' narratives show that for some, the social networks and links between residents, while not completely unproblematic, can mediate poor housing and social exclusion factors.

**THE WORKINGS OF CAMPING GROUND COMMUNITIES**

**CAMPING GROUND COMMUNITIES: DEFINITIONS AND PERCEPTIONS**

'It's a community in its own right' (Hoihoi, owner).

The concept of community in terms of camping grounds may not be contested in regard to drawing physical boundaries. That is, there exist clear physical boundaries of the camping grounds themselves. The camping grounds visited were a part of the wider locality, and situated within areas defined politically, for example through census measures. However, they remain very distinct and separate 'communities'. Camping ground residents themselves define camping grounds as communities, placing emphasis on such features as lifestyle, size, and length of residence.

Kaka gave camping grounds 'community' status through communal living: 'That’s what a camp ground’s all about, it’s coming together'. Riroriro similarly pointed to the positive: 'It is, oh it’s a fantastic family community type of thing'. Overall residents' narratives point to defining their camping ground as their primary community. The camping ground owners' narratives of camping grounds and communities contrast on the whole, and link understandings of social capital and sense of communities to camping grounds.

The experiences of camping ground residents connected to the camping ground 'community' were often memories of the use of the community, giving access to an underlying understanding of how and why the camping grounds were conceived and used by most as possessing a sense of community. Their interpretations of the camping grounds were often in terms of the resources and qualities inherent or present, and they placed an emphasis on cohesiveness and community. The connections between residents were often regarded as a quality that characterises living in a camping ground and these associations were mostly a desirable feature of camping ground life.
Sense of community

A sense of community was a key perception of camping ground residents, shaped by residents’ and owners’ experience of shared and collective arrangements and (close) acquaintance with each other. One social service provider, speaking of an increasingly individualised society, linked wide societal issues with a lack of community spirit and availability of care in communities.

Nikau: Because the society itself has broken down in lots of ways, it doesn’t make it easier for those types of people [camping ground residents]. We knew about those people in the 40s and 50s because we were a smaller community, and we cared about each other, and we knew our neighbours. We knew the people that were having problems, yes, and I think it just seems too hard now for people to care about each other.

Nikau’s counter-narrative provides insight into community development over time and space. The dichotomy in her narrative highlights difference between then and now; what society used to be like is somewhat retrieved in contemporary camping ground communities. To some extent, the narratives of camping ground residents flow against mainstream society, showing an ease of care within the small community bounds of the camping ground. The narratives of camping ground residents showed sense of community through the sharing of facilities and space in the smallness of the camping ground. Camping grounds were conceived of as places where residents all have a certain level of commonality, understand each other, know what is going on for each other, know each other’s needs, and help each other. These are community actions that occur within the camping ground.

Residents felt their needs were met through being a part of their camping ground community. As Tarapunga (owner) describes, there is a general perception that residents can rely on each other: ‘I think they are a community as such, because if anything happens, the community would be there for them’. Owners also spoke of fulfilling needs for residents and their roles in the day-to-day functioning of the camping ground. For some, camping grounds provided a substitute family, giving a community feeling through a sense of belonging in and to the camping ground communities. Community and family language was often used to describe relationships between residents. Residents of one beachside camp in particular provided ‘village life’ metaphors.

Miromiro: If we come back with a load of fish here we say, “Take what you want”.

Toroa, like other owners, spoke fondly of his residents, and indicates the closeness of relationships: ‘We haven’t got rid of him [laughter], he’s still here’.

Hihi: Yep, we become like a family in a way. Just like families, you all have your own space, all sort of there, and there’s times when you don’t get on, not everyone clicks. Most people are here for the same sort of reasons, which means that we’ve got that thing in common between us.
Hihi’s narrative gives a sense of expectation of typical problems and tensions, but nonetheless the commonality between residents within the camping ground remains important. Camping ground owners were viewed by residents as involved members of the communities. The owners themselves, while maintaining their distinct identity and roles within communities (apart from residents), also however spoke of ‘we’ and a sense of community through belonging.

Often, despite the clear physical boundaries and identification as a definite community, the camping grounds remained fluid and changeable. Ruru, an elderly female resident, spoke of her sense of belonging and was reminiscent of old times.

Ruru: [I] have had good neighbours, most of them. Such a lot of them have died, you know. Ah, I sit here and think the people who have lived here have died or have moved on, but then new people have come in.

Ruru's narrative displays some sadness in replacement and in the changeable nature of her community. The change over time is characterised by turnover of permanent residents and by the coming and going of tourists. She did, however, give validation to permanents as 'real' members of the community.

And so you've seen people come and go.

Ruru: Well, there's only three of us that were here originally. There's an elderly man down the end, he's 85 I think, and he's by himself. His wife died two or three years ago, and his family would like him to go back to over your way somewhere, but he says no, he's quite happy here. And there's a lady here, she had one of the first caravans here, and me. I think that's all, but a lot of the properties are original … But most of them are dead, gone. Come on next question.

Ruru felt a strong sense of belonging to her camping ground community and makes judgements about who does and who does not belong. In her narrative, she gives status to ‘being there from the start’, whereas she cut off newer residents in the camping ground with ‘that's all’. Their ‘newness’ decreased their value within and to the rest of the camping ground community. Who was included and/or excluded from membership of a camping ground community often relates to the unstable structure of the camping ground.

Pipipi: Nah, you wouldn’t even know them [tourists]. It’s different in that sense, you see heaps of people come and go, tourists and shit.

Others talked similarly of tourists, where their mobility lessened their significance. The novelty of tourists was given a positive light, seen as adding to the diversity of each camping ground.

Toroa: We have a lot of interesting characters coming through the place … It’s quite a good lifestyle, you meet a lot of interesting people from overseas.
Toroa felt tourists added to the character feel of the community and lifestyle, but notes that tourists moved through the community rather than being a part.

Movement of people in and out of the camping ground works to create this fluid changeable community. These changes within the communities are talked of as natural occurrences, as in Ruru's narrative above. She displayed some reticence to talk of the change that has occurred through death, with: ‘Come on next question’. Kea also told of death as a common event that breaks up the continuity of his camping ground community.

*And being here 17 years you would have seen a lot of people come and go?*

Kea: Oh hell yes, and I’ve seen, one, two, three, four, I think it’s about five, at least five come out by a hearse. Yeah, and about a month ago, I was sitting here and I heard this alarm going off, about midday, yeah, and I couldn’t make out what it was … yet, he was in the caravan just sitting up watching television. He used to drink a lot, and he had the door shut and everything by about six o’clock and that was it. One of the other jokers came in and said he saw the door open about half past eight and he went over to see if he was alright, and he was alright then. But I’d say he’d gone by midnight, yeah. It’s a lot quieter here without him [laughter] he was a real loud mouth, yeah [laughter].

Kea's story here tells of how, through the death of one resident, the predictable routine of this camping ground community was disrupted. Change was obvious and immediate for Kea and the other residents as this man was their neighbour and a part of their community and social lives. The stability of the community and the expectations of everyday life within this community crossed over with change at the time of the resident's death - with noticeable effects on the whole community.

In contrast to this forced and inevitable change, stories were also told of residents' control of their community. One owner spoke of new people coming into his camping ground and contrasted levels of control and involvement between residents.

Takapu: Some fit straight in, some just want to keep to themselves, not very often, but … The two guys that are down in the cabins that have come in the last month we hardly see them. They don’t talk to the others. They’ve got their own lifestyles. But in the caravans and campervans they all get to know each other, meet up with each other and away they go. All the new people they seem to come along with new ideas of what they’d love in their surroundings or what they had in their previous.

This latter group take an active role in maintaining or changing their community; their community was changeable by their active choice, again illustrating the sense of community present. Despite changes, many spoke of a shared history with other residents.
Titi: It’s actually one big family here, all of them. It’s only because they’ve been coming here for ages. I think Tieke’s about the only who’s just, oh he’s been here about six years I suppose, mmm. But all the rest have been coming down as long as we have. I think we’re the longest that have come here.

Regularity and traditions are developed over time and extend to the owners and their families. For one husband and wife owner pair, the small size of the camping ground resulted in a sense of intimacy and emotional connection that was important.

Korora: And they’ve seen the kids grow up and when they come home it’s like “Oh, how you’ve grown” and "How’s school?", “Gosh [daughter]’s growing”.

Parekareka: Shit, it’s not family as such, but having such a small number of permanents, not hundreds of them, it’s sort of personal eh.

Social capital

The sense of community described above was associated with aspects of social capital. Camping ground communities are reflective of the commonalities between definitions of social capital which focus on social relations that have productive benefits (Putman, 1995; Subramanian et al., 2003; Lochner et al., 1999). The social capital evident in camping grounds can be seen as multidimensional and context-specific, with the bonding between the people living there illustrating norms of reciprocity, information-sharing and trust (Woolcock, 1998). For example, owner and resident narratives brought attention to help and cooperation between fellow residents. Residents spoke of looking after caravans while others were away, sharing transport, and other displays of practical help and assistance.

Many narratives centred on high levels of involvement and participation. For example, Kowhai, a district council manager, recognised a sense of community in camping grounds and was aware of opportunities for community: ‘It’s a fairly social choice’. Owners and managers of the camping grounds similarly defined camping grounds as communities and narrated levels of social capital in terms of personal relationships, sharing, activities and support. Camping grounds were seen to fit the criteria of community through these aspects of social capital.

Hoihoi: Oh yeah they all get on well together, they have the odd party and the thing going … Yeah, it is definitely a community, no doubt about it.

Takapu: I like it. People just they get to know each other, they socialise together, you know … Up the top in the caravans and the buses they’re their own little community and they meet up and have a barbie, and things like that, but they look after each other.
In their stories, residents conveyed a sense of trust in each other and the owners, and depended on each other for help. Tieke sums up the general feeling: ‘Everyone keeps an eye out for everyone’. Many examples were also given of sociability between residents.

**Toroa:** We quite regularly get invited down there for potluck dinners and that sort of thing and we just go and join them all in one of the caravans.

**Tarapunga:** When it’s New Year’s Eve we always have a party. All the [permanent] people are involved, they come down, and we’ve had like we had a 70th here last year, and we had it at the camp because all his family came from Australia. We just had a big barbeque, and everyone just brought stuff, and they had a big party, and all the lease people came to that, it’s pretty cool.

**Tieke:** We quite often have communal hangi30, and that sort of thing. It’s a really good little community actually.

These actions are all reflective of potentially high levels of social capital in camping grounds and show the many ways camping ground residents consider and maintain social relations within camping ground communities. The value of social networks is illustrated in resident narratives of interactions within camping grounds, and acknowledge camping grounds and the associated social networks as a valuable source of social capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002).

### Social cohesion and connections with outside

Ideas of sense of community and social capital inherent in narratives describe camping grounds as distinct and potentially strong communities. The feelings of belonging, participation and inclusion within camping grounds are also indicative of social cohesion. In contrast, however, service providers often offered narratives that focused on a sense of instability, overriding residents’ positive narratives. While residents perceive there to be a certain level of social cohesion within camping grounds, this may be an active response to discursive negative framing, and secondly, can also illustrate a lack of social connection (and exclusion) from wider society. As Hargreaves (2004) states: ‘There is always an inevitable tension between the internal and external observer of place since the visitor will not always see what is there while the local may take what they have for granted’ (p. 58). Korora actively engages in challenging outside notions of camping ground communities.

**Korora:** Always felt, you know, it’s quite safe for the kids being out there and playing around there. There’s nothing that you want to keep the kids away from.

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30 Hangi: method of cooking food in the ground.
Korora uses characteristics of camping ground communities as a justification and narrative about safety and acceptability to challenge other ideas. She works rhetorically to use children to signify exactly how safe camping ground communities are in contrast to other places.

Some residents spoke directly of a lack of participation in wider society, some portraying hesitancy and opposition.

Miromiro: It's a totally different lifestyle than living in town.

Like Miromiro, Tieke defined his camping lifestyle as living an enjoyable life on the margins of society.

Tieke: I'm definitely going to town for a little while, I'm not looking forward to it, you know, conforming back into society as such eh [laughter].

Tieke's narrative is illustrative also of boundaries of community. In living in a camping ground, his life was separated from the rest of society, but he remains linked to others in the camping ground. In having these distinct physical boundaries, camping ground residents are able to identify their housing as community.

When read in parallel to others' definitions and perceptions of camping ground 'communities', the focus on the positives of camping ground life may be seen as developed in the face of criticism. Camping ground residents were often reactive to outsiders' perceptions holding that their camping ground is a community and provides them with community 'things'. Inevitable tensions exist between the internal and external observers of camping grounds. The outside views, while many consider camping grounds as distinct communities, were often focused on the negative, and somewhat tainted by media and discrete events. Karaka's narrative gives an example of typical stereotypes of camping ground residents.

Karaka: We know that they're on drugs and alcohol ... but it's not an issue. It's just sort of their social scene out there as well, yeah.

She holds an assumption about drug users and alcoholics living in camping grounds. This is who she sees living in camping grounds and she responds by socially distancing herself.

Another social service provider, Tawa, while viewing camping ground residents as loners, also admitted that the social development of community in camping grounds was a possibility: 'They've got neighbours who they can talk to, but they're sort of isolated'. She suggested that potential isolation could be displaced through social interaction provided in camping grounds, but simultaneously noted weak social connections beyond the camping ground communities. Other service providers focused on a lack of participation or cohesiveness with the wider community. These discursive understandings construct residents (and camping ground communities) as isolated and non-involved. They reject camping ground communities as valid and frame them as
illegitimate by focusing on the antisocial behaviours of some residents. Totara spoke of the role of housing (specifically camping grounds) in creating and fostering unhealthy communities.

Totara: When you see the woman up there, she had seven children, and oh, and living in that camping ground. Oh how horrid. It breeds all sorts, it breeds incest doesn’t it? I mean you’re living in that sort of … I mean as much as that woman said her children are growing up fine … Her daughter, who had a couple of kids, was now living there. It’s not an environment that is conducive to kids getting the best education, and their best chance … You know, should it be right for that client to stay there? For those kids to not live in a normal home, and because we know that it breeds. Those sort of camping grounds can breed other things that children shouldn’t be seeing.

Totara implies that living in a camping ground is not normal or healthy, but she too holds a sense of ‘What can you do?’ Rimu also saw the negative aspects of the social relationships of residents:

What about the community aspect of it?

Rimu: Whānaungatanga31 [laughter], yeah exactly and all the other things that come with it [laughter]. But again I suppose those are assumptions, unfortunately those things tend to happen, but that’s the reality of the situation.

Rimu carries on assumptions of unhealthy behaviours she sees as fostered by camping ground communities, such as drug use. While the residents’ narratives may reflect an engagement in taking a collective stance against the wider society that has excluded them (for example, through pathways), these narratives of outsiders further this exclusion by showing distaste and discursively constructing camping ground residence as an unacceptable behaviour.

THE DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE OF THE COMMUNITY

While owners told of involvement in community activities, they also told of their key role in the development and maintenance of the camping ground communities. Owners spoke of having an active position of management and charge in the camping grounds.

Toroa: [We play] a very active role, yeah.

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31 Whānaungatanga: Relationship, kinship.
So your role in developing that community?

Tarapunga: Yeah, definitely. I go for a wander down every few days and just see what’s what and have a chat to them.

The central control displayed by owners extends to the owners playing adjudicator of petty sociabilities, and encouraging residents to sort issues out for themselves. Often the owners were seen in their role as friends.

Kakariki: Yeah, there’s no worries about making sure the place is up to scratch for landlord inspections or anything. Parekareka comes in and I’ll say to him “Excuse the mess, I’ve been at work”, he’ll say “Not a problem”, it’s like “You’ll clean it up on the weekend”, which I do.

Kakariki contrasts her previous housing experiences and stressful formal tenancy relationships with landlords. In the camping ground she can relate to the relaxed rules and community expectations through a friendship with the owners. She went on to tell of community liberties extended to her by Parekareka.

Kakariki: We said to [owner of another camp they lived at in Hamilton] “Look, we see you’ve got a dog”, and he goes, “Yeah”, “Um, are we allowed to get a dog?” He went, “No”. I said, “Right, you not going to let me have a dog, I’m outta here”, so I left. We came up here, and I said to Parekareka, “Look, I really, really want to get a dog”, I mean I’ve always been around dogs, even since I was knee high to a grasshopper, and he goes, “I’ve got no problem with you having a dog, but…”, I went, “But?” “You’ve got to keep him under control”, I went, “Yeah”, he said, “He’s not allowed to run free round the camping ground” “Yeah”, “And if we get any visitors in, he’s to remain indoors”, well he pretty much sleeps in the bus anyway.

Community rules here are epitomised by dog ownership. The owners’ rules and ways of maintaining power in the community are feasible because of the level of trust and friendship with the community residents. In this way, the role of the owner was signalled as an important part of the community for the residents.

There is some sense of reliance on the part of residents to the owners providing this stable, safe community. For some, the owners become a key social contact.

Kakariki: I come back here, and in the afternoon I’ll go and check whether my mail’s been or not, and I’ll tell Parekareka all about my day, and he’s really interested to know ah, he’s like, “Got a kahawai to smoke today?” “No, not today” [laughter].

For this 'man alone' the role of the owner as someone to talk to is significant. Ruru shows appreciation for the owners of her camp.
Ruru: If I was to ever be feeling so ill that I couldn’t manage, I’ve only got to ring Tarapunga and they’re willing to listen. They’re not the stand-off-ish, I mean they keep apart, but they’ll listen to anyone. They’ve got to listen to a lot of grizzlies and moans, and carry on, but no, Tarapunga is really good, so we’ve been very fortunate really … You’re not isolated, Tarapunga would be the first ones I’d go to.

Several other residents felt the owners to be very reliable and held them in high esteem. In terms of their well-being, the owners were often the first port of call. Parekareka and Korora are accepting of this role they play, and look affectionately upon some of their long-term residents.

Korora: Well with the people that have been here the longest, like Kiwi, and Parekareka's just put some toys that he's been doing, he's just put them on Trademe for him, so I packaged them and sent them off, um, yesterday, 'cos somebody bought them from Te Anau on Trademe. And you end up being, if anyone's got a problem I'm the first person they come and see.

The narratives of owners and managers gave indications of two main ways of maintaining control in the camping ground - selection and surveillance.

### SELECTION OF RESIDENTS

Firstly, the narratives of owners show that they place high priority in their selection of residents. They had predetermined ideal characteristics of the community and model residents. Owners spoke of naivety in their early management of the camping grounds.

Tarapunga: Nah, we just don’t want them. We’ve been there tried that. We’ve had people living in the camp when we first came here, ‘cos I was a bit of a sucker, and I thought “Oh that poor lady, her husband's left her and she’s got three kids”. And then the next thing the kids are over here all the time, and they’ve got no dinner, and then he comes out pissed after the pub, and there’s a big fight. Oh, it’s just not worth it, and I’ve been abused for it, and then this lady abused me like big time out there “There's that bitch that wouldn't let me stay in the camp” … People eh, they're just out to take you for a ride if they can. But I've got a bit tougher now, ‘cos [husband] always said “Oh you're a sucker”, but when kids are involved, eh, it’s a bit different.

Parekareka and Korora had similar experiences.

Korora: We’ve just learnt to be wary, and ask the right questions … We just say “Is the accommodation for you?” and we just explain that well if we were letting a house we would ask to see the person.

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32 New Zealand online auction site.
Parekareka: Well we just do not let out on behalf, end of story … We hadn’t been here very long and someone was like “Oh, you better come, you better come, something’s happening, something’s happening”. So I went over to this caravan, and these people had just come from [drug rehabilitation unit] … and there was blood everywhere, blood everywhere.

Korora: And this bloke seemed to be fighting with his girlfriend.

Parekareka: So we called the cops and you know, just shows you how appearances can deceive, never assume anything.

Korora: We thought he was fighting with her, and there was a knife involved … and it turned out she was trying to cut her wrists.

Over time, owners' experiences developed, awareness heightened, most portraying a 'been there, done that' attitude. A clear selection process and seeking the model resident perhaps stemmed in response to potential and prior disruption and disharmony with the camping ground community. This selection process is justified by owners as important to the smooth running and calm in the community. Toroa and Tarapunga talk of a spill-over from private housing.

Toroa: The people we have problems with are people who are here for a week between houses, or two weeks between houses and that sort of thing. Some of the locals you definitely don’t want them staying permanently. Some of the habits I’ve come across, it’s why they’re not in flats, ‘cos they just get kicked out. As permanents we’d say no to them. Come in for a week or so, not a problem. They’re usually the ones we have the most problems with, getting money out of and so forth … But the majority of the time, the people that come into camps on a permanent basis, ‘specially here, we haven’t had any problems at all.

The residents also validated the selection of residents as essential.

Have you had any one that hasn’t fitted in?

Ticke: Yeah but you seem to weed them out. [Owner] won’t give them a lease. He is conscious on that aspect to have the right people fitting into the community.

Kea: I think it was being used for a mental hospital for a while there. There was three or four people from some hospital kind of thing, and disadvantaged people. I said to Parekareka “It’s getting more like a mental institution” [laughter] … It’s good, but you always get the odd one, the odd trouble maker.

Despite demand for accommodation long-term in the camping grounds, exclusion is rationalised. Most of the owners received between five and ten phone calls a week from people seeking permanent accommodation.
How often would you get enquiries like that?

Takapu: We get a lot of calls from mental health trying to place people here. We don’t want that. We don’t want people here on medication, really with all the children around all the time. You don’t really want people with a bad background or on medication if they don’t take it, it could affect them badly. They should be somewhere where they can be cared for.

Furthermore, owners had developed complex systems of not accepting residents they did not want. Informal rules and excuses are used in regards to the selection of residents. Rules of thumb are employed to avoid trouble and keep the camping grounds running smoothly. Parekareka and Korora spoke of this selection, and the process of negotiating who are ‘permanent’ residents.

Parekareka: We just say we’ve reached our limit.

Korora: It’s really hard to say no, because you realise people are in a very difficult situation.

Parekareka: But hell, you’ve got problems, I’ve got problems, I don’t want your problems becoming my problems, we’ve got enough problems of our own, we don’t need anyone else’s. When people come in now, I actually ask them, “Do you take any medication?” I mean we do the whole scenario of questions.

Korora: We interview and…

Parekareka: And they say “Oh, I don’t have to tell you that”. They don’t have to tell me, that’s quite right, but then again we don’t have to let them in.

Parekareka: Well, we give people a cooling down period. People come in, doesn’t matter if they’re white, black, pink, polka dots, whatever, if I think they might fit in, I’ll say, “We don’t have anything at the moment, but I think there’s someone leaving next week, but I’ll have to talk to the person concerned”. Then you read the rules, no booze, no drugs. I don’t mind beer or whatever in your accommodation but no drugs yadda, yadda, yadda, facilities are for your use and your use alone, etcetera, etcetera. So you read them by that, and say, “Come back, I will know on Monday morning if we’ve got a vacancy”. So they go away reasonably happy because you might have something, but if they don’t like the rules, they don’t come back. It’s a nice easy way, no one loses face, you’re not saying, “Cos I don’t like the look of ya”. It gives them a chance to think about it, and you a chance to think about it.

The next owner’s narrative illustrates how, in terms of selection, the camp owners are linked into the police and can do an informal check on people.

Takapu: We screen people as they come in, or you know, not very often but we tell them we’re going to do police checks on them, and if I’m worried I ring the police and do a police check done, and a lot of them don’t come back for another interview, we just tell them that and they never turn up, yeah.
There is somewhat overt exclusion of others as less desirable. Owners’ discretion is viewed as allowable and acceptable.

**Tarapunga:** We just say no, and we just don’t let our cabins out to long-term people. We just say no, we’ve got bookings, we can’t do it, a week at the most, and then they’ll say how much, and we just say no.

The 'ideal resident' was openly described, both in terms of acceptableness and appropriateness, that is, who can and should live at their camping ground, and be part of their community.

**Tarapunga:** You can’t have a family down there, with like three or four kids, 'cos it just wouldn't work out. The places are too small for that. We've got a single mum down there at the moment with her little boy and that’s worked out really well ... I mean we have families, and most of them have been people that they’ve had caravans or tents in the camp, and then want something more permanent. They’re nice as holiday places, because of the size of them, but for people to live, just single or older couples. Like we had one guy that was an alcoholic, well the next-door neighbours used to find him on the floor, in his own vomit and stuff. We said he couldn’t buy one. We just sort of look into the background of it more if we can, because we don’t need any hassles like that, and those people down there, 'cos it's such close living, don’t need hassles like that.

*Have you had other situations like that?*

**Tarapunga:** Yeah, we have. One dad came out, and he’s just got out of jail and ‘cos he’d beaten up his wife, and he had the kids, well he had half of the kids, and he wanted to live out here. Well, you know, we knew the history so we don’t need that, and yeah, over the years there’s been little things like that.

In order to avoid trouble this owner has determined her ideal demographic profile of the camping ground community. Her narrative shows a deliberate contrast of social acceptability - solo mum gets on her feet versus an alcoholic who loses his. Single, older people were the most desirable residents to the owners.

**Parekareka:** We don’t do younger people, hassles basically, problems, drugs, booze, noise, etcetera, etcetera ... And we don’t do families, we don’t go there. Single people. Well you can’t be putting up families in caravans, it ends in tears. Been there done that, it doesn’t work.

**Korora:** We’ve kind of seen it all fall about, and we just don’t go there. It’s no life for kids. These people might be wanting to move in, but we kind of advise them against it, particularly in winter, with everyone piled into a caravan.

**Parekareka:** It’s just not suitable. So our ideal long-term person is a male over the age of 40, single.
All the owners spoke frequently of unacceptable behaviours in camping grounds, such as domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and their unwillingness to accept these behaviours. Titore links previous experiences with problems of crowding and lack of social structure.

Titore: We’ve had some couples, but they seem to have too many problems … I think a lot to do with just living in a caravan when it’s raining, there’s nothing that they can do. And if they’re very on the brink of no money, then they just argue amongst themselves, and next thing they’re fighting, I tell them to take it away.

Kakariki tells also of residents coming together to exclude problem residents.

Kakariki: I think if Kaka keeps up the way he’s going … the other residents here are looking at talking to [owner] and seeing if we can get Kaka either to quieten down a bit, and settled as in no more crap starting, or get him moved out, ‘cos he was actually, I don’t know whether he told you or not, but he was actually kicked out of [foreign country], he did exactly the same thing in camping grounds, he was stirring nothing but shit, he’s been kicked out of [camping ground] in [another city], ah, he’s been kicked out of [another local camping ground], ah, he’s been kicked out of [camping ground] in [neighbouring town], and he was kicked out of the [another local camping ground], for exactly the same thing, he goes to each holiday park, he settles down, he gets to know people and he starts stirring, and it gets beyond a joke, they get him kicked out, and I think it’s getting to that stage where we’re all going to start having, basically pushing him out, and it’s like, I don’t want to do it, but if it means that I can stay on here, I mean I love living in Takutai.

Kakariki shows how social organisation can mobilise to exclude undesirables. The exclusion of unwanted residents to avoid trouble is a known process employed also between owners of different camping grounds, and is justified as such.

Tarapunga highlighted a sense of community operating at a higher level between camping grounds, and how informal institutional rules operate as an early warning system. Owners share values with agreement of who are acceptable and not acceptable residents. Together they work to help to keep standards, by cooperation not competition.

Toroa: A lot of the campgrounds now, these days, are all communicating with each other, they don’t see each other as competition, so they actually talk to each other. HAPNZ33 have an alert system set up where we just email HAPNZ and they fire it out to every other camp in the country. New Zealand is so small, you just can’t get away with doing that sort of thing, they get caught.

33 HAPNZ - The Holiday Accommodation Parks Association of NZ is a membership-based and funded organisation representing the interests of 400+ commercial holiday parks in New Zealand.
Through exchange and dialogue they work together to keep standards, helping keep 'bad tenants' on the 'bad list'. The selection of residents also extends to getting rid of unwanted dramas. These troublemakers are seen as the 'other', unwelcome people. They are regarded as separate/sidelined from permanents, and do not fit in to the community.

Hihi: We’re not a pile of drug addicts or boozers here, but we did have one and he got kicked out.

Hihi accepts that there are potential antisocial behaviours through her clear here/there comparisons - 'it does happen, but not here'. She displays an attitude that these situations occur at other camps, but that would be unacceptable within her camping ground community. These responses and perceptions of people needing emergency housing mirror Australian reports. Rogers, Hirte, Davies and Hume (2009) identified a range of strategies employed by caravan park management, including the refusal to respond in a situation where there is a housing crisis, and refusal to admit some marginal residents in response to previous problems.

SURVEILLANCE OF COMMUNITY

Secondly, in order to avoid trouble in the camping ground, owners used mechanisms of surveillance to ensure smooth running.

Kakapo: Parekareka doesn’t put anyone next door, 'cos he knows that I work, and I start early. There has been about three or four fellas there [adjoining cabin], and they were a bit mental before they come here. They talked to themselves and laughed at themselves all night. So, normally go around there and tell them if they can’t keep quiet, I think the last one I just tipped water on them. So I think Parekareka is a bit wary of putting some mental guy next to me, yeah.

Kakapo recognises the owner’s way of establishing rules by placing more difficult residents. Kokako and Kereru are also cognisant of Toroa’s ability in actioning control measures in their camping ground.

Kereru: You’ve got good neighbours, the others are pretty good too. We’ve got a good lot.

Kokako: Yeah, it’s a good camp, it is, it’s a good camp, any problems and Toroa moves them on.

The owner reasonably controls the camping ground community, and provides back-up for poor neighbours. It is recognised that this surveillance and vigilance pays off.
Parekareka: Oh we do run a fairly tight ship, I mean, arseholes don’t last too long, and I don’t actually confront them, real arseholes they don’t pay their rent, and the first thing you notice is that they actually start hopping over the fence instead of coming through the front gate, so basically you just leave them to it, and they get a week behind, two weeks behind, and then they’ll do a runner, and they think they won, and whenever you see them downtown they go and hide behind the … but you got rid of them and I’m not that bothered confronting them 'cos you know they’re going to do a runner, and they think they’re really smart, but they’ll never come back again.

Tarapunga: About four or five years ago we had a run of forestry guys staying the cabins while they were doing pine trees and stuff. You get good guys and you get bad guys, like real bad guys. Well, I lined them all up one day and told them all off, ten of them, 'cos they were just pigs, they just made a mess in our toilets, it was just revolting. I was [nervous], but I told them all off. They were my best mates after that. But nah, you just don’t need it. But they’ve got nowhere else to stay, they have to travel.

Mediation between different groups of people was required to hold a harmonious community. For one resident, the risk of losing the watchfulness of the owners was threatening.

Kiwi: I’m a bit suspicious that Parekareka and Korora could be walking away before very long from the business, 'cos there’s been a lot of chitter chatter between people. There may be somebody taking over, so I’m sort of thinking in my mind, it won’t be long before he does disappear.

How does that make you feel?
Kiwi: Well, not good, you never know who it might be next, yeah.

Kiwi shares his anxiety that the 'protector' and leader of his community, the enforcer of rules, may be leaving.

Through methods of selection and surveillance, the owners of the camping grounds form a backline of defence for existing residents. The working of the community is hinged on the owners' performing these maintenance roles. Stories told by both residents and owners give a sense of pending or potential community chaos, but for the owners’ part in mediating the workings of the camping ground. In this sense, the 'goodness' of the camping ground community is justified in many cases. Many residents talk of the owners holding them in high regard. They are espoused as a virtue of the camping ground community - the social structure of the camping ground is stronger with strong active management on the part of the owners.
Both residents and owners show an understanding of the important role of social structure in maintaining a problem-free community. As Young (2006) suggests, a community with a weak social structure is more likely to be disrupted by social events. In the camping grounds, the owners form a line of defence to prevent upheaval and disruption as well as disorderly or troublesome behaviours, and actively work to strengthen the structure of the community present.

The Role of Place in the Communities

The owners’ roles sit alongside the role of place in developing and maintaining the community. The place of camping grounds defines and shapes the social relations of people living in the camping grounds and how they experience community. The narratives collected indicate that the contextual features of the camping ground as housing influence the sense of community and neighbourhood, and ultimately the well-being of individual residents within each camping ground. How residents experience community is shaped by the spaces and places that they share and inhabit, what Popay (2000) describes as 'the close and compelling linkages between people and the places they live in' (p. 401). The narratives of camping ground residents do show community as being about people and relationships, but also defines community workings in relation to the environment. In their narratives, camping ground residents highlighted their perceptions of how aspects of the camping ground can both facilitate and impede social participation.

The interactions between residents and the way they participate in camping ground activities serve to develop the sense of community. Living in a camping ground, the residents are able to mix and socialise, to develop and utilise social ties and networks. The formation of community ties requires places conducive to relationship building. Baum and Palmer (2002) suggest that there are health-promoting characteristics of neighbourhoods in which people feel free to move, and have communal places to achieve and support social interaction: ‘People appear to appreciate the fact that their opportunities for the type of bridging social contact which appears to be so crucial to increasing social capital does not just come about because of the agency of people, but also because of the characteristics of the places in which they live’ (Baum & Palmer, 2002, p. 359). This importance of having places to go is expressed by camping ground residents, who speak of making use of the camping ground as the place to facilitate exchanges and interactions. Often the kitchen amenities were regarded as the hub of social activity.
Toroa: We’ve just built a new dining room, and that’s just about finished now. They’re going to start using that as a community type, potluck dinners in there and so forth.

Riroriro: I’d only been there about a week, and then I got to know the people, permanents, doesn’t take long, just walk around, … You meet them in the kitchen. That’s another thing, you know, I don’t cook in here [bus] when I’m in a motor camp. I go over there and use all their facilities, even wash the dishes over there you know, so I make the most of it, and that’s when you meet people in kitchens.

Hihi: Some times are very, very social. The winter’s not quite so social, ’cos you’re stuck in your vehicles, and not a lot of room for parties in a vehicle. But in summer you just grab your drink, your glass, and your seat, and you go over to the only shaded spot on the other side there. You all just meet there, it’s very social. We all sort of do the same thing, more or less, for the same reason. We just socialise, whether you’re drinking beer, wine or cordial it doesn’t matter.

Hihi links her experiences and her fellow residents’ social connectedness with the place they live in. Within this environment she is able to have many friends and a very sociable 'village-life'. Ruru too tells of the way her place serves as an interface with others.

Ruru: My poor little porch out there, it’s an ideal place. You can sit out there with your book, or just not taking any notice of anyone, but everyone that goes by says, “Ooh, you’ve got such a lovely place, blah, blah, blah”, and you talk and you find out who they are, and why they’re here.

With convivial communal facilities, camping grounds offer many opportunities for people to meet and talk in their community. The camping grounds often proved to be supportive environments for social interaction, especially in comparison to previous houses. For those residents where camping grounds were seen as friendly and welcoming, this was linked to feelings of belonging and the importance of feeling safe.

COMMUNITY RISKS AND INSECURITIES

The role of place in community was connected also to ideas about crime, privacy, suspicion, and safety. These became factors of significance perpetuated in narratives showing the social significance of these in resident roles as individuals and members of the camping ground community. The narratives show a connection between knowledge and relationships with fellow residents with a general sense of safety. These connections are sited within the physical space, layout and functioning of the camping ground itself, and represent a reconciliation between the needs of residents and the surrounding environment.
Overall, residents spoke of feeling secure in their camping ground.

Kea: It’s pretty good. We’ve had to lock the toilet block and the kitchen and the washhouse at nighttime after 10.30, but you’ve got a combination lock to get in. We had a run of thefts, microwave, and it was actually bolted down. They must have been in there one night, very late, because they took the whole top of the bloody washing machine or dryer, and it was at the time when you put the money into it, not the tokens, and it was found a year and a half later in the tip, the cops found it [laughter].

Kereru: Yes, yeah I do [feel safe]. We’ve had very little trouble, good security really. Originally we had a gate, which we used to close at 10 o’clock every night and open it up at seven every morning. For some reason, that gate did make me feel more secure, people did like it, but it got knocked down.

While residents told stories of minor opportunistic theft related to the weak boundaries of place, there was little else. The presence of people and residents watching out prevented any trouble. However the problem of theft meant that residents stayed alert to their surroundings. Furthermore, they placed trust in themselves and other residents in a defence against any insecurity.

The physical layout and resources of the camping ground affects the participation of residents in the community. Residents felt more secure because other residents were watching out for them and keeping an eye on each other's possessions. Often any risks that made them feel threatened were offset by the closeness of the community, physically and socially. Tieke sums it up as, ‘You couldn’t get better, everyone sort of keeps an eye out for everyone … and everybody knows everybody round here’.

A certain level of social trust was evident in the camping grounds where residents spoke of feeling safe and taking care of other people's properties.

Hihi: Very safe, I often leave the door wide open while I go to have my shower. The bus sees us, the big windows there, that’s their lounge. We’ve got just an unspoken thing, that we keep an eye on each other's place if we’re away.

Kakariki: Someone tried to break into me car while it was around the corner, I was not told, until I went out in the morning to get into the car, and I noticed the sun roof, they’d tried to pry it open, and I went and told Parekareka and he goes, “Yeah, I was just waiting for you to come in and see me”. I says, “Why’s that?” He said, “I chased a couple of boys away from your car last night about half past eleven. I was going to come over and see you, but I noticed your lights were out and your TV wasn’t flickering, so I knew you were in bed. But the police do have a report”. I said, “I beg your pardon?” He said, “I rang the police and I reported it straight away”. It’s not even his car, he didn’t have to do that.
Kakariki takes pride in living in a place where residents and owners engage freely in voluntary care - people doing things for others they do not have to. Matuhi also identifies living in a camping ground as safety in numbers.

Matuhi: There’s always some one around, in reality it’s probably like having your own personal burglar alarm I guess, 'cos there’s lots of eyes and people.

Parekareka: If there's anyone hanging around, sneaking around, [the residents] are a security system, they're brilliant.

Any disruption in the constancy of the camping ground is noticed by residents and acted on to minimise disruption/trouble in the communities. These feelings of security and open and honest community in camping grounds was often furthered by comparisons to living in previous houses. In comparison to living in town, residents felt less worry in regards to property protection.

*And how do you compare that to when you were living in your house?*

Hihi: I used to lock everything, all the time, didn’t go next door without locking my door, and we were in a good street in [neighbouring suburb].

Tui: I had a house up in Taone, and with the Samoans around you, and parties and fights all the time. See I don’t even lock my door here. You had to lock your door there, any noise, you know you’d be jumping out of bed, see what the hell was going on, chaos.

Tui feels he can choose his neighbours in the camping ground. Residents share similar sentiments, that is, a higher sense of security resulting from moving to the camping ground.

Kakariki: Well in town you can’t do it… You’ve got to make sure your house is all locked up and all secure. You’ve got a broken window, you’ve got to pay for it. Here, don’t have to worry about vandals, haven’t got one that I know of.

Some of the older residents did nonetheless express feelings of insecurity, which worked to limit the extent of their movement. The perception of the wider community as dangerous restricted the movement of a few of the elderly male residents. They related outside images of deviant and drunken youth, stand-over tactics, and dog attacks as a motivation for staying within the bounds of the camping ground to avoid unsafe situations, but this limited their access to wider local resources.

Kea: Sometimes it can be pretty rough, like I won’t walk up from the camp, up the road here to say the Masonic Hotel at nighttime, no way, no. You get so many kids coming up, 'cos you might have been out to buy a dozen beer or something, and they come along and want a couple a couple of bottles and they get really abusive, yeah.
Kiwi: They’ve got the showers down there if you want them. I just use what I call a sponge shower, I just use a bowl, and you can just wash yourself. I don’t bother with a shower because the things can just disappear, you put them there and then they’re gone. You’ve got to be careful, when you go to the toilet, you’ve got to make sure you don’t leave anything lying outside, or going to wash your hands, they’ll disappear, quick.

These two older men worked out security routines with Kiwi, employing measures to counter his fear of theft even when having shower. In all their narratives, residents linked feelings of (in)securities to the physical environment of camping ground, often making it central to their ideas about sense of community.

COMMUNITY BELONGING: RESIDENTS ‘IN-PLACE’

In the same manner, the more positive social and cultural meanings were attached to the geographical territory within which they live and a real sense of place was shown. ‘We are all here living by the sea’ indicated a pride of place, and emotional attachment to their camping ground, signalling a sense of belonging with the land, and a sense of belonging with each other. Living at the camping ground both affirmed their identity and sense of belonging with each other, as well as a sense of difference from others. The sharing of kaimoana\textsuperscript{34} was used frequently as an example of the important meaning attached to the camping grounds on the beach.

Collectively these aspects of the camping ground setting may be considered to enable residents to develop and maintain a safe and welcoming community together. Camping ground housing possesses an ease of contact between residents, and may signal that camping grounds can be effective in the creation and safeguarding of community within. Given the close proximity of the dwellings, people are able to keep an eye on each other and their dwellings. Casual social contact was valuable to residents, the ability to walk past and casually say hello. Residents referred to a sense of community ambience, people out and about and greeting each other throughout the day.

Kakariki: Parekareka put all the residents down one end, and all the short-termers down the other end. So that we, more or less, keep together in our own little community. We can get to know each other better, and we still pop down and talk to the short-termers. It was a move for the better.

\textsuperscript{34} Kaimoana: Seafood
Camping grounds were able to provide this ambience in comparison to other housing that had fences, roads and walls, which detracted and prevented people making informal contact with each other.

Miromiro: You don’t sort of do that if you’re living in town. It’s different eh, no, people come home from work and shut their doors.

Piopio: See here, you just have to walk over there, when you’ve had enough you can just waddle back here, and tumble in bed, no driving anywhere.

Miromiro: No driving, no cops, nothing [laughter].

Kokako and Kereru identified the lack of fences seen as a distinguishing feature of camp life.

Kokako: We’re not fenced off from one another, eh. There’s no fences to jump before you come and visit, my gate’s open.

Kereru: That’s true, yeah, the door is always open.

Kokako: No walking around and through the gate, oh, no. This will do me for the rest of my life, living like this.

In a camping ground, everyday activities such as going to the toilet or cooking dinner facilitate the interactions and exchanges between residents. For some, these walks and shared facilities give some opportunities to converse and mix with others, blurring traditional lines between private and public spaces of daily living.

Residents provided stark comparisons with earlier experiences of housing. Living in a house was described as an alienating physical environment in which residents became isolated. The camping ground, in contrast, had the potential to stimulate the formation of social networks, encouraging active sharing of information, trust and cooperation between residents.

Miromiro: It’s just the lifestyle you live I guess. It’s different to living in the city or in a town, where you’ve got everybody backstabbing you, nosing over the fence to see what you’re doing. Nah, it’s a good laid-back life.

Residents recognised that interaction and participation can be stifled without provision of shared places to facilitate social connections and involvement. The narratives talk of effortless contact between residents. For some, the sharing of facilities was shown to aid strong social ties, commitment and responsibility in the camping ground. For example, Kea talks of rubbish and residents cleaning up after themselves. These characteristics of the communities functioning effectively show the presence of a certain level of social capital and cohesion is present.

The existence of easy contact is not however synonymous with problem-free relationships between residents. Kowhai, a local district council manager identifies the risks of isolation and loneliness despite living in a place where other people are available.
Kowhai: You can sit in your home, nobody comes past you … If you're sitting in a camping ground kitchen, you're going to be meeting people all the time. They're coming to you, you don't have to go out and socialise and find people. In some cases it's a temporary thing that turns out to be quite comfortable, no hassles of having to share a house with anybody else, you live in your little shed or caravan [laughter] whatever, I suppose.

Her narrative shows an awareness that alternatives are also sub-standard, and that while living in relative close proximity to others and sharing facilities, this is a somewhat forced situation. Other narratives also voice how residents' choice can be constrained somewhat by the structure of the camping ground and their housing, also influencing their relationships with others. The structures identified by residents as bringing people together were not always seen in a positive light.

The nearness of the dwellings within the camping ground can be problematic. Tarapunga, as an owner, takes these problems lightly, and suggests that not only are residents living close to each other, they also spend the majority of their time at the camping ground, which can result in inevitable friction between residents.

Tarapunga: Some people don't talk to some people, but that's their problem not ours. The problem is it's so close, and because a lot of them are retired, they've got nothing else to think about. So if someone's smoke from their chimney is blowing into their house, it's just silly little things, or so-and-so dumped their lawn clippings down on the beach, and they shouldn't go on the beach, you know. Just little dramas, it's a bit of a dag.

Kakariki tells of herself in the midst of a camp saga, frustrated at this level of involvement of other residents in her affairs.

Kakariki: Certain people here who can't keep their noses out of other people's business … it's just getting beyond a joke, it's like, you can take it for so long, and then it's like well hey, they know what I'm doing before I'm even thinking about doing it, sort of thing [laughter].

And is it different than when you lived here last time?

Kakariki: Yeah, last time it was, you could sit down and have a conversation with somebody, and nothing would ever be said, now you sit down and have a conversation with them, and a week later it's coming back to you completely twisted around … 'course at the time when I found out Kaka was stirring bout me, and my so-called being pregnant, yeah right, I turned around and said to him, “Look, you want to stir trouble mate, you come to my bloody face and say it, you don't say it behind my back, and if you want to say it to my face, be prepared to cop a whack”, and he says, “What do you mean?” I says, “I'm not going to sit back and let you cause shit, I've got my life to think of, I'm not in the mood for listening to anybody shit-stirring”, and he turns around and says, “I wasn't shit-stirring”, I says, “Hey I told [another resident] I might be, you turned around, and went racing off down and told [another resident] I was”, “Oh, how do
Cos [another resident] went and congratulated [husband], and [husband] didn’t even know what the hell was going on”.

Kakariki’s narrative highlights the extent of association and contribution. This and narratives of other residents show how they know each other’s stories, both past and present, illustrating the close linkages - wanted or not - brought on by living in the camping ground 'together'. She does suggest that the camping ground should protect her privacy.

For Kea, his housing affords less privacy than he would like: ‘It’s better than living in a crowded house with a lot of people, I’ve always been a bit shy’. He does state that it is better than other alternatives, and suits his personality. Other residents also have an expectation that living where they do they will not always have their desired level of privacy. Matuhi accepts this how it is.

And you have enough privacy living here?

Matuhi: Oh, yes and no, not really but, I mean that's what campsite’s like isn’t it? You know everyone can sort of see everyone coming and going … The showers and all that, they're all there with the toilets, so you’re having a shower and you hear people coming in and out. Keep looking up at the top 'cos it's not closed off, yeah.

He shows a degree of anxiety about others impinging on his personal space, buts does little to problematise this. Kokako and Kereru are similar; they are quick to downplay any suggestion of lack of privacy in their comparison to 'normal' housing.

Kokako: Well it's no different to living out on the street, with your next-door neighbours, they have their rows too.

Kereru: Yes, I know, but you're living closer together and your walls are thinner, so therefore you hear more, you're a bit more aware.

Their dialogue continues with them reiterating that the frequency of troubles is low.

Kokako: But I mean, it’s still that nice quiet place, I think, we don’t have much, the last two years, we’ve probably only had about three or four people who have been noisy eh, one with a bloody dog that barked.

Kereru: Yeah, we've only had a few problems.

Kokako: Another guy got abusive over there, in the day time, had a couple over there, they used to get boozed up, they got marching orders too.

Kereru: Oh gosh, that's right.

Kokako: He used to play the guitar, and she used to sing, beautiful voice.

Kereru: Trouble is she used to sing all day though.
They talk of how not everyone fits in, and take ownership of (privacy) problems as a group when they speak of ‘we’.

Awareness that living in a camping ground can provide too much interaction was held by most of the residents spoken to. Mohua tells of being careful about privacy.

Mohua: If you want to go and gallivant round everybody’s caravans you could do it, but if you just want to, “Hello, how are you?” Keep to yourself, you still have that privilege to do it, yeah.

The high density of the caravans and buses is recognised by Mohua and opportunities to intermingle, but the option of choosing to be alone was also important. Tarapunga talks of her efforts to prevent ‘dramas’ and sees the need for residents to be self-reliant, encouraging them not to live in each other's pockets.

Tarapunga: Because it’s so close-knit living, they seem to get tangled up in little dramas over nothing sometimes, and then they come down and we hear about it. Well if they lived in town, who would they tell? They would have to sort it out themselves, you know.

Many residents' narratives mirrored the value Hihi placed on respecting privacy and setting limits on intimacy.

Hihi: We all just acknowledge that everyone’s got their own space. As I say, we can be very social, but you don’t go knocking on each other’s door unless you’ve got a reason.

The camping ground community is often presented as a relaxed atmosphere where relationships are informal and unforced, however some narratives point to them being site-specific or even unnecessary. Weka says he has no need to socialise, that's not what he's there for.

Weka: It’s only somewhere to lay. It’s not a home, it’s a house, if you know what I mean. I’ve not made it a home, it’s just somewhere to lay my head and eat my food, and that’s it, no where to socialise.

And do you have much to do with the other people living here?

Weka: Not a lot, not a lot at all, I sort of try and stick to myself I guess, certain reasons it’s best I do, yeah.

Pipipi has a similar attitude: ‘I wouldn’t talk to them, I would be polite, but then just bail', demonstrating camping grounds and the activities that naturally arise let people easily adjust their social distance and level of intimacy with others.
Pipipi: There’s a couple with kids here now, and there’s another guy over the back there with kids, he’s just renting a caravan and on Guy Fawkes we let off all these boom boxes and that for all the old people and that so that they could see fireworks, and the young kids. We took them some sparklers and that was cool eh. I think they were all pretty buzzed out. It was fun, but it’s sort of like, don’t know them, but we’ll do that for fun, you know.

This contradictory story tells of sharing fireworks with the other residents, and he is glad of it, thinking of himself as providing a valuable service to the rest of the community and being a part of that community. Pipipi then talks of retreating back to own corner of camping ground, suggesting that the relationships between residents need to be analysed within the wider context of the physical environment.

Formal and informal rules come into play to mediate the tensions between sociability and privacy in place. The owners maintain basic formal rules, including noise control, alcohol and drug use, and general behaviour. These were based on respect for others.

Tui: Just behaviour, you get thrown out, you’re allowed to have a drink if you want to, but not outside and yahoo. ‘Cos those people up there did a couple of nights ago, oh last night, fighting and carrying on, I heard bloody glasses smashing. That’s the sort of carry that’s not tolerated, ha, they’ll be out on their bloody ear. If you’re just quiet and keep to yourself, you can have a quiet drink, you know, just keep things nice and clean and tidy.

Kereru: There’s rules but they’re flexible, you know, like they say no drinking over in the block, or at all. But on Friday nights we get together for drinks over there and because he knows it’s us, and we’ll control it, then they’ll come down and join us. But there’s also things like, there’s the basic things for most camps where you try not to make too much noise after 10 o’clock at night because you consider other people. That’s the biggest thing, and that’s probably the most basic rule of the lot, isn’t it? Considering your neighbours.

Takapu: We don’t mind as long as they play ball, they get a bit agitated if we go out there, “Oh you’ve been playing up here, you’ve got to tone it down a bit or you’ll have to find somewhere else to live” and then they’ll tone it down.

Some leniency is given, but there is an understanding that the owners have final say about any occurrences.

Informal rules also provide community expectations about the behaviour of people in the camping ground communities. In contrast to traditional neighbourhoods, there are different expectations about interacting and behaving in camping grounds. Kea speaks fondly of this system.
Kea: It’s the freedom, you know, please yourself where you go, when you go. Freedom to do whatever you like, as long as it’s within ‘the rules’ [laughter]. No, as long as you don’t make trouble or anything like that.

These 'rules' Kea refers to are the often unwritten informal rules of the camping ground which residents agree to, showing they speak of operating within a shared culture and language.

Tui: Ah, privacy is not an issue. You know, everybody has to sort of get up in the morning and stumble over to the shower half dressed. Nobody looks, just leave people alone. If you want privacy you just shut the curtains.

Tieke: See it’s a P\textsuperscript{35} free zone, here. There’s just absolutely none of that crap in this park here, and we’ve all made that quite clear. But pot is like cigarettes, it’s not a problem here. And you know, it’s no worse that alcohol, so that’s widely accepted. But it’s good we have a ban on the hard you know.

Kereru: Every now and then you really want some time to yourself. We had to sort of start having this rule that when people saw that my front curtains were shut I wanted to be left alone, you know, don’t bother me. That was mainly because I was working night shift at the time, sleeping in the daytime. I think that’s sort of half pie gone by the wayside, people knock on my door at two o’clock in the morning these days [laughter]. Doesn’t seem to make a lot of difference, but it doesn’t matter now.

These ways of relating and interacting with each other are important to the functioning of the community. There may be tensions and frustration when others do not follow the rules. On the large part, residents hold the need to compromise high, and in some situations informal rules can be waived by both residents and owners.

The value of keeping distance and boundary lines of contact can also be seen in narratives of the blurring of public and private places. This is linked also to potential lack of privacy for residents and is another aspect of the camping ground environment that is perceived by residents to undermine the sense of community. Mohua speaks of using place to mediate between sociability and privacy.

Mohua: We were facing the house, there was nobody camped in front of us, yeah, so we only had on the side, and it was an elderly couple on one side, and a family on the other side, and trees behind us, you know, so we had heaps of privacy … We were lucky in that respect. We had nobody in front of us so we had all open spaces and it was like swimming pool in front of us and the playground, so we were seeing plenty, yeah.

\textsuperscript{35} Methamphetamine
With 'outsiders' frequenting the camping grounds, some residents had issues with the place being their 'home' where they had settled, but also being a place that is accessible to the general public and viewed as a public place by others.

Kea: They’ve got a feeling like the play area is public, yes. But it’s not. Parekareka’s told them to please leave, and go and play up on the one at the primary school up the road, ha.

The owner of this camp, Parekareka, tries to differentiate between public and private place recognizing that such movement of people can be disruptive to the rest of the 'permanent' population of the camping ground.

In the event that there is distrust or discontentment between residents, there is some hierarchical recourse to the management in camping grounds. Camping ground residents can complain to the owners. Owners are also able to take action against residents breaking the rules. There are also external rules: for example, the trust board of Camp Tahi can tell the managers they cannot change or develop; and local councils can make decisions about where and when to implement the camping ground regulations. For the most part, residents have a level of trust built into their relationships with the owners to protect them from higher-level tenancy and development issues, such as advocating for residents in cases of potential forced relocation.

C O N C L U S I O N

Camping ground communities are dependent on available resources - the social and physical infrastructure and levels of participation. The features of the camping ground affect the complex concept of community. The narratives show the ways in which people work together and build mutual trust and social capital - social dimensions of housing that also affect health. Dynamics between physical structures and social interaction are also present in camping grounds. The ways residents experience community is interwoven with the physicality of the place, in particular the presence of communal facilities promotes social interaction.

The participation and interaction between residents discussed in this chapter gave a sense of community to camping grounds. The narratives capture the structural opportunities and constraints of the camping ground, identifying factors that help shape the social networks at play. In contrast to their previous experiences of housing and other neighbourhoods, residents spoke of actual collective rituals and ways of knowing that sustain their communities. Residents were not passive; they also demonstrated active agency in shaping the communities they lived in. Personal
choice and values also help to shape the networks of residents. Overall, the residents and the owners show an understanding of the important role of social structure in maintaining a problem-free community. This social structure of the communities is stronger with the active management on the part of the owners. Their community is upheld through the prevention of upheaval, disruption, and disorderly or troublesome behaviours, through the line of defence provided by the owners. Their stories also show a potentially high level of social capital (a combination of trust, sociability, and support) in camping grounds – important for the health of communities.

The relationships between camping ground residents is shaped by the places and spaces within which they live. The physical place of the camping ground emerges as having a major bearing on the establishment of social networks and community between residents. These social networks are formed and continued within spatial and temporal contexts of the camping grounds. The presence of communal facilities promotes social interaction through opportunities to interact with others. Informal structures work in the same way as formal structures in wider, normal towns (fences, roads, etc) - providing the security of community. Furthermore, in being part of the camping ground, they were enabled to mix and socialise, maintaining social ties and networks.

Residents do raise concerns about privacy and security. Camping ground communities may be seen as constructed in opposition to wider society and to be a nostalgic rendition of an egalitarian past. While these communities provide opportunities for most residents to participate in social networks and give and receive social support within the camping grounds, there may be an absence of social cohesion with wider society. In contrast to the literature, narratives here show temporary (as opposed to permanent, secure) housing can fulfil needs for social connections, but social relations beyond the communities based in camping grounds may be compromised by the nature of the housing. Chapter 8: The health of camping ground residents will explore residents’ access to community and the implications of this for their health. The next chapter The problem and politics of camping grounds, discusses socio-spatial features of camping ground residence.
THE PROBLEM & POLITICS OF CAMPING GROUNDS

INTRODUCTION

‘When power is unequally distributed, the economic and social world presents itself not as a universe of possibles equally accessible to every possible subject - posts to be occupied, courses to be taken, markets to be won, goods to be consumed, properties to be exchanged - but rather as a signposted universe, full of injunctions and prohibitions, signs of appropriation and exclusion, especially according to the degree to which it offers stable changes, capable of favouring and fulfilling stable expectations’ (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 225).

Places themselves can be at the centre of political conflict and contestation (Jones, Jones & Woods, 2004). Camping grounds, as places, are seen here as the site of politics of place. This chapter develops the contextual approach, showing camping ground residence as patterned and organised. They are key sites where inequalities and identities are constructed and reproduced. With this in mind, the negotiation of space and the role that the state, media and public sector play in camping grounds as housing and social space are discussed. The ways in which these actors and their narratives shape camping ground residence and how camping ground residents respond to these politics of place is the focus. Furthermore, as camping grounds have significance historically and culturally, their meaning (and that of camping ground residence) must also be viewed through these associations.

The narratives collected show the differing ways in which camping grounds are used, which in turn construct various meanings of space. Narratives accordingly criticise any different or
conflicting understandings of camping ground space. Jones et al. (2004) explain that places are: ‘socially constructed by individuals and groups who draw on their own experiences, beliefs and prejudices to imbue places with particular characteristics, meanings and symbolisms’ (p. 15). Conflict may arise when different groups oppose or dispute these meanings. They go on to argue that while divergences are mostly uneventful, ‘occasionally [the] different discourses of place that are mobilized are so incompatible that political conflict erupts over, for example, the appropriateness of particular developments’ (p. 15). In terms of the narratives concerning camping grounds, the contrasting perceptions of place can lead to tensions around legitimate uses of space and the provision of housing.

McCabe & Marson (2006) discuss the ways in which people position themselves as legitimate users of space. They state that increasingly the use of space is contested: ‘What one individual deems to be morally correct may differ greatly from one another, depending on the use of the place, the people who inhabit it, and the activities that are being performed within’ (p. 103). In this chapter, holiday imagery and aesthetic values are juxtaposed against images of camping grounds that equate with down-and-out transient accommodation. Camping grounds can be seen in this way as arenas where local and national demarcations of power and identity occur. These factors also form the basis of negotiations of place and space. While the contestation about camping ground (residence) may appear to be about economic values and preserving New Zealand culture, it also contains complexities around power, politics, values and meanings. Secondly, camping ground residents are marginalised through some narratives, as they are excluded through political framing, ideas about acceptable and appropriate housing, and regulatory processes.

Narratives of various groups, media, institutions, and the roles of politics have in some cases worked to define or develop imagery of camping ground residence as a housing problem. The construction of camping ground residence as problematic draws strongly on popular negative stereotyping and media representations and some social service providers. These ideas may remain dormant for periods, emerging intermittently as important social issues. Reaction to camping ground residence is generally discussed in relation to housing acceptability and rights, and regulations of housing. The representation of camping ground residence as problematic is essentially attributable to land development, lack of coverage by the Residential Tenancies Act (1986), and the enforcement (or not) of the Camping Ground Regulations (1985). These contextual aspects very often use causation, fault, and responsibility to undermine the status of camping ground residents. The tension between these discursive understandings and those of camping ground residents is a focus of this chapter.

While those living in camping grounds are not roofless or houseless, their living conditions can be considered inadequate compared to standard housing, especially when they have no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation. Although proportionately small in
number, camping ground residents as a group face increasing marginalisation through socio-spatial processes such as insecure housing and control measures utilised by various societal groups and individuals. To illustrate this point, the New Zealand Definition of Homelessness will be looked at in regards to camping grounds. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the impact of politicisation and problematisation of camping ground residence for the residents themselves.

THE POLITICISATION OF CAMPING GROUNDS

THE CAMPING GROUND REGULATIONS (1985)

Camping grounds are regulated under the Camping Ground Regulations (1985), made under the Health Act 1956, as described in the literature review. At a national level, several local councils\textsuperscript{36} have recently reviewed the operation of their camping grounds due to particular concerns about the legitimisation and use of permanent structures in camping grounds. As one council recorded, they had: ‘great concern at permanent camping … and felt it would be well worth investigating as it could get completely out of hand’\textsuperscript{37}. Some council minutes expressed concern and sympathy after hearing emotional submissions from camping ground residents. Proposals to require removal of permanent dwellings and residents often resulted in anger and confusion. Other councils remained adamant in moves to enforce the regulations, and forced residents to move out\textsuperscript{38}.

Relocatable home parks require a certain standard and compliance with the Building Code. However, in the one camping ground that had a section divided off as a relocatable home park, and leased sites to residents, there was reticulated sewage and water in some of the dwellings but not all. While this area was being developed over the long-term, the majority of dwellings in the relocatable home park were caravans with rigid annexes, and visibly would not conform to building legislation, questioning the enforcement of these regulations. Even so, the enforcement

\textsuperscript{36} For example, Maetzig (2009, May 2). Caravans may get to stay put. \textit{Taranaki Daily News}.

\textsuperscript{37} Kaikoura District Council minutes (June 21, 2006).

\textsuperscript{38} For example, Katters (2005, May 14). Happy campers face boot. \textit{The Dominion Post}. 
of the Camping Ground Regulations is variable, with some councils strict, but not others. For some owners and residents interviewed, the reasoning behind the time restrictions was perplexing.

**Takapu:** I don’t see why there should be a regulation for it. You know, if people are happy, go for it.

The Regulations are described, however, as easily manipulated. Camping ground residents often dodge the Regulations by staying somewhere else overnight then returning to the camping ground.

**Takapu:** But it’s not enforced and many people go away for a weekend every couple of months, come back again … If it’s not a problem, leave it alone.

**Hoihoi:** We’ve got a few what we call semi-permanents, ‘cos yeah legally you’re not supposed to have permanents, ah but these regularly move their vans so that they obey the law … I don’t even see why they’ve got that because there’s a lot of people, you’ve got a lot of camping grounds that they’ve built little shelters alongside their caravans, there’s heaps like that so ah … just move their caravans a couple of feet and then move them back again, or they actually go away on holiday and just leave there their caravan and leave the place for a while … I can’t see any problem with people who like it living in a caravan all their life.

One council manager recognised that, while long-term residence in camping grounds does not fit with the Regulations that the councils are charged with, there are difficulties in enforcement. In her narrative she shows understanding of the implications of actively acting on the Regulations.

**Kowhai:** Well, it’s not legal [laughter] so it’s, yep, it’s not supported … I guess it depends on who is making the rules, councils are often charged with enforcing laws that are made by central government, and it’s often the case that laws are made, and that the responsibility for enforcing them are handed down to local government with no resources, and I don’t think that that’s communicated to the public, they don’t understand that, they don’t see it as a central government issue, they just see the person that’s enforcing it.

Kowhai’s narrative provides an interesting account of a rift between central and local government, and a battle of enforcement. She is vague about the council’s role in camping grounds, but remains aware of the ramifications of the camping ground residence and the Camping Ground Regulations (1985). While her narrative suggests that this particular council avoided being proactive because of sensitivities, two local camping ground owners spoke of becoming aware of the Regulations being pursued more vigorously.
Titore: They have demolished permanent ones in [neighbouring town], and the camping ground on the other side of the hill, I read in the paper and that was to do with permanent fixtures and Council regulations, so I started looking at it, ‘cos they’re trying to amalgamate that council with this council, and with them comes their regulations, they’ve told them to give dates to remove all their permanent fixtures.

Titore displays a fear of tightening regulations as a result of a possible merger between two local councils, and the impact of this on his camping ground, and ‘his’ residents. The managers of another camping ground in the same area had also experienced conflict with the local council in regards to their permanent residents.

Parekareka: They started jumping up and down with us, we said “Look that’s fine, but when we took over the place over 10 years ago, [long-term residents] were already here”, so it was their problem if they wanted to enforce the lease they should have given us an empty, with no permanents here to start with, but they didn’t … I mean, this place has been going since 1978, and there’s been long-term people since then, and then all of a sudden they get a bee in their bonnet and who knows why … they’re not changing the rules, but I mean, when we first arrived it should have been a holiday park with no long-term people in here.

These owners had understood the presence of people living at the camping ground as a kind of tacit agreement with the Council, given the fact that the Council had never commented on it previously.

Parekareka: So we basically said well we weren’t going to be the ones responsible for kicking them out, and why should we be? It’s your responsibility … now we got them to write a letter that says to the leaseholder [manager] that they will not enforce the conditions of the lease any more vigorously than they have.

Korora: We’re obviously fiercely loyal to our long-term residents, otherwise we wouldn’t really for their sake be trying to take the council on, I just don’t think it’s right for them to suddenly start trying to boulder over people.

These owners were prepared to dispute the seemingly irrational and unfair movement against residence in the camping ground, as their informal negotiations and understandings with their local council allowed for the residents to remain in their current housing. The residents of this camping ground were aware of this situation and how the managers’ lease essentially insecured their housing.

Kaka: They were having a court case, but the council didn’t go through with their threat, they were going to, because it’s peripherally against the law to have permanent residents, anyway they got through that one.
Kakariki: Parekareka [owner] was worried that the council was going to stop him having long-term people, but they didn’t. They’ve actually leased it to him for a period of 99 years, so he’s got no problems, and if he sells it, he just on sells [residents] with the camping grounds, so he’s quite happy, so we sort of know for the next 99 years, we’re sweet, we can stay on, or move off, and come back again, and still have somewhere long-term.

However, for the most part, those living in camping grounds are living in inherently insecure accommodation. While many residents feel safe in their understanding that the owners or managers they trust will protect their interests, ultimately there is no housing security. The presence of the Camping Ground Regulations (1985) and the Reserve Act (1977) undermine camping ground residence as a legitimate, permanent housing option.

The mixed and varying actions of local councils across New Zealand show the level of discretion exercised which is dependent on outside forces, such as media reports and public pressures. Hillier (2001) states the politics of place often entails a contest of identities, images, and values. Institutional regulations regarding camping grounds, such as the eviction of residents (and resulting displacement), can be seen as a reflection of conflicts over the development of the camping ground environment. For instance, holidaymakers and the general New Zealand public are frequently attracted by an idealised notion of camping. This New Zealand holiday idyll for some becomes tarnished by the realities of long-term residents – noisy, unkempt social misfits and the development of permanent and anesthetically unpleasing dwellings. Kowhai shared her sentiments on what she sees as the loss of everyday people’s ability to access camping grounds.

Kowhai: In the summer periods, there’s never enough, they’re max capacity over summer holidays … I always feel sorry for the young families these days, a long time ago you could pack up in a car with a tent and find a place to camp and have a wonderful holiday, now they’re unable to, it’s a shame for a lot of families, that they can’t enjoy these camping holidays because you’ve got long-term residents in camping grounds, there’s another few spaces that aren’t there.

This narrative shows the particular significance that the physical sites of camping grounds have to some people. They illustrate some of the politics that have developed around camping grounds, chiefly the value of and attachment to camping grounds as a part of cultural tradition and custom. Change is seen as disruptive to a sense of continuity and security, where camping ground places, environment, familiarity, and types of accommodation must be retained and conserved. This outlook is reflected in the 2006 report to the Minister of Conservation ‘Review of Camping Opportunities in New Zealand’ (Department of Conservation (DoC), 2006). Introducing this report, Minister Chris Carter (2006) stated:

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39 And, as discussed earlier, internal forces such as prior tacit agreements.
‘The chance to pick up a pack and retreat to the wilderness, or take the kids on a summer camping holiday … are opportunities generations of New Zealanders have valued … Even though we are becoming an increasingly urbanised society, these opportunities remain an essential part of how we see ourselves … The etiquette of the outdoors is inextricably linked to the social values the majority of New Zealanders share … It is part of our national identity’.

The report identifies widespread public concern over the closure of camping grounds and the reduced space for tourists and holidaymakers. Rising land prices and appeal of alternative development resulted in a rapid net reduction of around 70 camping grounds across New Zealand between 1996 and 2006 (DoC, 2006).

Local councils have re-exerted ‘control’ of permanent living in camping grounds by evicting many residents throughout New Zealand. This has led to frustrated and upset residents, social service providers and often owners of camping grounds. These conflicts can be identified as housing struggles and has resonance with Mormont’s (1987) analysis of rural struggles: ‘between groups seeking to promote or defend their own symbolic representations of rurality – or, to use a more generic term, their own discourses of place’ (p. 116). In the same light, various groups engage in ‘claims-making’ of camping grounds. The legislation (and resulting action and interpretation) denied some camping ground residents the right to protect their housing and social network. The spatial processes that frame the insecurity and illegitimate nature of camping ground residence are questionable and regulative practices raise basic political concerns around entitlements, power, and negotiation.

The predominance of private and market interests, as well as institutions and gatekeepers, affect the narratives around camping ground residence, in turn shaping the perceptions and actions taken against permanent residence, and towards protection and preservation of camping grounds as special public localities. The momentum of political conceptions of camping ground residence, actioned through pressure placed on local authorities, does however continue regardless of economic and social functions that camping grounds may fulfil. Firstly, camping grounds do meet the demand for cheap housing. Actions taken by local councils to clear camping grounds of long-term residents (as a vehicle of social transformation) often fail to acknowledge camping grounds as providing housing.

Kauri: People like that think about all the holidaymakers that can’t come back to their favourite holiday spots ’cos they’ve been closed down. But there’s also the side that you’re talking about, you know, those places are homes for people, places to stay in. We’ll probably find that we’re having less camping grounds around the country and then when they close down that causes displacement. They go somewhere else to another camping ground, you know, and that’s someone else’s problem, so to speak.
Kauri identifies that the provision of housing within camping grounds often fails to enter the debate, and the removal of long-term residents and their resulting displacement can be a silenced outcome. Secondly, there is an interesting counterfactual narrative to notions of access to camping grounds being disrupted by permanent residents. Camping ground owners stressed their concern over threats to commercial viability if regulations were strictly enforced. Kakariki was one of several residents who also recognised this situation.

Kakariki: Well, hey, basically at the end of the day, when it comes to winter season, and it’s cold and people are not going to be traveling around as much, he’s still got an income … When he’s got no one here in the off peak season, we keep him going, we pay all his bills and everything like that.

Kakariki outlines the role that residents play in sustaining revenue. Several owners spoke of the need for the income of these residents, and the risks to the camping grounds’ continuing financial viability if enforcement of regulations removed this. HAPNZ\textsuperscript{40} supported the owners and also stated that cutting out long-term provision of housing in camping grounds would have a negative effect on the economic feasibility of many camping grounds. These permanent sites provide necessary returns over the off-season and can offset losses where peak season earning is lower than expected.

Hoihoi: We don’t advertise as such for permanents but ah, they’re good for covering the operating costs, you know, if you didn’t have [them] here, you’d be struggling at times.

Permanents residents form part of the economic infrastructure of the camping grounds, mitigating the effects of low patronage in winter.

**RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT (1986)**

While camping ground dwellings may be fulfilling a market need through residents’ demand and owners’ preferences, caution must still be applied to the mechanisms that shape this type of housing. Camping ground residents do not have the security of tenure that is afforded to others who are renting residential properties, pushing them further on to the margins of housing. The Residential Tenancies Act (1986) expressly excludes these tenancies:

\textsuperscript{40} HAPNZ - The Holiday Accommodation Parks Association of New Zealand.
(a) where the premises are commercial premises;

(k) where the premises constitute part of any hotel, motel, boarding house, or lodging house used for the provision of temporary or transient accommodation and;

(t) where the premises comprise bare land\(^{41}\) (with or without facilities) on which the tenant has the right under the tenancy agreement to place or erect a mobile home, caravan, or other means of shelter.

The Department of Building and Housing (2005) states that this type of tenancy is excluded as it: ‘is of a temporary or transient nature and so it is not seen as ‘residential’’ (p. 20). Some particular issues differentiate camping ground residence from ‘normal’ tenancies. It was noted by residents and owners that there are unique characteristics of camping ground residency that need to be balanced in regard to general tenancy law. Firstly, camping ground residence differs from other tenancies covered under tenancy legislation through the communal nature of living arrangements and the sharing of common facilities. Pipipi and Koekoea stressed the advantage for them of being able to move at low cost. Where mainstream renting is becoming an increasingly complex transaction, moving into the camping ground did not require high costs, for example, bond payments.

Secondly, camping grounds operate within different rules and management structures. In particular, the maintenance of grounds is usually undertaken by owners. Narratives frequently pointed to the lowered stress for camping ground residents due to the absence of formal responsibilities. Kakariki (resident) spoke of this in regards to the upkeep of dwellings, facilities and surrounding environments: ‘There’s no worries about making sure the place is up to scratch for landlord inspections or anything’. Owners’ narratives highlighted how the running of the camping grounds resulted in different tenancy circumstances.

Takapu: Oh no, no completely different. We can kick them out anytime we want. They get a bit of paper when they first come in like any drugs, alcohol, abuse, or not paying their rent or whatever, instant leave. It’s like staying in a motel or something like that or in a camping ground in cabin. You know we’re running a business here. We were questioned that a couple of years ago ‘cos the community law office rang, ‘cos I was kicking someone out and he says, “You should give her more time than just say she has to be out by tomorrow”, “Look, she’s had a week to get out and she still hasn’t gone”. One of the things when they first come in, if they abuse the privilege, abuse the rules and regulations of the camp, then they’re out. He said, “Oh is that right”, and that was it.

\(^{41}\) Many residents pay for a site at camping grounds on which to place their own, or otherwise rented, dwelling.
Hoihoi: It’s not an easy question that. Because it’s a business basically, and the nature of your business is attracting holidaymakers and things like that. If you’ve got one sort of permanent who you considered was detrimental to your business about making holidays, I think you should be able to make the right to get them out, bam that’s it. And, well they get behind with their rent and things like that I think I, you need to … I think there’s a difference, ah between people who’ve got their own caravans and things on site and like the guys down in the single cabins … Maybe there should be a bit more protection to the people who are in their campers and caravans and things, although it’s dead easy for them to move, but then it’s not always easy to find somewhere to go [laughs] with them, if you want to stay in the area. Um, perhaps there should be a little protection, not just up and out. But as I said with the cabins [emergency and short-term], we’ve got to be able to get rid of them if they if they start acting up when we’ve got school kids yeah, we just go shoo out, hmm.

These managers stress the need for specific and local rules to enable them to effectively run the camping ground as a business, catering for tourists and holidaymakers as well as long-term residents.

Thirdly, some tenants intend to, and often do, stay on a temporary basis, and may wish to leave at short notice. In addition, as pointed out above by Hoihoi, owners may wish to keep some space for short-term dwellings only, and apply a level of discretion about who they let to long-term.

Kakariki: We don’t have to give him 21 days notice when we want to move on, we can just pack up and move on … suits us, yeah, we can be sitting here and like tomorrow morning we might decide, nah, we want to go live in Gisborne for a while, so we just pack up and mosie on, we’ll give [owner] the key back.

Weka: I’ve got the freedom to move on.

This greater flexibility than mainstream rental properties was welcomed by some residents, and is also linked to the provision of emergency and short-term accommodation in camping grounds.

Lastly, the variable nature of residence is camping grounds was noted. Residents may rent a site, or site and dwelling, and a range of fees may be applied.
Kakariki: It’s awesome. I actually prefer not having a tenancy agreement to worry about, because it, I know for a fact [owner] is not going to put the rent up, ‘cos he works on an on-peak, off-peak programme. For his long-term residents like myself and Kea, we get a flat rate anyway, and at the end of the day it works out cheaper than what the tourists are paying. He keeps it cheaper because we are his bread and butter, when he’s got no one here in the off peak season, we keep him going, we pay all his bills and everything like that. He shows his appreciation by giving us the cheap rent. One of these caravans overnight for [husband] and I would be 24 dollars a night. Over a week it would be well over 100. Whereas for the week, for the two of us, we’re only paying 90 bucks. So it’s like, it’s that saving plus we didn’t have to come up with a bond.

Kakariki saw the apparent lack of obligation to be beneficial for both residents and owners. For example, preferential rates were given to residents above tourists because they are ‘bread and butter’, giving ongoing financial security for owners and ensuring the financial viability of camping grounds. These key discrepancies were some of the issues also identified in relation to the application of tenancy law to caravan parks in Australia (Community Law Reform Committee of the ACT, 1994).

This set of narratives suggests that a lack of coverage by the Residential Tenancies Act has positive aspects, and that both owners and residents prefer not to have a formal tenancy agreement. Despite these ideas that the minimal commitments and obligations suited camping ground residents and that this may be seen as a beneficial characteristic of camping ground residence, it does also create situations where there is an imbalance of power and this seriously affects the ability of residents to feel secure in their housing.

Often there is no clarity around the rights and responsibilities, with several residents either unaware that they had no tenancy rights, or having erroneously thought that they did have such rights. One social service provider gives an example of this.

Nikau: We have people who aren’t aware … issues like, “I’ve just been kicked out, what are my rights?” and then you tell them they’re not actually tenants, you’re in a camping ground, and yes they can tell you to leave, and they don’t have to give you a reason … They don’t know their rights, and they’re unaware that they’re going into this situation.

Social service providers recognised that the lack of awareness of having no rights is an ongoing problem. In relation to tenancy, camping ground residents faced issues not dissimilar in nature to private tenants in some ways, except that they experienced a lack of legislative protection and resolution processes. There is no definition of the rights and responsibilities of users and providers of camping grounds in situations where this accommodation is being used other than for holiday purposes.
Some camping ground residents spoke of eviction, and the imminent threats of having to move out. Matuhi moved into a caravan after not being able to secure housing elsewhere. He had rented the caravan on a week-by-week basis, but had been told to move on with the advent of the Christmas period. His situation meant he was caught in an ongoing, stressful process of finding alternative housing for himself, his girlfriend, and their young child. His lower status as a short-term resident meant he was the first one to go. The impermanent nature of his housing created a significant stress for this young family and they were struggling to find alternative housing. As time drew closer to the date of departure, they were finding themselves feeling increasingly vulnerable. Many social service providers felt arrangements such as this were unfair and put residents at risk.

Karaka: I know that we have had people in there in cabins, but it's sort of taken on a week-to-week basis, and if, like especially during periods like Christmas and holidays, they might have to find alternative accommodation, for that time. They can get more money from the visitors, yeah, which isn’t very fair, but I do know of that happening.

Tui: Well they can make [the rent] up. I can see that coming too. There's not much you can do about that, just have to pay them or piss off … No, so there obviously no law, no protection law for price rise in camping grounds.

Residents relied on trust and confidence they had in owners, and this mediated some of the insecurities they felt. Many residents had developed personal relationships with the owners rather than formal landlord-tenant associations, such as Tui: ‘If you get on with the manager, you’re fine’. Tui holds an instrumental view of the importance of the owner, and sees that a working relationship with owners is critical. Kereru is aware of the risks, but they do not worry her because she can pack up.

Kereru: We’re lucky that we’ve got a good owner. If you had another one it could be a problem, but then if you don’t like it, you move on, you just hitch up and go, pack up all your gear, you just cart it off.

Ruru: They’ve been very good to us. But as you say we’ve got no legal protection. But I don’t think, they’re not going to, well you hope they’re not going to wop it up like that eh, but I don’t know.

Tieke: No, that doesn’t affect me because, as I say, he’s a good friend of mine, the people here are exceptionally lucky with [owner], like it’s all verbal leases anyway … and he has no intention of selling the place.

Residents hold a sense of luck and hope that their housing is secured through their relationships with owners, with little regard for the role of local councils charged with enforcing regulations, not the owners per se.
Whilst camping ground residents may experience stable housing in the short-term, over time various threats can develop, including the possibility of change of ownership, and changes in the enforcement of regulations and rules. The lack of formal regulation of housing provision within camping grounds is, however, a complex issue. Given the specific characteristics of the setting, standard tenancy policies would be difficult to enforce and may not actually be deemed appropriate. As camping ground owners reiterated, a more rigorous enforcement of the Camping Ground Regulations (1985), such as length of stay, could possibly prove counter-productive to protecting residents’ interests.

Parekareka: With tenancy, you’ve got to have a reason to get rid of people, then you’ve got to give them a week’s notice, and then you’ve got to blah blah whatever it is. I think it would be a nightmare, I don’t really think we’d take the people on. I mean, in Australia it’s different, the climate’s different and there’s that many more of them. Here they’re not designed for long-term stay, basically, it’s just a caravan out the back isn’t it? Nah, I don’t think it’s a good idea at all.

Korora: If you had a place that was dedicated to long-term people, but then it’s not a holiday park, so you’re getting away from the whole thing. When it’s a camping ground I think it’s a really dumb idea.

Other owners also suggested that necessitating formalised agreements would actually reduce the supply and provision of housing in camping grounds. Nevertheless, as it stands, those living in camping grounds do not qualify for the degree of protection and justice of other tenancies covered by the Residential Tenancies Act.

Titoki: In camping grounds I think there needs to be rules and regulations like I’ve signed up for x amount of time … I think if a camping ground is going to provide emergency, or ongoing, accommodation, then yes there has to be something in place so that they can’t put it up like, “Oh tonight it’s $10, oh no it’s $12 tonight, oh it’s $15 tonight”. I think there has to be something especially if it is a long-term thing, people have to be protected but then again it has to be up to the camping owner as to if he wants to provide that service.

The inconsistency of regulation of tenancies also excludes residents from access to mediation and Tenancy Tribunal services, and places them on the margins of housing provision. Social service providers remained adamant that residents should have protection of their basic rights to accommodation through legislation. They were very concerned about the level of discretion allowed to owners and managers which is not permissible within normal tenancy agreements.

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42 Australia’s Residential Parks Act covers tenants’ rights and obligations, security of tenure, park rules and fees. Many of these parks cater primarily for long-term residents, as opposed to New Zealand’s which focus on tourism.
CAMPING GROUNDS & HOMELESSNESS

The positioning of camping ground residents on the fringes of housing provision also has significance with regard to current understanding of homelessness. Definitions of homelessness are shaped by what is culturally and politically accepted as appropriate housing. This has been highlighted in homelessness literature, where a continuum (from extreme rooflessness to substandard housing) has been described to account for differing degrees and notions of homelessness. Tawa described her understanding and points to the value of this approach.

Tawa: The housing issue is like a continuum, there’s sort of sleeping rough on the one end, and then there’s very secure privately-owned by the individual accommodation. And then there’s everything in between, from your emergency and transitional housing, through to camping grounds and boarding houses, right through to state and social housing. So everything needs to be viewed in terms of that continuum.

Permanent residency in camping grounds has been described as: ‘the most invisible but common form of rural homelessness’ (Meert et al., 2005, p. 109). Cloke et al. (2005) explain this as a tendency to equate homelessness with rooflessness, which often results in a false impression that rural homelessness is limited or non-existent. Government attention has started to focus on homelessness in New Zealand, with work to develop a New Zealand-specific definition of homelessness. The Working Group for the Definition of Homelessness comprised of Statistics New Zealand, Housing New Zealand Corporation and the Ministry of Social Development representatives. He Kainga Oranga provided a submission encouraging the inclusion of camping ground residents and challenging assumptions that these dwellings are intended to be temporary and therefore not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act. The submission made a proviso that this pertains to those residents who have no options to acquire safe and secure accommodation.

The inclusion of camping ground residents emphasises the importance of a generous definition and provides opportunities to take into account the myriad issues that lead to this type of homelessness or housing exclusion. In particular, it will acknowledge camping grounds as a survival strategy for some people due to a shortage of adequate, appropriate and affordable alternative housing. It is also vital that camping ground residents’ housing is included in this definition, for not only is it illegal, but the residents often go through periods of great uncertainty in respect to future housing opportunities.

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43 Housing and Health Research Programme, Department of Public Health, University of Otago (Wellington).

44 See Appendix 5 Submission to the working group for definition of homelessness.
THE PROBLEMATISATION OF CAMPING GROUND RESIDENCE & RESIDENTS

Camping ground residence is problematised in two main ways: the actual provision of housing in camping grounds; and the people in camping grounds themselves. The political context and lack of security in camping grounds outlined brings into question the actual provision of housing in camping grounds. Narratives that problematise camping ground residence compete with narratives that various forms of temporary housing may fulfil the needs of residents effectively. Camping grounds are an important source of housing throughout New Zealand. Social service agencies view camping grounds as an option that is affordable, accessible and available where there is otherwise an absence of alternatives.45

Tawa: Workers have mentioned they called this place, and this place, and this place for a tenant, and they were either full up, or you know, didn’t want to have the client for some reason.

Camping ground residence is linked to shortages within private and public housing provision, including emergency housing.

Tawa: In terms of camping grounds, they are definitely important, ’cos in some parts of the country there’s nothing else, there’s literally nothing else.

Rimu: We have advocated on numerous occasions to Housing New Zealand that they need to be looking at their rental portfolio in this area, because they’ve actually said that they’re not going to put anymore, because we’re not high growth. But we are, otherwise we wouldn’t be getting many calls a week asking for accommodation. There certainly is a big gap in accommodation.

Kauri: The council and Housing New Zealand, they’ve also got a long waiting list. There are certain criteria, and a lot of these people don’t meet that criteria.

These social service providers voiced frustration about government agencies and unmet need in their local areas. Rata sums up the evident gaps in provision of specific types of housing in her area.

45 See Chapter 4 Pathways for a full discussion of how people come to live in camping grounds.
Rata: How do we address some of the obvious gaps in our community? Some of the gaps are around the housing of mental health patients, we don’t have any residential houses, supported or unsupported. We also don’t have single men’s accommodation, we don’t have any single people’s accommodation. We don’t have specific housing like community housing initiatives, there are none really. We’ve got two emergency houses in town and that’s it. The rest is either private or Housing New Zealand state-owned houses.

Camping grounds provide a recognised supply of accommodation, especially where people fall outside rules and requirements of other forms of housing. In addition, the exclusion of some people from private rental housing highlights the relative accessibility of camping grounds and hence social service reliance on them for emergency accommodation. Furthermore, camping grounds are considered part of the overall housing system, as demonstrated by informal institutional arrangements: social service providers refer people to camping grounds; the use of camping grounds as emergency housing; and payments of rents and subsidies directly to camping grounds.

However, camping ground owners emphasise the challenges they confront in providing accommodation, especially for high-needs or hard-to-house people. The tension lies specifically between owners’ business interests and the social needs of some residents. This is notably the case with emergency housing, and those people placed by social services.

Takapu: Most of the emergency people are, ah, the down and outers, and somebody’s picked them up and said, “Oh, we want to help you”, and then try and lumber it on us … “Oh, I got this person off the street and into a camping ground”. But it’s not the environment for them here, especially with our purpose here as a camping ground, and with children coming in … but we still do take people for emergency.

Parekareka: It’s not our job, I mean you’ve got family or the State. It’s not our job to look after people that have got troubles … If they bring them around, “Yes, they can stay on a trial basis” … and we want the name of the nurse or provider, and someone that we can contact 24 hours a day, and weekly visits, and if you’re not going to do that, no … So with [resident], we have all the contact numbers, and all the people we can.

Korora: Because, since we’ve become more aware of the problems we might face, we’re not interested in that.

Owners were aware of the shift of problem tenants their way, but often felt pressured to provide ongoing accommodation with the knowledge that the camping ground was often the last port of call for many.
Totara: They kind of felt like they got dumped with them, and then had no support for them, and there’s nowhere for them to go afterwards either, ‘cos that’s it. That’s where they stay, there’s nothing else, apart from a trip to the police station, or a trip to the hospital again, or back to prison [laughter].

Tawa: We need to not lose sight of the fact that there is a need for more resourcing into housing, as opposed to just expecting that business providers will pick up this problem. One of the issues is that there will be people with particular needs and those needs aren’t going to be met in that sort of environment.

Titoki: Camping ground owners are not interested in the social service. It doesn’t come under their jurisdiction at all, whether they’re not skilled or don’t have the time for that … They’re a business, there to make money and that’s fair enough too. You can’t make it run smoothly if you’re running a camp for tourists to come in, and you’ve got these people and you don’t know what they are going to do next … I mean there’s no point in making these kinds of things into social services, ‘cos they’re not … I don’t think that we should be making camping grounds as the bad person in all this, ‘cos they’re only doing what they do. And you know, we’ll lose them if we don’t look after them … They’re pretty tough people who run these camps, but they don’t have a responsibility to provide accommodation for those people that no one else will take.

Service providers frequently pointed out that public bodies, specifically Housing New Zealand Corporation and local councils, should take responsibility for unmet housing need.

The problematisation of housing provision in camping grounds was also based on suitability. The physical design factors of this temporary housing were acknowledged to make camping grounds less habitable on a long-term basis, with the potential to result in poorer health outcomes for long-term residents.

Rimu: You won’t get any argument from me about poorer health outcomes [laughter], it makes sense, you know, be practical, whether you’re living in a caravan or a cabin at these places, the fact is they’re not a home, they’re not insulated, they’re not suitable for accommodation long-term … camping grounds are not our ideal situation.

 Nonetheless, the key informants’ notions of housing quality depend also on context, which is variable over time.

Takapu: You know, 30 or 40 years ago it might have been a health issue, but now you’ve got the technology for all the ablutions everywhere and the drainage, and people can put their pipes down out of their buses straight into the ground, into the systems, years ago you couldn’t do that, you had a bucket sitting under your caravan.

Takapu’s narrative comments on how camping grounds have evolved from the original purpose as short-term holiday accommodation to convenient repositories for those excluded from
mainstream housing. The quality of camping ground housing is contested – while the dwellings may meet the needs of some residents, in general they are not able to provide the same degree of shelter as permanent dwellings.

Most providers thought, despite any potential benefits of camping ground residence, the acceptability and appropriateness of this housing was debatable. Their understandings were based on a premise that all people have the right to adequate housing in decent surroundings of their choice, at affordable cost. Totara, like other service providers, viewed camping ground residence as an undesirable reflection of unaffordable housing and exclusion – a problem to be solved.

Totara: There should be no excuse for a family of eight or nine to be living in a caravan, not in this day and age, not with what we have, what the government’s about, and when we can get just about anything we want for families. We have a huge discretionary system and that policy is backed up by legislation. But legislation is so vague anyway it’s open to all sorts of interpretation, but basically if there was a family or a person, single, in need we’d be able to help, yeah … Should it be right for that client to stay there? For those kids to not live in a normal home, and because we know that it breeds, those sort of camping grounds can breed other things, that children shouldn’t be seeing, so maybe that’s not an unfair law [Camping Ground Regulations]. We need put into place a process of providing sustainable accommodation for those clients … We need to step up to the mark, and get them into [permanent housing]. What we do have is clients going from one camp to the next, and still not getting help. They’re maybe not wanting the help either, but I couldn’t see anybody who would really, really prefer to be living that type of lifestyle over living in a house.

Rimu also identified that concentrating solely on agency – perceived or suggested – of residents is not useful. Their choices are constrained by their experiences and the opportunities available to them.

Rimu: It’s that old adage, how do they know what they don’t know? And if that’s all they know, how are they going to know that it’s actually a lot more comfortable being in a real house? [laughter] Well that’s what you and I would say because we know.

The incorporation of agency into Kowhai’s narrative makes an implicit narrative of a distinction between deserving and undeserving residents.
Kowhai: In my previous workplace [another local council] there were some serious issues with a couple of the camping grounds that were very unsavoury places for families to live. There was quite an ongoing battle for that. It’s always difficult for a council to eject people, it’s an emotive issue, and we really don’t want to do it, unless there’s adequate housing for them to go to, there’s support available, from WINZ, and from central government agencies for that. We always have to battle where does the ratepayer responsibility stop, or start, or end, where’s that line? Nobody really wants to see people living in uncomfortable situations.

Her narrative fails to account for social processes and constraints. Where other narratives give sensitivity to material and spatial dimensions of social and political action related to camping grounds and their residents, Kowhai focuses on the unclear boundaries of who is responsible for housing provision.

So, despite accessibility and affordability associated with camping ground residence, many sectors reject camping grounds as acceptable for residential housing use. The media, social service providers and the public raise concerns about their use. These actions can be described as the Not-In-My-Back-Yard (NIMBY) syndrome, one that is supported by central government and local authorities (Somerville, 1998). The enforcement of the Camping Ground Regulations and other legislation supports the exclusion of camping ground residents and their ability to live securely in this type of housing. Importantly, there are differences between ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ understandings of camping grounds and this affects the life of residents46.

CAMPING GROUND RESIDENCE & SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Camping ground residence is potentially more exclusionary than other forms of housing as residents are subject to a situation of uncertainty, illegality, and illegitimacy. Somerville (1998) describes social exclusion at the national level through housing as a lack of planning and provision of accessible housing. At the local level, he gives the example of ‘NIMBYism’, where powerful residents of an area can exclude others. He explains the relationships between social exclusion and housing: ‘If successful, such strategies have the effect of exacerbating housing shortages in the area, thus forcing people either to leave or to lack a decent home of their own – classic expressions of enforced social segregation and social isolation’ (p. 772). This is also related to residents’ housing pathways, where various socio-spatial processes also shape access to housing. Camping ground residents are often denied access to secure, quality housing and the ability to

46 Stigma and discursive versus inside understandings are discussed in-depth in Chapter 7 Place & home.
exercise control over their housing. While it may be argued that they do have ‘access’ to housing in camping grounds, they are still socially excluded through the inability to access secure housing, and the lack of tenancy rights.

Camping ground residents are seen to occupy a place that is given social value by mainstream New Zealand; they inhabit a marginalised space as they ‘taint’ these places. The socio-spatial process of social exclusion for camping ground residents is legitimised through public discourses and legislation. For example, the Select Committee Report on the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill (2009) attempts to define acceptable and appropriate housing. Firstly, camping ground residence is rejected through exclusion from the Act. Camping ground residents are further excluded on the basis of their housing.

‘ … bringing temporary living-spaces under the principal Act would result in occupants having long-term tenure rights to types of accommodation that are inappropriate for permanent occupation’ (p. 6).

This narrative can be seen as an effort to define who is entitled to camping grounds, and as excluding those who are not. This lines up with Mandanipour, Cars and Allen’s (2003) argument that: ‘Space is a barrier and can exclude. It is freedom from being excluded, from being subordinated’ (p. 85). While definitions of camping grounds as illegal and illegitimate may be settled on paper, they are not so much in reality. The narratives in this chapter have illustrated Massey’s (1998) argument that individuals and groups constantly include and exclude others in efforts to claim and territorialise places.

The narratives here also have resonance with Cresswell’s (1996) analysis of rough sleepers using public places for private use, and how the ‘proper’ meaning of place is threatened. Similarly Kearns (2006) discusses the legislation and constraining of homeless people in efforts to ‘purify’ public space. The way in which Kearns (2006) analyses the movement of rough sleepers from public spaces through legislation is a similar process to the enforcement of regulations, exclusion of legal rights, and lack of housing security for camping ground residents. In addition, when seen in conjunction with public narratives of camping grounds as idyllic and a New Zealand ideal, Gesler and Kearns’ (2002) ideas of ‘in-place’ and ‘out-of-place’ are pertinent: ‘The notion of being ‘in-place’ expresses ideologies of what is right, just or appropriate by members of society. In contrast, some people transgress these ideologies and cross social and geographic boundaries, becoming ‘out-of-place’ (p. 98) The (re)construction of camping grounds as public places is a form of social exclusion, and camping ground residence is considered invalid, the residents out-of-place.
This chapter has outlined the contexts shaping the politics of camping ground residence. As Jones et al. (2004) state: ‘Contestation of place is often a central element in political conflict. This arises because the meaning of place is not value-neutral’ (p. 133). Camping grounds are sites of contestation where competing narratives of meaning are constructed and represented. Various groups form different meanings of camping grounds: for tourists, holidays; for owners, a business; for residents, a home; for others, emergency accommodation, the only alternative. The construction of camping grounds is fundamentally political, inevitably linked to broader social relations and must be seen in relation to wider social structures.

Institutions play a key role in the socio-political construction of camping grounds. Where different individuals and social groups have competing understandings of place, tensions are generated. Government authorities have shown movement to protect particular place narratives. The conflict revolves around the impact of development on the character and identity of camping grounds, and accordingly the use of camping grounds is governed and regulated. Camping grounds are a culturally important place in New Zealand, historically constructed as holiday spaces (DoC, 2006; Collins & Kearns, 2010). However, over time camping grounds have become sites of housing, and sites of potential development for investors. Camping grounds are considered then as illegitimate housing, actioned through existing legislation and exerted through local authorities. Camping ground residents also face social exclusion through lack of coverage by the Residential Tenancies Act. In this way, the provision of housing and the marginalisation of residents can be seen in view of homelessness.

Not only is conflict about camping grounds as places, but it is related to the acceptability and appropriateness of actual provision of housing in camping grounds. Public narratives problematise camping grounds and their residents, providing regular commentary on antisocial behaviour and unattractive dwellings. These accounts stereotype camping grounds with little regard to ‘insider’ understandings of place, deflecting attention away from the political and social shaping of inequalities. However, residents determine their own narrative explanations, focusing on the idea of camping ground housing as being fit-for-purpose, and rejecting camping grounds as entirely problematic. The political construction of camping grounds highlights a lack of connection between inside and outside narratives of camping ground residence. Till’s work on community identity construction has significance here: ‘the geography of otherness … reinforces existing social and spatial divisions, promotes reactionary and exclusionary territorial identities and legitimates the status quo’ (1993, p. 709). Thus for camping ground residents the nature of their
housing should be considered in how the objective view of the media and state relegates the subjective personal nature of the housing.

Camping ground residents live in a politically and socially unsecured space, a space on the margins of the housing market. Living in a camping ground provides less stable and secure housing, and therefore less stable and secure living for those who reside there. Chapter 8 *The health of camping ground residents* will discuss how the politicisation and problematisation of camping ground residence lessens the capacity of residents to secure their housing and exert control over it. Furthermore, the inherent insecurity of their housing situations can restrict their opportunities and strategies for future housing. Chapter 8 *The health of camping ground residents* will revisit the marginalisation of camping ground residents and consider the likely health consequences.

Kaka: It can be great, but it's like surface waves, you know, in order for there to be waves there has to be an ocean. Beneath the waves there is activity, and there would be no waves without the ocean. So we tend to think of civilisation as the waves, and forget that there is an ocean that needs to be looked at. And we’re part of that ocean, and that ocean actually, the greater ocean is the humanities, caring about each other, you know.

This chapter has discussed the role played by government and local authorities in regulating and controlling camping ground residence, as well as the role played by public narrative in shaping views of camping grounds as both housing and social space. The following chapter looks at residents’ meaning of place, home and attachment in camping grounds.
Camping grounds function as ‘home’ for many people. This chapter unpacks what it means to live in a camping ground. The stories of residents collected show the interaction of residents with their dwellings and local camping ground environments. ‘The use of space in everyday life gives an illustration of how place-bound residents are and how significant the place of residence is to its people’s social and cultural belonging’ (Mazanti et al., 2003). The variety of meanings attached to living in camping grounds is evident, and residents’ experiences of living in camping grounds and following understandings of home are covered.

Residents have diverse experiences of living in camping grounds, ones that are ultimately individual and subjective. For some, ideas of home do not apply to camping grounds, yet for most, camping grounds meet the needs and desires for home. Residents create homes in camping grounds as an ongoing process. These home-narratives show that camping grounds may take on meaning beyond the physical characteristics of the particular dwelling. They go on to discuss these characteristics relating and comparing them to their experiences of their past and present housing. This chapter focuses on how residents make use of and experience their housing, while still recognising how camping grounds work in different ways for each person. The contradictions and collective and common experiences of place for residents are expressed in two particular ways – a sense of place, and their sense of identity.
Camping grounds often provide residents a place of meaning and social connections, and memories, emotions, and experiences are linked to ideas of place and home. The inadequacies of the physical shelter do not necessarily preclude the ability of camping grounds to provide home (or for residents to develop a sense of home). Even though many residents experience marginal shelter (for example, expressed in narratives of lack of privacy, security, control), this is not simply congruent with a lack of home. Camping grounds can work as places where a sense of belonging and home can develop. Relationships with other residents and interactions with the physical environment are discussed as two key ways residents establish a sense of home in camping grounds. The majority of residents thought of or referred to their camping ground as home, and spoke of being comfortable, familiar, and in the ‘right place’. While not always intended to become home, experiences of camping ground residence most often led to the development of positive experience and attachment, to the extent that those who originally did not intend to stay now choose not to leave. The social and physical environment functions in many residents’ development of social connectedness and a strong, positive sense of place.

The sense of place evident for residents in camping grounds ultimately links to their own individual (and collective) sense of identity. As Perkins et al. (1999) state: ‘Our houses and homes, the places where we live, are a key locale which shape and enable us to develop our sense of who we are’ (p. 124). Residents positively define themselves in relation to the qualities of the camping ground, other residents and the environment, developing their sense of self and identity. However, camping grounds have also been associated with a negative place identity and can be places of stigma, marginalisation, and insecurity. Both residents and camping grounds face frequent labelling. While residents themselves may have a positive sense of who they are and where they live, this may not align with outsiders’ constructions of camping grounds. Residents use their narratives to define themselves, and also to differentiate themselves from others, by challenging the negativity and stigma associated with camping grounds.

This chapter uses Mazanti and Ploger’s (2003) framework of the construction of the meaning of place. This approach draws on Massey’s (1995) ideas about the construction of place as a social process. Here, meaningful places are socially constructed: ‘produced by the individual’s use of, experience in, and conceiving of place’ (p. 310). The use of the camping ground space by residents on an everyday basis shows how the camping ground is a site of social relationships and the significance of the physical environment. Their participation in the social and physical environment shows how residents engage with their camping ground as a ‘meaningful place’. Analysis of camping ground residents’ experiences gives an understanding of their subjective evaluation of their positive and negative experiences of housing in the camping ground. These individual and collective experiences are reflected on, showing how residents conceive their place of residence, with reference to both positive and negative attributes.
The process of homemaking is active, an ongoing developing relationship between people and where they live (Rivlin & Moore, 2001; Gurstein et al., 2005). Camping ground residents actively manage their dwellings and surroundings purposively to create a sense of home. Although often faced with insecurity, and not in traditional houses, the concept and process of home is still legitimate for camping ground residents. Residents work with the social resources available in camping grounds (for example, relationships with others, connectedness, emotional support and assistance), as well as the physical qualities of their camping ground (for example, a refuge from the outside world, lifestyle, and physical environment) to incorporate the experience of home. Being at home in a camping ground is not simply a matter of having shelter, but is situated within the contextual and locational qualities of place. Positive emotional bonds develop between camping grounds and residents – referred to as place attachment (Mesch et al., 1998). Satisfaction with dwelling and location has bearing on attachment and sense of place. The narratives of camping ground residents, while often contradictory, showed that they were largely satisfied with their dwellings and felt at home. The stories of residents showed positive views of their housing, as Piopio emphatically states: ‘Can’t beat it actually, can’t beat it’.

Overall, residents do not negatively relate to their place of residence. They speak of living in camping grounds as a largely positive experience. This stems however from many and various reasons, subjective for each resident. Camping grounds were experienced as homes in often-contradictory ways. For example, Kereru and Kiwi’s resident narratives show the many aspects that make camping grounds home, or not. For Kiwi in particular, the affordability and sense of community was important for his belonging and attachment, and formed the basis for him not moving on. However, this attachment was affected by feelings of insecurity in and around the local community mainly stemming from a dog attack and his personal health issues. Kereru presents ideas that make her feel at home.

Kereru: For a woman my age, on my own, the camping ground is great … Suits me fine, I can come and go as I please … There’s others here if I need them, so it’s my home now.

In this next account she highlights the potentially contradictory experiences of home.
Kereru: I get as much company as I want, probably more than I need sometimes ... I do worry about what will happen when I can’t empty my toilet anymore. Although there are people here, they tend to be here for moral support, they’re not here to look after you. That’s probably a point where I’d have to move out of the caravan, and I wouldn’t want to.

Kereru experiences camping grounds in dissimilar ways to Kiwi. The camping ground gave them both a sense of security in knowing others were watching out for them. Even though Kiwi gained a sense of security from others, the fluid boundaries of the camping ground meant this was somewhat eroded and left him feeling insecure. Kereru also linked her sense of home to having others around, and her independence and freedom. Kereru speaks of a feeling of insecurity and impermanence, of not being able to maintain independence at home, and anticipates possible threats to her future sense of home. They frame camping grounds as places with multiple notions of home attached. While residents could point to inadequacies in the camping ground, they also moved past difficulties to emphasise how camping grounds could and did provide positive experiences of home.

**SENSE OF PLACE & PATHWAYS**

Camping ground residents are on a path to creating a home, whether they have been excluded from elsewhere or have chosen an 'alternative' lifestyle, they are embarking on the complex and meaningful process of creating 'home'. The various pathways into camping grounds essentially illustrate a homemaking process, for those socially and economically excluded from mainstream housing, and for those seeking change through lifestyle. Mesch et al. (1998) define place attachment as: 'A positive emotional bond that develops between individuals or groups and their environment' (p. 504). It shapes the ways residents conceive of and experience camping grounds as their place of residence.

In the process of creating home, the narratives of those socially excluded commences with a referral or otherwise into the camping ground, where there is no real other option. They are merely seeking shelter which is both safe and affordable. The appropriateness of this housing is questionable, but the resident moves in and settles. However these pathways often become stabilised with residents staying for a reasonable period of time. On the other hand, however, those with the choice to move into camping grounds often share similar goals in creating a lifestyle and through this housing they find a way that meets their needs and desires. Their perception is that this acquisition of a caravan or other dwelling is an important part of the construction of home, a place of belonging.
Integration into the camping ground does become an important role in the wider process of creating home for those socially excluded who cannot find accommodation elsewhere. Their situations through living at the camping ground have improved or at least changed. Their narratives show a development of confidence in belonging and sense of connectedness to other camping grounds residents, the wider community, and the place itself. They talk of being more able to participate, freer from the social exclusion previously faced. As Gurstein et al. (2005) state: 'Constructing a sense of home is a social, meaningful human action. It is not simply a physical structure' (p. 732).

This feeling of home in their narratives is connected to their feelings of safety and sense of community, a 'no pressure' lifestyle through the social and physical environment that a camping ground provides. This process is not simply the result of them having a roof over their heads at the camping ground; 'place attachment is important because it generates identification with place and fosters social and political involvement in the preservation of the physical and social features that characterise a neighbourhood' (Mesch et al., 1998, p. 540). For many residents, as Tawa suggests, the importance of home stems from previous experiences of disruption and dysfunction in their social networks.

Tawa: It would seem that's what people are looking for, they're actually looking for something decent and secure, they want security, they want stability, they want to be safe.

For some people, moving into the camping grounds may signal the intention of having a period of temporary respite from a downward mobility spiral, and does work to reduce their economic costs. While the precipitation of movement by emergency needs is warranted, it does other positive things that may not be improvements in quality of dwelling, but for many there are improvements in quality of place; 'for most people in this process, the transition from being unsettled or out-of-home to that of being at home, is one that flows naturally ... It is tied in with the course of development, the move from dependence to independence, and the acquisition of skills needed to settle into a place' (Rivlin et al., 2001, p. 324). This is not to say that this is the case for all. For some, it can be challenging and the social exclusion can carry on through their lifetime. This may be especially so for those who continue to be mobile, moving from one camp to another, kicked out because of accommodation no longer being available at the camping ground, or for those who experience instability through mental health episodes.

Mesch et al. (1998) describe people's evaluations of such characteristics of their place of residence as pertinent for their development of place attachment, or not. They state that such neighbourhoods are the settings in which many experience the benefits of community. The majority of camping ground residents spoke of their place of residence positively. Their narratives evoked particular emotions, meanings and connotations that they express being identified and being connected with the locality and community. Narratives included memories of former times,
where residents felt ties to people and things in the area, for example, the intergenerational context and New Zealand holiday ideal. Drawing on their biographies, residents frequently tried to align past experiences with their current experiences. Their narratives show a working to judge the advantages and disadvantages of the place, forming a positive bond and sentiments, and developing an attachment to their place of living, with respect to both physical and social attributes.

Kakariki: So basically, how do I put it? Got my life the way I want it, I don’t have to answer to anybody, I can come and go as I please.

Pipipi: It's good, it's peaceful, it's quiet, good atmosphere, I'd recommend it to anyone who wants time out for a bit.

The narratives of the importance of lifestyle and what they get out of living at the camping ground once they are there highlight the importance of both the actively sought out social and economic support, as well as the provision of shelter. These narratives show how processes of place attachment and homemaking help to mediate the effects of previous social exclusion. In moving into camping grounds, residents often moved from a marginalised place to one where they experienced a stronger sense of belonging and acceptance. This shows that even when people's movements reflect constraints imposed by the housing market and pathways are characterised by moves into alternative, less preferred dwellings, there remains the possibility that residents often become quite satisfied, or at least an adjustment process happens. Residents often develop greater attachment to their residence, for example, through the environmental aspects of the camping ground or through the formation of social networks. This is seen clearly in narratives of satisfaction, and where the camping grounds are viewed as home. In this way, housing pathways are influenced by, and influential to, the construction of social and place identities and attachment to place. Residents subjectively evaluate the features of the place (physical and social environment), showing the characteristics that bind them to the place: in contrast to previous fear and uncertainty they gain feelings of trust, predictability and security. When the needs to be part of a group, to belong and participate, is fulfilled for camping grounds residents this then outweighs the negative aspects of a pathway in.

SENSE OF PLACE & SOCIAL RELATIONS

Chapter 5: Camping ground communities outlined the importance of social relationships of residents living in camping grounds. This is also critical in understanding their attachment to camping grounds. The relationships of residents and their social connectedness provide meaning and experience of place. The following narratives provide examples of the role of place in these social
relationships and camping grounds are the context in which these occur. Kakariki described her loyalty to fellow residents.

Kakariki: I always keep an eye out from them and help out when I can.

Takapu, as a manager, saw this loyalty extended to the whole camping ground.

Takapu: They let us know if they notice anything out of the norm, or something needs repairing.

Residents Miromiro and Kea described their level of commitment to the camping ground.

Kea: It was booked out here in the weekend, and I went over to the block, and ah what a bloody mess in there. I said to these jokers, “Do you do that at home?” “Oh no, my wife would shoot me”. I says, “Well you should be shot here too!”

Miromiro: Keep the place pretty tidy and everybody knows that. They do the right thing. We do all the lawns, we do all the gardens. We live here, we’ve got to keep it nice and clean. All these people are the same, all their rubbish in the proper bins. They know it, soon let them know if they don’t … Yeah so, everything’s in its right place over here.

And Kereru spoke of the local social ambiance.

Kereru: Friday night is our get-together night, we have drinks over in the kitchen.

This set of narratives gives a picture of the ways in which residents talked about the place where they live with pride, and one in which they are connected through a community spirit that made them feel they belong.

In contrast to the majority of other residents, Weka had minimal expectations of his housing at the camping ground.

Weka: Well, I’m only here to rest my head and eat food. I mean to say, if it wasn’t a caravan, it would be a tent. It’s only somewhere to lay. It’s not a home, it’s a house, if you know what I mean. I’ve not made it a home.

The camping ground provided primarily a shelter for Weka, and he was not active in creating ‘home’ there. He still conveyed a positive assessment of the camping ground he lives in, regardless of the low extent of his involvement socially in the camping ground. He later spoke of his love for camping and nature, showing that his attachment stemmed primarily from direct experiences with the local physical environment.

Other residents have a high level of commitment to their camping ground and identify with the camping ground community. They perceive their marked similarity to other residents and a sense of shared values. Some residents spoke positively of living in a camping ground, because of the social interaction that would not be experienced elsewhere.
Riroriro: You know, when I was living in my house, I didn’t even see my neighbours, and they lived just there. Now I’m chatting to others here, having a chat on the way to the loo, all throughout the day.

While some residents did speak of lack of privacy, and several residents described themselves as loners. Ruru described herself as a loner: ‘I’m a loner, like being by myself’, and linked this to her desire and wanting of independence, not at everyone’s beck and call. Nevertheless, all residents generally felt that having their own separate dwelling space countered this. The close proximity to others, whilst still maintaining their own, albeit small, dwelling is appreciated, and is closely tied to their sense of place. These narratives illustrate how residents’ sense of place is shaped by the ‘presence or absence’ of other residents, and that these social relations are an important factor in people staying in camping grounds.

SENSE OF PLACE & THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

In addition to social relations bounded in place, residents also attach meaning to camping grounds through their experiences with the physical environment. Mesch et al. (1998) state that residents subjectively evaluate places: ‘They judge the advantages and disadvantages provided by the physical and social environment of the neighbourhood and the degree to which these qualities fit their expectations and needs. When a positive evaluation is reached, a positive bond and sentiment such as attachment develops towards the place of living’ (p. 504). The nature of the dwellings can create barriers for residents through the lack of several basic necessities. Most residents had no access to mains utilities (such as reticulated water and sewerage), and often had restricted access to other services such as telephones. The physical dwellings and their amenities exacerbated problems faced by residents. Weka identified the confined space limiting people’s ability to create a warm and cosy home-place.

Weka: As a permanent, long-term thing, I think it is a bit of a strain, ’cos it’s quite confined. In wintertime it can be absolutely horrible, simply because you’ve got no porch, and you’re walking wet in, and that could become a hazard. The shit on the carpet creates mould and that.

He linked the physical characteristics of the dwelling to the performance and functionality of home, and in his case he viewed the housing poorly. Rimu, an iwi provider, also linked the temporary structure to poor living conditions.

Rimu: Whether you’re living in a caravan or a cabin in these places, the fact is they’re not a home. They’re not insulated. They’re not suitable accommodation for long-term.
Residents also gave other examples of structural problems in their dwellings, namely cold, leaks and condensation.

One owner provided a contrary narrative, emphatic that the dwellings and amenities were adequate. He follows a discourse of public health rules.

Toroa: They’ve all got to have electrical warrant of fitness and grey water tanks for their sinks. If we see grey water coming out on the ground they’ll only get two warnings. If it happens again they’re out of here. None of them actually have got sewer, they all just use the main ablation block … The ablation block and kitchen are cleaned everyday. They don’t get a chance to get to the stage where they’ve got bacteria or anything else, they’re thoroughly scrubbed out. And we go and have a look in the caravans every now and then.

While this owner focuses on environmental health, the residents often pointed out that not having their own separate kitchen and bathroom facilities was problematic. All residents discussed this lack of private amenities. The toilet at a distance was particularly an inconvenience for older or sick residents. For example, Kea, an elderly male resident said he struggled with frequent night-time walks to the toilet, especially in winter and with the toilet being 50 metres from his caravan. Another resident in his 80s spoke of the distant ablutions.

Kokako: It’s good as, but the only thing, I’ve got to walk over to the toilet, and have a shower and that. I go to the amenities block for that, but otherwise it’s pretty well set up.

Kakariki, like other residents, provided another counter-narrative in regard to the amenities available to them. Her narrative is an example of how residents compared their situations to previous dwellings, and simultaneously emphasised the positive aspects of what others might see as inconveniences.

Kakariki: I was living here in the caravan park, it was like “What’s the point in getting a house?” A caravan park is just as easy. The power’s paid for, all I’ve got is my rent and food. I don’t have to stress about power, or whether there’s any maintenance gotta be done, ‘cos if anything goes wrong with the van, I’ve just got to go straight over to [owner].

Some owners could also point to cases where individual residents found the set up of the camping ground as a barrier to maintain personal hygiene and adequate diets. The layout and space of the camping ground (especially the communal facilities) was also linked to feelings of insecurity for residents. Sharing a kitchen and bathroom undermined their ability to secure food and groceries and personal effects. Their personal possessions were at risk of theft from people both inside and outside the camping ground, showing the weak boundaries of place not normally evident in private housing. This lack of feeling physical security did work against some of them feeling relaxed, safe, and able to perform normal everyday actions that are carried out at home.
All residents were, however, able to experience other things that would not be available to them if they lived somewhere else. Residents frequently spoke of the beauty of the natural environment where their camping ground was located, how their ‘place’ was ‘irreplaceable’. They frequently questioned: ‘Where else could we live and have the sea across the road for a pittance a week?’

Parekareka\(^{47}\): The long-term people, they look out their windows at nature. You can see the mountains, the hills, the horses in the horse paddock. It’s magic, you’re not in suburbia.

Their sense of home extended from their dwelling to the wider surrounds. Many residents commented on the benefits of the climate and local physical and natural characteristics especially in comparison to other locations. The presence of space and peacefulness was well-regarded. Tieke felt at home in his location, and used the natural resources available to him.

Tieke: In town you’re looking right across at other houses. This way you get up in the morning, go over to the beach if you want, have a swim in the river. We’ve got kaimoana\(^{48}\), fresh fish, wild venison, pork.

It is described as a desirable choice, and residents often questioned ‘What else could you want?’ Piopio sums up the beauty of her environment well.

Piopio: You wake up looking at the sea, you go to sleep looking at the sea … and hearing it, definitely hearing it. Oh, my ears are used to hearing the sea now… In the morning he used to say, “Hon, can you hear this?”, “I can’t hear nothing”, and he goes, “It’s good for fishing”.

For many residents the environmental aspects were primarily related to place attachment and homemaking. Whereas social relationships were important to some, they were unimportant to others who did not place much regard on these aspects, but did however still express similar sentiments of attachment to the camping ground. For some, a sense of belonging stemmed from an attachment to the type of housing – camping grounds, caravans, motor homes – and the type of lifestyle this entails. Many had lived in camping grounds previously.

Kereru: I’d always had a fascination for caravans, so I bought one.

Pipipi: Yeah, we’d lived in one at the back of her sister’s place, so we’re doing it again.

For some, it was returning to a ‘favourite spot’ where they already had connections with the place and for some people it was a significant place for them where they felt attachment and bonds, and were comfortable. Camping grounds, as a specific type of place, offered resources and

\(^{47}\) Owner.

\(^{48}\) Kaimoana: seafood.
opportunities that other types of housing would not necessarily. For example, Tieke enjoyed the space and lifestyle of his camping ground: with no ‘political correctness’ he was able to smoke marijuana, and experienced social connections with people of similar mindsets. This both attracted him to continue living there and discouraged him from living in a house or in a different location. Indeed, many were adamant that they would not go back to normal housing, which indicated an attachment through identification with this particular type of housing.

Several residents described themselves as lucky to live there and to have experienced what they had. They indicated a high level of attachment and satisfaction with their dwellings in their camping grounds. This occurred to the extent to which they felt at home in the camping ground, more than what they had felt, or would feel elsewhere. Through comparisons and contrasts with other places and dwellings they linked feeling at home to their particular dwelling and the location. Their ability to create a sense of home there, have a garden, have ‘all they need’, meant that they felt at home in the camping ground. Their narratives challenge social ideals about what a home is, through their willingness to live in an alternative housing situation which could be construed as substandard housing.

**SENSE OF PLACE & TIME**

The sense of place held by residents has a temporal component, as Parekareka states: ‘Well, they’ve been here that long, it’s their home too’. The length of stay of residents was a key aspect of this.

Kereru: I’ve been here the longest, ‘cos I came here six months after the camp opened. Sort of part of the furniture [laughter]. The place has built up around me.

Many residents, like Kereru, developed a positive sense of place over the time that they had lived there. This often began with a fair appraisal or mere satisfaction at the beginning of their stay focused on their accommodation and its ability to provide shelter. In some sense this satisfaction made them more inclined to develop an attachment to place.

Affirmative evaluations of the camping ground were demonstrated in residents’ desires and plans to stay there due to the physical and social environment. This shows a link between commitment to stay and a positive sense of place. Almost all residents showed these emotional bonds, reflecting high overall levels of place attachment. As discussed in Chapter 4: *Pathways*, whether residents had forced or active pathways into camping grounds, most residents subsequently had positive experiences in camping grounds. Their initial impressions and understanding developed into optimistic views and development of bonds to and within their camping ground.
Ruru: My poor little porch out there, it’s an ideal place. You can sit out there with your book, or just not taking any notice of anyone, but everyone that goes by says, “Ooh, you’ve got such a lovely place” … To me I don’t want to be anywhere else, and if I should die sitting out there on the porch, in the sun, within hearing of the sea, watching the birds, listening to the birds, I couldn’t want or wish for anything more, you know? I don’t want to die in a hospital.

Ruru imagines, contentedly, dying at home in her caravan. Her attachment is about being happy with where she lives, the existence of friendship and conversation, and also the (perceived) absence of any other place to go. She shows a sense of anxiety at any suggestion of having to move. For many of the older residents, living in camping ground was an alternative to institutionalisation in residential care. The camping grounds were a means to help maintain their personal attachment to their homes and independence. Kiwi held similar sentiments. He talked of the present owners selling the camping ground, and expressed apprehension at what this could mean for him. The insecurity and impermanence of his ‘home’ is realised as he talks of this situation, and he displayed a sense of attachment to both the owners and nervousness at the potential of being displaced from his home in the camping ground. Residents’ sense of place came under threat from various outside sources, and at the hint of any disruption to his home, Kiwi felt threatened.

The intentions to stay in the camping ground were common, and the unwillingness to move out articulated strongly by some.

Titore⁴⁹: That guy with the mental health, Whio, he’ll just probably end up staying here as long as I’m here, ‘cos he feels comfortable here. He feels safe, he gets on well with all the campers. Most of my regulars know him now. Where he was staying he was getting into trouble, young fellas tell him what to do, and he’ll go off and do it. Out here he feels like he’s in control of himself. He’s got his own space, he’s got his own caravan, he’s got to look after himself. It’s really good on that side.

However, when this emotional level of attraction is seen in conjunction with pathways and length of residence, the residents’ almost universal attachment raises questions around why they place such a value on their housing: firstly, when they may not have chosen to live there; and secondly when they are not experiencing secure or physically satisfactory dwellings. James (2004) suggests that people can be active in managing their residential environments in efforts to increase satisfaction and to cope with negative environmental aspects: ‘People can become habituated to sources of dissatisfaction [and] accept their residential environment’ (p. 18). Nikau, a social service provider, and camping ground owner Korora both recognised this circumstance.

⁴⁹ Owner
Nikau: Some of them are actually quite static. That’s their homes now, heaven forbid, and they’re feeling set in there … I think they are now in the situation they have actually got into that pattern now, and that’s all they know, that’s all they care about. They get their money every week, they can get their alcohol, blah, blah, blah, so it’s not an issue … For some people it’s fine ‘cos that’s all they expect, so that’s what they put up with.

Korora: I think people get used to the idea that they are looked down upon for living in a caravan park.

These responses may be salient for camping ground residents facing social exclusion, who have lived there for a reasonable period of time. Residents’ attachment to place may stem from actions they have taken to accept their housing, and they have indeed become used to their housing conditions and/or resigned to the lack of other alternatives. Kellett et al. (2003) suggest that homemaking can be in response to exclusion and the absence of home. In this light, it can be suggested that camping ground residents’ active creation of home in camping grounds is a way of establishing a sense of belonging in response to the social exclusion of homelessness.

So far, this discussion has shown that the attachment spoken of by residents is tied up with a sense of community and feelings towards the physical space they inhabit. Most residents saw the camping grounds as their homes not only because they did not always have anywhere else to go, but also founded on their feelings of belonging and feeling settled. This is a complex process and residents may face threats to home and things counter to place attachment. The home narratives of camping ground residents frequently showed an active development of their sense of value in their role as members of that camping ground community. Through reconciling their sense of place and home, residents often develop attachment to place. In the process of identifying with their housing, their identities become somewhat constituted through the camping ground environment, both individually and collectively. That is, the identities of camping ground residents are shaped and developed within the space and place of camping ground residence. Camping grounds facilitate residents in developing meaning in their housing, home and identity, showing a social role of camping grounds. The narratives and actions of residents provide the link between the housing (caravan, bus, etc.) and residents’ identification with such. How residents engage with and within the camping ground in this identity work is now discussed.
Narratives give attention to how camping grounds are given meaning by residents and provide both a sense of place and a sense of identity. Residents reflect on and interpret camping grounds, and they use their place narratives to position themselves both within their housing, and within wider society. Camping ground residents’ attachment to place locates them within society and a sense of place is an essential part of their identity. Camping ground residents continually negotiate their positions as camping ground residents, and positively define themselves in relation to other residents, and to the qualities of place and environment. Particularly important here is a frequent disconnection between discursive understandings of place and that of the residents’ own inside understandings of camping grounds.

MEDIA & STIGMA

Media institutions play a major role in defining social problems. Couldry and Curran (2002), drawing on Bourdieu, describe an unevenly distributed symbolic power in contemporary societies, where populist media possess concentrated power in constructing reality (or constructing representations). This most often forms the outsider’s understanding and interpretation of camping ground residence in New Zealand. Camping ground residents are often portrayed as undesirable people in undesirable dwellings, as illustrated in the following newspaper headlines:

‘Caravan park haven for misfits’ (NZ Herald, 19/02/05)

‘Camp use spurs complaint’ (NZ Herald, 20/11/96)

‘Drug raid closes caravan park’ (NZ Herald, 10/02/05)

‘Residents want long-term people out’ (Taranaki Daily News, 01/11/05)

‘Happy’ campers face boot’ (NZ Herald, 14/05/05)

‘Westies want rid of historic camping ground’ (Western Leader, 19/12/00)

‘Slum-style housing’ (NZ Herald, 19/12/96)

‘Horror stories flow out of accommodation shortage’ (NZ Herald, 25/06/04)

‘Caravan crisis home for some’ (The Press, 11/05/05)
“Permanent campers get marching orders” (The Dominion Post, 26/08/05)

These characterisations frequently depict problematic appearance (crowded, poorly maintained dwellings and grounds) and behaviour (high levels of drug and alcohol use and associated crime, low socio-economic group, transience).

Toroa: Unfortunately with living in caravans and that sort of thing they always tend to become, from outside appearances, a hovel. The caravans start to get run down. It’s the exterior appearance of the caravans, and yous always see things lying around them, and under them. They always look as if they’ve sort of just been dumped there. Most of the opinion and the bad publicity and everything else is not from the locals. It’s coming actually from the tourists seeing all these permanents all lined up in a row, and temporary fences up here, there, and temporary sheds up around the place, or lean-tos tacked on to them. It tends to give them a bad image to start off with, and we’ve tried to avoid that here, and it seems to be working.

The articulation of camping grounds in these ways clearly attaches a notion of stigma to camping ground residence. The media powerfully present camping grounds as an inferior form of housing and tenure that is a significant social problem.

Rimu: It’s not something that’s just happened now [laughter]. And, if it’s such as concern, why is it only starting, why is it only an issue now? When people have been living in these conditions for such as long time, is it because suddenly they can make lots of money out of camping grounds? ‘Cos if that’s the issue then that’s a financial issue that’s not actually a health and safety issue [laughter]. That would be my take on that. And, anyone who’s got any involvement with the media would know that they only pick and choose what they want to report, and housing is one of those issues that tugs on the old heart strings, gets the media ratings up so [laughter].

Tawa: I don’t think it’s a bad thing for media to be exposing some of those issues and problems, however it would be good if it could be followed up by action, resourcing. Often it’s a double-edged sword with the media stuff. I’m sure there is people who work with homeless people who on occasion wish that stories could be framed somewhat differently [laughter].

Not only are camping grounds perceived as a second-rate, poor-quality alternative to permanent housing, they are understood as harbouring a concentration of poor and dysfunctional people. Media narratives about camping ground residence focus on the deficiencies of the housing and residents. The explanations and negative public images effectively blame the victim, and more often than not divert attention away from the social and political shaping of the housing market. The media contributes to and reinforces these narratives, but they are often in conflict with the narratives of camping ground residents themselves, owners and some service providers. Press reports and political actions formulate dominant public narratives.
However residents also form their own common understandings of their housing. The ‘problems’ considered by outsiders are not always the same as those recognised by camping ground residents. Residents are not in denial about the existence of troubles, but they are more positive about their housing. Residents link the development of stigma in part to the press and some see local authorities’ regulations and macro-structural forces as primarily responsible. The interpretation of stigma by residents was somewhat dependent on their pathways into the camping ground. Those who made lifestyle choices, like Hihi, to move into camping grounds, acknowledged the stigma, but were still content in their choices.

Hihi: My mother-in-law thinks we’re crazy, but she’s very English, and you don’t do that sort of thing, only gypsies do that … and another said, “Oh, you’re going to be carnie folk” [laughter]. No, if you look around, there are the hippy, gypsy type people, and then there’s those of us for who it’s just a lifestyle … It is a lifestyle choice for people, it’s not just people who are down on their luck … I think when people see people living in a caravan or in a camp, they only see people who are dero, and they don’t think of other people who are making a choice. It sort of gets quite a bad name at times.

Other residents who did not make active choices, but whose pathways in were shaped by various circumstances often developed a more optimistic perspective over time, based on their own positive experiences. Nonetheless, all of the residents recognised the negative, stigmatised reputation of camping grounds housing.

Kakapo: A few times they sort of look down on you eh, that you stay in a camping ground, but I’m happy.

Kereru was in a situation where the negative stigma reaction came from her own family.

Kereru: They said only trashy people live in caravans, only poor people who can’t afford anything else … I think the kids weren’t happy about it because it doesn’t look good in other people’s eyes, you know, you’re not doing the right thing by your mother if you’re letting her live in a caravan, but I say to them, “To hell with what everybody else thinks”.

Kereru affirms her housing as positive, and rejects the negative stigma. These narratives show that residents are well aware that stigma exists and of outsiders’ view that camping grounds attract transient people with unconventional lifestyles. All residents contested these images. Their narratives worked against the stereotypical view of camping ground residents as lazy, poor and disempowered. Some residents drew on long histories of living in camping grounds to validate their belief that camping grounds are ‘good’ places despite reputations. ‘Us/them’ comparisons were used to acknowledge that some people or some camping grounds tarnish the view of camping grounds as a whole, but did not wish to have this stigma placed on them personally because they share the same type of housing. Tui drew attention to other camping grounds and his consciousness about his relative position in society.
Tui: I think it all depends on the facilities. If it was run down, like you go to some of these camping grounds like I did, God, you don’t want to stay there for more than a week anyway, rough as. Full of a lot of hard-case people. Some camping grounds they’ve got a husband and wife and three kids in a caravan as big as that bedroom, and how the hell? That’s when the councils steps in, you can’t do that. I’ve seen it on TV too. There was domestic violence and bloody murder in a camping ground, and they showed you the caravan and it was only as big as that bloody room, no wonder they fight, crikey. You’ve got to have space … In the rural ones you feel like you’re the king of the castle, but when you’re in a city one, you feel like you’re a bum. Everyone else is in these high-rise apartment blocks worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, and, “There’s the gypos, down there”.

The unpicking of socio-spatial stereotypes reveals how many of the assumptions about camping grounds might be considered place-myths. The recognition that some residents choose to live in camping grounds, and that others may enjoy it, turns upside down some preconceived ideas about what it means and what it is like to live in camping grounds. However, the political narratives continue without reflecting on what the concepts mean to camping ground residents – how camping ground residence is experienced and the implications of popular narratives on their housing experiences.

THE FRAMING OF CAMPING GROUNDS

Narratives appearing in public spheres, for example media, friends and family, and legislation, make political statements about camping ground residence. Some key informants did not see camping grounds in a positive light. Karaka, a social service provider, alongside others, described her local camping grounds a having ‘a fairly bad appearance’ and ‘attracting transients’, focusing on low-income and antisocial behaviours. Camping ground residents, however, point to the ways in which they understand and experience living in camping grounds. Their construction of their housing, in which they conceive of it as a meaningful place, does not align completely with outside constructions. Residents often took an opposing view and pointed to the qualities of themselves, other residents, and their positive experiences of the environment.

Outside understandings of camping ground residence extend to councils enforcing the Camping Ground Regulations, especially in reaction to NIMBY effects. They work to exclude residents from living there permanently, with little regard as to why people are living there, and what it means to residents to be living there. As discussed in Chapter 6: The problem & politics of camping grounds, the illegitimate and illegal space occupied by camping ground residents has some

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50 See Chapter 6 The problem & politics of camping grounds.
bearing on the political narratives about camping ground residence. Furthermore, historical narratives about gypsies and contemporary narratives of trailer parks in the United States provide negative images of social problems and add to the stigmatisation of camping grounds.

Hoihoi\textsuperscript{51}: It’s a matter of perspective really … I guess I can’t see anything wrong with it, and why people should complain about it, I don’t know … I suppose they associate caravans and that with gypsies and people rolling along the roads and things like that.

Totara\textsuperscript{52}: If you’ve got a camping ground and there was crime committed I don’t think you’d have to go far to find them. I mean it’s a sweeping statement I know, but just from what I’ve seen on some of the particular camping grounds that we have in New Zealand, with your permanent residents, they don’t look like people who abide by every law.

Titoki\textsuperscript{53}: If you’re running a camping ground for tourists to come into the area, you don’t want emergency accommodation people there.

All residents acknowledged that stigma did develop from a few camping grounds that were poorly maintained and managed and that social and physical problems developed in response to this. For example, to Tieke, a resident, for example, it was important that he was not seen as down and out. His ability to point to others who were was stressed, and to the enforcement of informal rules in his camping ground, placed his camping ground higher than others. Tieke unravels socio-spatial assumptions of these stereotypes about camping grounds. He could point to an engineer, a PhD, nurses and a dentist that he knows living in camping grounds. In his narrative there is recognition that some actually choose to live in camping grounds and that others actually enjoy it, thus challenging preconceived ideas about who lives there and what it means. The problems related to living in a camping ground and ideas of what it is like, are not necessarily the same, or of the same extent, as those recognised by the residents themselves. For example, one owner Hoihoi did not feel that the number of unemployed people living in camping ground justifies naming it as a ‘society of the excluded’. Kaka, however, did speak of inclusion in the face of exclusion from wider society.

Kaka: Society, most of them have been kicked out. Just about everybody here in this park has been a jailbird. Except for Kiwi, he’s never been to jail. So in order to come here, you’ve got to be a jailbird right? I’ve been to jail.

\textsuperscript{51} Owner

\textsuperscript{52} Social service provider

\textsuperscript{53} Social service provider
Kaka gave one way the ‘insiders’ are bonded together by a shared identity. They share and are included by a clear understanding of what sets them apart from ‘outsiders’. For him the camping ground provides social inclusion where residents fall back on their own resources and similarities.

The challenging of dominant narratives did not correspond with them thinking living there is not problematic at all however. For residents there is some compatibility between internal and external views of camping grounds. However, they do experience and focus on the ‘good’, periodically faced with the ‘bad’ and coping with negative judgments of camping grounds. Tieke’s quick reframing and focus on the ‘good’ is repeated in Kea’s resident narrative.

Kea: You see some motor camps on TV, and it looks like a whole lot of hippies and God knows what. Well they’re not all like that [laughter]. That’s a bad look on ones that are run properly. Some of those camps would be shocking I would say. This one, it’s always been tidy.

All residents conceded that camping grounds had an outside negative reputation. Toroa, an owner, also contests this reputation. He uses a housing hierarchy to favourably compare his people with houses in the local area.

Toroa: We don’t have any problems, issues with rubbish, or build up of grime, in fact they’re actually a damn sight tidier and cleaner than a lot of houses around the Taone area … One of the local camps had a very bad reputation, but if we come across anything that’s even remotely suspect, they’re outta here … We tend to maintain the place pretty well.

Toroa draws on several years of experience in managing the camping ground, and contests the camping ground’s negative status, justifying that it is not a ‘bad’ place to live. Furthermore he disputes that any stigma should carry across to individuals and to all camps. Toroa earlier recognised that a small proportion of usually short-term transients come in to camping grounds and feed the reputation. He did not want to personally be identified like this merely because they reside in the same place. Other residents’ narratives showed the impact of community prejudices being extended to all residents, based on their housing.

Residents actively engaged in challenging the stigma they encountered. They understood and were aware of outsiders’ understandings of people living in camping grounds and how they made assumptions about their personalities and behaviours. They recognised the attributes that were applied to camping grounds – such as low socio-economic status, instability and disorder, lack of responsibility and participation – however these were rejected. Their perceptions were missing from mainstream narratives. Tieke, Kea, and Toroa’s narratives, for example, gave a contrary narrative in which they try to alter discursive constructions. They do not think of living in a camping ground as a negative experience, but they do acknowledge that others may, and that

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there may be others who fit these descriptions in other camping grounds. ‘Those’ camping grounds have high levels of drug use and crime, and poorly maintained dwellings. These are fractured images that do not show the full picture and experience of camping ground residence.

This negative place identity presents itself as stigma. Goffman (1963) defines stigma as: ‘The situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance’ (p. 9). It refers to: ‘The negative effects of a label placed on any group’ (p. 9). The negative connotations of camping ground residence result in narratives of the stigma faced by residents and associated ‘shame and disgrace, uncomfortable and unacceptable’. In Kereru’s earlier narrative she spoke of her family’s disapproval of her living in camping ground, based on the wider perceptions of camping ground residents. She spoke of a constant battle of justifying her choice of place and fighting against preconceived notions about people who live in camping grounds. Kereru also has a sort of ‘reverse stigma of place’ often speaking of previous housing and neighbourhoods, fences that neighbours peeped over, and associations with expectations and pressures. She frequently repeated that in the caravan she has very little housework.

Kowhai, a district council manager, legitimises the status quo in her narrative of the ‘otherness’ of camping ground residents.

Kowhai: Well it’s not legal [laughter] so it’s not supported. We would act on it … It’s certainly not an ideal situation, some are very unsavoury places to live … Nobody really wants to see people living in uncomfortable situations, there’s a few people that choose to have that individuality … I wouldn’t even want to live in a camping ground in the holidays [laughter]. I guess you’d have to say it is a choice, because if you say it’s not a choice then you’re saying that income support is not adequate, and if it’s a choice, then it’s a choice they’re not supposed to be making anyway [laughter].

Kowhai reinforces social and spatial divisions. She uses individual weakness as an explanation for the social disadvantage she sees in camping grounds. Her narrative continues later with how she perceives her local camping grounds to be lowering the tone of the neighbourhood. As a camping ground resident, Hihi considered views like Kowhai’s to be prejudiced in relation to her camping ground and challenges the dominant political narratives. Her narrative shows how camping ground residents are not only discerned from mainstream by their relative poor quality housing, but also by their cultural and behavioural divergence from mainstream society. Other key informants spoke of camping ground residents not only being physically separate, but a culturally distinctive group. Hihi believes this stigmatisation results from a lack of knowledge and interest in the provision of housing in camping grounds. While all residents worked against dominant narratives, especially strong counter-narratives came from those who had actively chosen to live in camping grounds, like Hihi. She stressed that they are not all lazy and disempowered, fighting against the stereotypical view portraying camping ground residents as subject to fraught personal and external circumstances.
The negative place identity does create difficulties for some residents. Residents react to threats to sense of place and NIMBYism when others suggest it is an unhealthy living place or inappropriate to stay there. Residents identified with the character of their housing and resisted any change to the physical environment of camping grounds that would change the nature of the housing. Residents Kereru and Kokako talk of the importance of rurality and size, and how they do not want it changed.

Kereru: If you improved it too much, you’d ruin it. You’d ruin what the basic thing is, what is has … It would ruin the atmosphere I think.

Kokako: ‘Cos it’s got that rural attitude.

Kereru: I think one of the big advantages of this camp is because it’s small.

They suggest that the nature of camping grounds is essential and claim that this essence is at risk.

Residents spoke of the existence of a hierarchy of housing where they feel stigmatised for living in a camping ground, which is assumed as the bottom rank - ‘… and then you have camping grounds’. Each resident interprets and conceives camping grounds differently, usually based on the social and physical character of the camping ground. Camping grounds are also compared to each other, with real effects for some residents such as lessened opportunities to secure employment, secure housing in other locations (primarily private rentals), and to access local services because of reactions and stigma. Owner Korora spoke of the residents of her camping ground not being able to become members of the local public library because of camping ground residence, which does not constitute a permanent address.

Perkins et al. (1999) describe how meanings of places are developed from historical social interactions, embedded cultural values and economic activity. In camping grounds, however, residents have themselves taken on an active role in place-making despite the hegemonic nature of the value and public meanings of place. That is, the negative aspects of place identity do not appear to greatly influence residents’ attachment to place. Those residents who face limited options cannot move, and are, to a degree, sustained and supported by the nature and identity of camping grounds themselves. They are not inhibited by negative place identity, but rework ways to fit in their dwelling and location.

55 See Chapter 8 The health of camping ground residents.

56 See Chapter 6 The problem & politics of camping grounds.
LIFESTYLE & THE PERFORMATIVITY OF IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION

In camping grounds, some marginalised identities find affirmation. Being among like-minded or similar people was important for most residents. Where they may have been excluded through the housing market and norms of housing, the camping grounds are sites of support and identification. Totara, a WINZ manager, spoke of social ties which confer identity.

Totara: When they’ve got a personality that’s quite insular anyway, and if you’re not liking other people, say you’ve been diagnosed as paranoid schizophrenic, you’re not going to move to a place where there’s a lot of people. You’d probably quite prefer the whole camping lifestyle as such, oh, gosh, definitely.

Riroriro’s resident narrative included the notion of lifestyle with particular meaning and worth. He had let go of traditionally important sources of identity, home ownership for example, and views his housing in camping grounds as a means to an end – the development of an identity and lifestyle. Hihi had a similar story, and spoke of her identity being grounded in where she lives. Her search for identity is carried out through the construction of her lifestyle, and is a means to an end. For others, however, where their camping ground residence may be more of an 'end', they are still shaping their identities. Those in situations where there are no other options, or at least may not have the diversity of options available to them as Riroriro or Hihi, do still negotiate their housing, and its meaning. For them, their perception of themselves and how they conceive their housing are linked, and living in camping grounds allows a sense of fulfilment.

Karearea and Mohua’s story is another example of how place and identity meet. The relationship between dwelling and cultural identity is presented in this couple’s narrative, and is an example of identity as a performative construct. Butler’s (1991) theorising about gender, states that identity is: 'performative in the sense that it constitutes as an effect the very subject it appears to express' (p. 24). Action does not represent an identity; instead, it creates it. Mohua’s narrative links their housing with identity formation, through not only focusing on dwelling itself but how this couple speaks of it, and how they use it.

Mohua: A lot of people here have started off in a caravan in the camp, like we did, and a place has become available and they moved in, and they’re here … It was just a holiday place, we’d been coming about 27 years, but now we’re here, it’s permanent … Every day’s a bonus living here, we’ve got no worries … It’s just been a dream place to have those times with the kids, and now we’re enjoying it, yeah, it’s awesome.

What is shown is how Mohua and her husband are contradictory in living ‘permanently’ in a ‘temporary’ dwelling, but simultaneously that they are living their dream lifestyle. They are reliving their holidays and now the caravan is not providing holiday accommodation, they can talk of their lives as a holiday. They are performing a holiday and they engage with their dwelling place in this
sense. That is, their identity is framed by how they relate to their dwelling. The memories associated with activity inside and around caravan are again realised. Kaka, a resident, also spoke of people drawing on previous history to create the present.

Kaka: We have people winding up in camp grounds because they want to be on vacation. You come to a holiday park, wow, I’m on holiday now. I can afford to pay my rent, my power bill’s been paid, so all I gotta figure out is how to eat. That’s a big question.

Kaka sees a rationalisation for living in a camping ground constructed through action. His narrative describes people’s biographies reinforce a sense of identity.

Mohua and Hoihoi point out personal characteristics that enable camping ground residents to avoid potential negative effects of the housing. Mohua places worth in her ability to ‘cope’ with difficult circumstances. Owing to her personal and individual characteristics, she felt she could adequately adapt and had the necessary resources to face adversity. When questioned about the convenience of the amenities at the camping ground, Mohua responded:

Mohua: You just look around, and work it all out. I never had any problems or waits to go and have a shower, or go to the loo, because you just went not at the peak times. The same with dishes and the cookhouse, “Oh blow this”, so off you’d go and get a bucket of hot water and bring it back, and you’d wash the dishes in the caravan.

Her narrative contains important statements of identity, that she is resourceful and has pride in her adjustability. Hoihoi, as an owner, could identify a certain type of person who can make it in camping grounds.

Hoihoi: I think it takes people who aren’t terribly materialistic, because, well you can make them quite comfortable, but you haven’t got rooms and staircases and all this fancy stuff. You just live basic.

Hoihoi reflects on the temporary nature of the housing, and suggests that traits of resilience may be advanced. Some residents face housing situations that are distressing, but face them with resignation. Many residents also reflected how they thought about their previous housing. Their sense of place identity was linked temporally to former housing, past housing and the experiences associated with that continued to shape how they viewed themselves and camping grounds. Residents who were living in very modest situations and facing hardship still strived to create home and sense of place. The significance and development of home and investing in their dwelling and community shows how they undertook a form of identity making. Moving into the camping ground may have been a reshaping of their previous identities, which they re-established and reflected on new identities in their homemaking in the camping ground. Their stories reflected ongoing adjustment processes to a different community and way of living.
Identity from place is also subject to the boundaries that exist in and out of the camping ground itself. The fluid boundaries of camping grounds have risks for camping ground residents. In normal housing, privacy and control is maintained, however camping ground residents find themselves openly judged because they live in a ‘public’ space. In traditional housing, people use the structures and spaces created by dwellings to facilitate privacy, and there exist social practices to avoid or screen visitors that maintain restrictions in access to the place. In these ways, camping ground residents are more vulnerable to external influences and pressure. As they live in socially non-private housing, their ability to avoid and moderate such things as stigma linked to their identity is lessened. They can be more vulnerable to processes of unanticipated and unwelcome interference that can disrupt their sense of place and identity. These are examples of how discourses of camping ground residence can cross over between the public and private. Camping ground residents often encountered challenges to their identity and worked to regain control when their identity was threatened.

While residents achieved some sense of identity from social relations and interactions with others, they also worked to show how they were different from other residents. They differentiated themselves from others outside their camp, and from each other, going against notions of collective identity. However, in other ways they reinforce their collective identity and there is a sense of tension between collective identity and individualism.

Kaka: In every camping ground there is the idea of camaraderie, coming together. If that’s lost, if they just turn camping grounds into places where we’re in it for the bucks, you’re going to lose the humanities, and that’s a very real danger. Because what is happening with socio-deprived people is that they’re turning to camp grounds. People who cannot afford to buy a home, and raise their children end up living in their cars. If they get help from Income Support, they’re able to go to camp grounds. If they’re using drugs they haven’t got a hope, they’ll stay living in their car. So I do understand there’s a very, very, real public health problem here. We have socio-economically deprived people who will look to camp grounds as a place to live and be trusted. The big thing, when any new person comes into a camp ground here, is, “Can we trust this guy? Is he going to, do we have to lock the windows?” You know, so there’s a commonality of thought, of idea.

It has been shown that camping grounds are contested and complex places. Camping ground residents draw a sense of identity – who they are – from belonging to the group, those people who live in camping grounds. Following from this there are comparisons made with those who are not members of this group – those who live elsewhere, be it in another camping ground or in

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57 See Chapter 6 The problem and politics of camping grounds.
other forms of housing. Residents’ narratives often use ‘us’ versus ‘them’, comparing themselves to others and developing their own sense of positive self-identity.

Different groups and people claim the space of camping grounds. Kea’s narrative shows how tourists are another group claiming his space.

Kea: When it’s busy, people gotta have a walk down and look around here. They just poke their nose into anybody’s bloody window. I am just sitting here and I always pass some sort of remark [laughter].

For Kea, his caravan and the surrounding environment are his home and housing, but tourists are free to move and explore the same space. This contradicts his feelings of safety, security and privacy. The intimate space of his home is transformed in this context from being his home to being a visiting place for others. He moves from being at home to being subjected to the gaze of tourists and this places threats on his sense of place. For the tourists, they choose to leave their homes and go to camping grounds for holidays. The reverse is true for camping grounds. They are receivers of tourists. The places people choose to go for holidays have consequences for the spaces and places of home life of camping ground residents.

This can be juxtaposed to stories of welcoming and greeting tourists coming into the camping grounds. Tourists are often viewed as visitors to the place, where residents play host-guest relationships and display pride in the social mix which place allows. They retain the ability to permit access and share and invite people in and often spoke of a sense of pride from doing this. Tieke showed pride in hospitality and the social mix of his camping ground.

Tieke: Last year we had one of the head surgeons in the New Orleans hospital over here. He just couldn’t believe it, what did he call me? “You goddamn lucky son of a bitch” [laughter]. Like he’s a wealthy man, and he’d just like to forget everything and just come and live this lifestyle.

Tieke suggests here that others envy him; he does not want to be perceived as a victim of circumstance. By comparing himself to others, and creating here/there and us/them imagined divisions, he was able to exclude perceived negative features of camping grounds residence. This enabled him to sustain his own particular narrative of identity and well-being.

Residents’ narratives highlight how camping grounds hold different meanings for a wide variety of groups, each negotiating their identity in relation to place: for tourists, a holiday; for owners, a business; for residents, a home; for seasonal workers, accommodation; and for others emergency accommodation or respite, the only alternative, a refuge. Each narrative reassesses the role of tourists in camping grounds, for whom camping grounds are primarily socially and politically constructed as holiday places. Camping grounds may be designed and designated for holiday purposes but multiple meanings and experiences are attached to these places. How these different groups engage and negotiate place used in identity formation reflects the contested
nature of camping grounds. For Kea, the camping ground is his space of everyday and his social networks. The camping ground is also represented as a space where other groups give meaning and govern the use of space, for example, through the Camping Ground Regulations and the function of provision for holidaymakers.

CONCLUSION

Even within structurally and materially marginalised circumstances, camping ground residents work to construct home, meaning, and identity through their housing. This chapter has outlined the use and experiences of camping grounds for residents and looked at the significance of their housing in their lives. Their narratives have described their preferences for and evaluations of camping grounds, and how these places can enable and constrain them.

Narratives have shown how residents use the camping ground and conceive their housing and environment, often leading to significance and meaning of place and home. Residents held diverse understandings and values, hence various and often contradictory representations of camping ground residence. They defined camping grounds as home through multiple social relations and interactions between people and place. Residents also linked sense of belonging and attachment to the physical and natural surrounds. Often the dwellings themselves were problematic and a lack of basic necessities was apparent and constraining. Nevertheless, despite adversity, residents positively conceived the quality of the places where they lived and felt largely satisfied with their housing. No residents indicated that camping ground residence is unproblematic; despite some shortfalls it was able to provide some aspects of home. They spoke of their experiences of past, present and opportunities for future housing, concurrently assessing the features of camping grounds. For the most part, residents focused on the positive aspects, and minimised negative experiences, and developed positive emotional bonds and place attachment. For example, this place attachment was reflected in their satisfaction, loyalty, belonging, commitment, and remorse towards leaving. Residents concerned themselves with notions of fulfilment and benefits rather than the quality of housing per se. The notions of importance of housing and place are subjective, and for camping ground residents not based on generalised physical standards and structures. Furthermore, the meanings and attachment given to camping grounds are not fixed but vary between individuals and their relationships, place and time. The physical aspects of the dwellings and location are not isolated issues, but are placed within larger contextual dimensions of place and meaning, and integrated with residents’ experiences and use of space.
Narratives presented in this chapter have also shown that residents located themselves within camping grounds through the development of meanings of home and sense of place. Their positive place identity bonds them to their housing and situates their identity in that place. For residents, identification with camping grounds is shaped by the intersection of experience, meanings and values in place. Identities of self and place are related, but subject to change. As Massey (1991) states: ‘There are indeed multiple meanings of place, held by different groups … the question of which identity is dominant will be the result of social negotiation and conflict’ (p. 278). Moreover, as time and context change, so identities change and are being constantly enacted. Residents work to define themselves in relation to the qualities of place, people and environment, showing that place and identity are inseparable. The camping ground is a space of development of identity and a space in which to view the politics of identity.

This chapter looked at ways in which residents’ identity formation is tied to place, with the centrality of the frequent incompatibility between internal and external constructions of place. Camping grounds frame social interaction between residents and outsiders. One way in which camping grounds became the place of identity formation is where residents work to define themselves in opposition to others. Residents felt tension through the impact of perceptions of themselves and their housing, and highlighted how their sense of identity is not always synonymous with current discursive constructions. They worked to validate their place in camping grounds against stigma and negative place identity, reflected in residents’ dispute of the dominant narratives about who lives in camping grounds. The influence of these outside understandings of camping ground residence illustrates uneven power relations and the political nature of this type of housing.

Place also framed social interaction between residents. Camping grounds are shown as places that belong to certain people, and conversely there are a group of people who belong to camping grounds, through their social interactions and communal use of place. Identities of camping ground residents are not only individual identities, but there are group collective identities produced in camping grounds. These identities also flow through place and the inherent contradictions are negotiated. They illustrate residents trying to make sense of their lives, reconciling past, present and future. In sum, residents’ development of attachment to place sees them involved socially and politically in their housing; they use, experience and conceive their housing actively. Chapter 8: The health of camping ground residents will use these ideas of place, home and identity to address connections between camping grounds, health and well-being.
THE HEALTH OF CAMPING GROUND RESIDENTS: A DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

‘Housing should provide shelter, and, by definition, shelter should reduce our exposure to harmful environmental conditions and our vulnerability to other people’ (Hartig et al., 2003).

The evidence for the centrality of housing to health and well-being is growing. Current epidemiological research and literature focuses primarily on individuals and risk behaviours, rather than the characteristics of the housing environment (in both physical and social senses) as a determinant of health. This research shows that where people live does have a significant impact on their health outcomes. This chapter will discuss the effect of housing on the health of camping ground residents, and how different factors work to promote (or not) positive health outcomes. Public narratives of camping ground residence, and temporary housing, often claim negative health consequences resulting from these living situations. In relating their housing to health, camping ground residents here, however, identify ways in which their housing environments both foster and deter health. Their narratives draw on a range of concepts to show complexities and contradictions in the relationship between their housing and health. Furthermore, camping ground residents spoke of their health in broad terms, giving examples of how living in a camping ground does impact on their ability to be healthy. Narrative threads of pathways, community,
space and place are shown to be interrelated with implications for residents’ health. The health of camping ground residents is explored through these dimensions.

In their narratives, residents use concepts of time and marginalisation, community, home and belonging, as well as the physical dwellings and environment in describing their housing. Residents draw on both tangible (for example, physical structure of dwellings and access to amenities) and less tangible aspects (such as access to services) to make links between health and housing. Access to camping ground housing often provided opportunities for residents to improve their health and their access to social resources. The social context of camping grounds was central to residents’ perceptions of health, reaffirming housing as a social determinant of health. Residents were able to engage with others, draw on support (as a health resource) and experience social inclusion in their camping grounds. Narratives also point to the socio-political structures and contextual features of camping ground residence that shapes the health of residents. For example, marginalisation can influence the mental health of residents, their access to services, opportunities and ability to achieve housing ‘rights’ (King, 2003b). Some of these narratives suggest negative health impacts, for example, worry and stress from lack of housing security. Aspects of place, dwellings and environment were also linked to residents’ health and well-being through ideas of home, belonging, and identity. The physical nature of their dwellings can be seen as undermining the quality of their day-to-day lives, when considered in the light of contemporary understandings of the relationships between housing and health. However, many residents draw on the characteristics of the physical environment to positively frame their housing for health. In these ways, camping ground residents are both enabled and constrained in their ability to achieve ‘healthy housing’.

Despite positive perceptions of their housing as healthy, and potential for positive outcomes, many camping ground residents faced increased vulnerability and health risks through their housing. The interplay between various aspects of their accommodation is central to their ability to be healthy in camping grounds, and demonstrates the complexity of this housing situation. While in some ways, characteristics of this housing were seen to compromise their ability to be healthy, residents’ perceptions reframe camping grounds as beneficial to their health. This raises questions of whether residents adapt to their living environments, and also the paradox of being simultaneously healthy, and at home, whilst in precarious housing. The ability of camping ground residence to meet internationally-accepted notions of rights to adequate housing is discussed. The chapter concludes by discussing the potential for camping ground residence to further disadvantage and inequalities in health and housing.
Chapter 4: *Pathways* used residents’ narratives to show how camping ground residents came to live in camping grounds. The pathways of all residents into camping grounds were in response to meeting a housing need and were reflective of both individual circumstances and wider social processes. The pathway narratives were discussed in relation to their agency-related characteristics and macro socio-political components. A small group of residents focused on choice, lifestyle and their pathways were often timed together with life events, such as retirement. For the majority, however, pathways were shaped by an inability to access mainstream housing. Their lack of social and/or economic capital negatively affected their opportunities and housing conditions. This latter pathway was described as socially exclusionary. In this section, discussion of residents’ pathways will be extended to their health: how pathways – as reflective of distributions of material and social resources – influence the health of residents.

**PREVIOUS HOUSING & CIRCUMSTANCES**

Many residents spoke of their inability to fully participate in the housing market prior to moving into their camping ground. Their limited social, political and economic resources shaped their experiences of instability, mobility and isolation. Various aspects of the housing market created barriers for some in accessing mainstream housing, resulting in renting a caravan as a last resort. These forced pathways into camping grounds played a central role in residents’ day-to-day experiences of health. These experiences can be assumed to negatively affect their health status through their impact on their self-esteem, control and rights\(^58\). Others were faced with exclusion from mainstream housing and identified age, employment status, and mental health status as explanatory factors. Many residents also had to cope with chronic health conditions, often attributed to previous living and working conditions. This cut across both groups (agency and forced), where episodes of illness preceded a move into a camping ground.

It was those who experienced forced pathways shaped by social exclusion\(^59\) that primarily spoke of feelings associated with negative health status. They frequently told of stressors relating to their previous housing, relationships and economic constraints. For example, some women spoke of previous domestic violence and how this had affected their sense of control and self-

\(^{58}\) Discussed in more depth later.

\(^{59}\) Social exclusion effects on health discussed later in this chapter.
esteem and resulted in poor mental and physical health. One man spoke of a loss of possessions stored with friends that were consequently stolen and made him feel a sense of loss. Similarly, other men told stories of how their wives had died and left them without friendships and community. Those whose pathways were reflecting physical and social isolation and exclusion were seemingly at higher risk of poor health outcomes. Various characteristics of their housing pathways influenced their mental and physical health, and were also reproduced in narratives of anxiety, worry, lack of control and fear.

While their movement into camping grounds may mediate some of the effects of marginalisation, this is not synonymous with them making active moves to better their health. This is not to say that their moves were always shaped by a desire to maximise their health, but, many residents made health gains upon moving to a camping ground. Narratives showed the extent to which residents associated their previous housing with a relative perception of poor health. Now, how they related to their current housing with a positive sense of health will be discussed.

**PATHWAYS, HEALTH & CHANGE**

Many residents spoke of their pathways into camping grounds as characterised by a change in their health trajectories. For many, moving into a camping ground had health benefits, mainly an improved sense of health and well-being. Their narratives were centred on social and economic benefits and linked to their sense of ability to control life circumstances. Camping ground residence, for many, ultimately led to the experience of increased opportunities and availability of social and economic health resources.

**Social benefits**

Narratives suggest that the availability of social support systems in camping grounds provides protection from isolation and the exclusion faced previously. Social needs, such as interaction and participation, are met more fully in camping grounds. Some residents described how moving to a camping ground had improved their sense of well-being through the development of friendships, and being able to maintain, control and regulate these relationships within camping grounds. The social environment is central to the ‘healthy’ environment of the camping ground in this narrative, and extended to the returning of previous residents. Social relationships are maintained regardless of the higher residential mobility of a few residents.

This community development is linked to pathways also through residents’ intentions to stay in their camping grounds. Many residents associated higher levels of social cohesion since they
had moved into their camping ground; they had been able to participate more, and saw this as a key characteristic that made their current housing a place where they wanted to remain. The development and maintenance of these social networks show potentially high levels of social capital – important for the health of both individuals and communities. Residents’ stronger social and community ties decreased their propensity for residential mobility. Their ability to establish supportive networks in a camping ground, conversely then, means they are less likely to move. When asked about how residential mobility affects peoples’ health, Matai, a mental health worker said “Yes, yes, because they have no place that they belong to”. She spoke of how her tāngata whai orā had maintained their housing in camping grounds despite previous high residential mobility and aligned this to the social belonging achieved. Residential stability reflects the social benefits of camping ground residents, and positively affects the well-being of camping ground communities and residents themselves. In sum, the social context of the camping ground may shape trajectories that protect and even enhance the health of camping ground residents.

**Economic benefits**

Economic factors, such as affordability, are key characteristics of the relationship between housing and health (Howden-Chapman & Wilson, 2000). Chapter Four: Pathways discussed how moving into a camping ground was a viable economic solution for many. One underlying reason for living in camping grounds, or remaining in this type of housing was financial. The economic advantages of living in a camping ground and the shortage of alternative ‘cheap’ accommodation, were widespread in the narratives. Residents proudly spoke of the economic arrangements in camping grounds. The flexibility and low fees were linked to residents’ perceived housing satisfaction and lower stress levels. Other residents also talked of lower levels of economic stress (affecting mental health), presenting a picture where their relative socio-economic deprivation had a smaller effect on their everyday lives. Some of the negative effect of poverty may be mitigated in camping grounds, through the reduction and minimisation of economic burdens of residents. These housing arrangements show a positive interaction between camping grounds, income and health.

**PATHWAYS AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE**

Nearly all residents said they felt happier and healthier after moving to their camping ground. Narratives highlighted a positive everyday health experiences and the importance of pathways and present housing for camping ground residents' health. The stories of camping ground residents 60 Mental health consumer
show how they can sustain their housing and health through increased freedom, control and community links. Most residents spoke of a more enjoyable lifestyle and less stress. They saw camping grounds as opportunities for change. Their present dwellings helped to restore not only their previous unhealthy lifestyles, but also to build up their health reserves.

Mohua: He was quite sick when he retired through doing shift work. But since we’ve been down here, he’s improved.

Tieke also found his move to the camping ground improved his health.

Tieke: I noted my pain factor has been a lot better, because a lot of it can be state of mind too. When you’re in a good state of mind you can deal with your pain a lot better, definitely.

Tieke pointed to an increased sense of control and being comfortable. He located his mental and physical health to place and time, and moving into the camping ground allowed him to better cope with his chronic health condition. He went on to say how he is protected from further decreases in his health status through his housing conditions. Resilience was obtained through moving into the camping ground and this lessened the risks to his health. The positive changes experienced by residents suggest that their pathways into camping grounds give them opportunities to improve their health. Camping grounds serve as places where health-promoting resources can be drawn on more readily than in their previous and ‘normal’ housing.

**CONFlicting ideas: how pathways can negatively affect health**

The ability of residents to form and maintain social relationships and the resulting residential stability has potentially important effects on the health of camping ground residents. However attention must also be given to how pathways could negatively shape residents’ health. The sustainability of their housing is key. While residents may intend to stay, the inherent insecurity of tenure (discussed in Chapter 6: *The problem and politics of camping grounds*) rendered them potentially residentially unstable. This instability is associated with health risk factors. Their lack of control and security resulted in stress and potential trade-offs that may have negative consequences on their health.

Smith, Alexander and Easterlow (1997) discuss the health effects of moving house. Psychological distress is associated with residential change, particularly where there is a lack of ability or options for movers to control the situation (Smith et al., 1997). This has resonance with camping ground residents’ residential stability. Often moves out of camping grounds are in response to factors outside the residents’ control, and narratives showed that even the suggestion
or threat of forced movement out can be depressing, stressful or worrying to residents. Some residents may not have ‘chosen’ to move into camping grounds, nevertheless for various reasons they may not have the ability or desire to move out. Even though they may have experienced health gains since living there, there still exist threats to the health of camping ground residents, namely a lack of control and security around being ‘able’ to stay. Forced pathways out were often actioned through their lack of tenancy rights, and through developments of camping grounds. Residents were sensitive to these risks and often spoke of their worry and stress in relation to having to leave their camping ground and find alternative housing. Narratives included a sense of resignation and powerlessness – residents often felt their housing was out of their control. Regardless of how satisfactory their housing was, the probability of a forced move out of the camping ground resulted in frustration and isolation. This situation excludes residents further and has implications for their mental health.

In addition, while residents may experience aspects that are positive to their health, movement into the camping ground means certain trade-offs can occur. These are discussed in-depth later in this chapter. They are linked to pathways so are noted here. Firstly the trade-off of better quality housing may be made when one moves into a camping ground. Secondly, insecurity of tenure and residential stability has implications for access to services and support. Their pathways into camping grounds may mean ties to primary medical services (for example, enrolment in a local PHO), and proximity to family and friends may be disrupted.

In conclusion, pathways into camping grounds reflect the temporal, spatial and social patterning of health and housing. Residents positively define their own health in reference to their pathways into camping grounds, and they believed that their pathways into camping grounds offered opportunities for change and social and economic resources that positively promoted their health. The degree of control they were able to exercise once in camping grounds has been discussed. In particular, lack of tenure affects residents’ sense of security. This inherent insecurity is associated with levels of distress for residents. Narratives also present a situation where health inequalities may be influenced (generated and maintained) by camping ground residence. Becoming part of the camping ground community, moving into the camping ground, and staying there, also gives an escape from existing social networks. The next section will show how camping ground residence often provides a positive opportunity not to live by themselves, or die by themselves, but to be a part of a community.
Social networks play a central role in the relationship between housing and health. Chapter 5: "Camping ground communities" used resident and owner narratives to show the ways in which community was experienced and negotiated by residents. It showed the availability of social resources in camping grounds that fostered residents’ active participation and interaction with others. Narratives often emphasised that camping grounds were 'communities in their own right'. This was seen in relation to the role of owners in creating and maintaining community, and interwoven and mediated by the physical nature of the camping grounds. Narratives illustrated how camping grounds can promote or impede the social interactions through the provision of communal places and facilities for social life. The structural and social aspects of housing have a significant impact on health, reinforcing housing as a significant social determinant of health. The characteristics of camping ground housing shape not only the quality of life in these communities, but also both individual and community health. As discussed in the literature review, a focus on the roles of sense of community, social capital and social cohesion ensures an emphasis on social processes rather than individualistic micro risk factors.

The following discussion will reflect on narratives of social capital – how the quality and form of social networks and the importance of these for residents can be a health-promoting aspect of camping ground residence. The camping ground communities described provided residents with access to community and a level of social capital conducive to health. Firstly, how social networks and participation can decrease social isolation by enabling some residents to help each other. Secondly, how the community structure, norms and informal social control influences the health of residents both individually and as a community group. Camping grounds are not immune to social problems, but residents are somewhat protected, largely through the role of owners. Thirdly, social trust, gender and boundaries are used as examples of limits on privacy and control in this type of housing that can negatively affect perceptions of community and individual health.

**SOCIAL NETWORKS & RESIDENTS’ HEALTH**

Camping grounds create communal places for residents, and health may be created through community networks and the design and layout of the camping grounds. The physical environments and facilities (for example, shared areas and kitchens) are conducive to the
development and maintenance of social networks. Residents spoke of how being a part of a camping ground meant they had daily contact with other residents. When social networks are seen in this way, the housing situation and context can positively influence the potential for the social connectedness of residents. The physical environment is the central domain in which residents’ participation in that community is located.

Regular participation in social activities and engagement with other residents is central to these narratives; the social lives of most camping ground residents are based in their camping ground. The residents who had lived in their camping ground for a reasonable period had developed strong friendships with other residents and the owners and managers. These were often residents who believed they have made an active choice to live in a camping ground, and those who had ‘accepted’ this housing, and as such were more likely to hold a more positive view of their housing. Their narratives recognised isolation as a health risk, and personal relationships with other residents as ‘good’ for their health. Positive interactions with other residents, and participation in camping ground life were beneficial. They gained support, lowered their perceived risks of isolation, and achieved fulfilment from roles in the camping grounds.

Residents spoke of the relationships with other residents positively: ‘I’ve got good relationships with them’, ‘We all get on well’, ‘There’s always someone here for you’. They often provided the kinds of emotional support traditionally provided by families. For many residents, other residents gave support and demonstrated concern. Tieke’s social network in the camping ground was one receptive to his health needs.

Tieke: See, there’s another thing with my health condition, I’m on sedatives, and I use marijuana as well. I don’t care, and these people, they don’t care. You know, I can walk down to the toilet with a joint and it’s not a problem.

Tieke presented a lifestyle where he was able to do what he needed to keep well. He contrasted his previous and more ‘naturally’ occurring networks of family and friends, and his previous housing, and concluded that the camping ground is more supportive in appropriate ways and can better meet his health needs. Kereru also linked the importance of community and care to her own mental well-being – having social networks within the camping ground was a significant source of health for her.

Kereru: I sort of think, really, it’s because the people around you really keep you more optimistic, stop you from becoming … like, you don’t really have a lot of time for self-pity. There are so many people around to shove you back up on your feet. I think that’s probably it eh … The mental health side of it, I think, is better, I mean, I tend, one of my family traits is depression. We suffer from quite severe depression in our family, and I find that I tend to force myself back up, back up again more readily here than I would if I was living in a flat, when I used to live in a flat, much more readily.
Can you pin that down to anything specific?

Kereru: Um, probably because of my neighbours, ‘cos of the people around me, you know, they worry about me, and you don’t want them worrying about you, so yeah. They blatantly sort of tell you what they think sometimes [laughter] which is probably good for you.

She compared this to living on her own – the camping ground was an active environment of which she can be a part, and this was ‘good’ for her depression. Kereru also implied tensions created by the camping ground being a more ‘public’ space rather than ‘private’ housing. She perceived that this community context placed requirements on her as her domestic space left her exposed to others. She gave a sense of an impossibility to hide her depression or be invisible to her neighbours – but concurrently and contradictorily appreciated the openness and connections between residents. This conflict between individual responsibility and collective responsibility was evident in many narratives of camping ground residents; they did not want to be a burden on others. Overall, however, narratives pointed to a situation where health was ‘better’ because of the social support available in camping grounds.

More practical forms of social support were also available in camping grounds. The narratives collected highlight provision of healthy aspects of housing such as feelings of cooperation and practical assistance. The camping grounds served as a network of a flow of practical information – providing opportunities for some in regards to housing, employment, and health services. Residents felt they had people to rely on in times of need and helped each other out both on a day-to-day basis (such as picking up groceries, fixing boats) and in direct response to immediate health needs (‘If he’s sick they bring him over soup’). Kokako’s experience of the social networks and support gave him a sense that ‘someone’ cared.

Kokako: I’ve been very ill, and Kereru’s [neighbour] been right on the job, “Get to hospital, get to hospital” … There’s the possibility, if you died in a flat or somewhere you could be there for a week before someone would notice, but in a caravan you wouldn’t [laughter].

Kereru: We notice as soon as someone hasn’t opened their curtains in the morning, we start worrying.

Kokako: I went up to hospital again just recently.

Kereru: Yeah, he had us all worried.

Kokako: The cleaner rang my daughter, “Is Kokako alright?”

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61 The negative implications of this lack of privacy are discussed later in this chapter.
Everybody was saying, “What’s wrong with Kokako? His curtains aren’t open” … Which is good for you here, you know. It has that sort of caring that you’d normally have in a little small country town, with family around you. It’s the same sort of support network really.

This example of practical community support, calling an ambulance, typified how for some tasks fellow residents proved able and willing to provide immediate response. They were an accessible source of help and care, more so than family members who live further away, or may be estranged. These networks also hold characteristics of important ‘bonding’ ties of well-established groups (Granovetter, 1973). Kokako and Kereru’s story, which resembles several of those living in camping grounds, illustrates how one’s health can be protected through this source of social support. Residents’ fear can be negated – such as Kokako’s of dying alone. Residents spoke of how they tended to feel less anxious and depressed with the social networks related to their housing. Social support was particularly important for the elderly or sick residents, such as Kokako, Kereru and Tieke. Their narratives illustrated how the social support present in their housing situation was a benefit to their health, improved their quality of life, reduced their risk of dying prematurely, and prevented downward mobility.

The features of the camping ground play a role in promoting positive social relationships and hence social health. Less loneliness and more social contact between residents was due to proximity to each other and to communal gathering spaces. Pleasantries were exchanged on a daily basis and residents greeted and knew each other well.

Kakariki: It can take forever to go to the toilet ‘cos you stop along the way to talk to the others.

Kokako: It would be pretty lonely here without [other residents] here, I always pop in and have a cup of tea, a talk, irritate her. She says, “Go home”.

Kiwi: I can converse with a lot of people, on all subjects. No I have a lot of friends here, they all know me, all say, “Hello Kiwi, how are you?”

Kereru: This is better than a rest home village, for the simple reason that you’ve got people of all ages. It’s more like an extended family, as you see I’ve got a toy box for the kids.

The camping grounds provided opportunities for being sociable for residents. There are both loose, open networks, which Granovetter (1973) would describe as ‘weak ties’, which bridge gaps between and across strata. For some, fellow residents are appreciated as acquaintances with little intention that they want to have close relationships. There are however examples of both conviviality and close companionship. Informal social ties within camping grounds, such as visiting, chatting, lending, sharing transport, watching caravans while others are away, helped to prevent a sense of social isolation through circumstantial friendship (whether close
or loose). The language of residents showed their experience and relative importance placed on the well-being of relationships or merely daily contact with other residents. Many had maintained contact with people who had left the camping ground, and their stories of camping ground communities contained stories of things they had learnt and gained from their connections with other residents – things that had enabled them and others to cope and enjoy their housing. In these ways, their health was managed through their experiences of social resources and networks.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION, ROLES & HEALTH

Participation in the camping ground, through the involvement in the running of the camp, and other community-based activities, also had positive health effects. Stories told of residents working together and the roles of each in the community. Owners specifically told of how residents made issues known to them and helped to maintain the grounds and watched the office. Miromiro’s narrative shows his willingness to cooperate for the common good of the community.

Miromiro: I’m the handyman, I’m the electrician, plumber, gardener, whatever [laughter]. They got something broken, “Hey, come and look at this here”, “Yeah, no worries”.

Piopio: He’s an asset, like when the water pump broke down, well of course that would have meant that nobody had any water here. So this one goes down there and has a tutu, and dong, dong, dong, next minute the camp’s got water again.

This couple displayed a sense of achievement and pride from being able to fulfil these roles, and others gain from this also. These benefits can be seen as an outcome of social capital within the community. Kea’s sense of responsibility was also in response to friendships and camaraderie, and it is in line with the natural rhythms of camp life.

Kea: You just say gidday to them each day, and check on them, see if they’re alright. Like with Kiwi at the moment, you make sure he’s up and about in the morning. I’m dreading the day when he does go. You wanna have a look in there, there’s not a lot of clear space, and it’s all papers and boxes and God knows what. It’ll all go up, and he owns that shed on the other side of the road and that’s chocca block. Hell, I don’t know how the hell we’re going to get him out the door … We’ll have to stand him up or something [laughter].

All residents displayed an enjoyment of being part of their camping grounds and having a sense of responsibility – a function of the social capital accessed by many residents.
This section has highlighted some health-promoting aspects of camping ground housing: residents are free to move and have communal places to achieve and support social interaction. Narratives show how camping ground residence affects patterns of social networks and how residents individually and collectively respond to relationships created through place. The importance of place geographically for social networks in camping grounds was noted. Their health and the strength of these social networks were shaped by place and by the larger social context of people living in camping grounds. The outcomes of social support, roles and responsibility – functions of social capital – were linked to the health of residents. Their participation in camping grounds fostered connections between residents. In some ways, camping grounds facilitated greater social interaction and subsequent mental and physical health for residents who would otherwise be socially isolated. The narratives give a sense of the existence of camping ground communities as a microcosm existing within the anonymity of urban space.

**NORMS & INFORMAL SOCIAL CONTROL: INFLUENCES ON HEALTH**

Feelings of being supported through the camping ground community and playing worthwhile roles with the camping ground help to establish social bonds between members. Camping ground residents develop these social networks within a clear community structure. These community structures established the social norms, and the role of the owners created a level of informal social control. Narratives showed how this community structure contributed to resident’s health and the role that these structures played in promoting their collective health and well-being.

Sacker et al. (2006) describe existing research that living in a deprived neighbourhood adversely affects residents’ health, based on both individual characteristics (compositional effect) and the social and physical environment (contextual effect). However, the narratives of camping ground residents focus on how potential disadvantage and instability can be mediated through the structure of the camping ground community. Through narrative comparisons – such as here/there, urban/rural, this camping ground versus that camping ground, renting versus camping ground residence – residents actively engaged in dissociating themselves from ‘unhealthy’ environments. The ‘healthy’ environment of the camping grounds was explained by the presence of social buffers.

Many of the residents spoke of a perceived quality of community based on factors of social ties amongst residents and a sense of social order. Shared values and common social norms appeared to have a basis in the health-supporting role of the camping ground community. The focus on networks and embeddedness illustrates people’s connection to place, and how the
promotion of social norms works against fragmentation and social exclusion. Camping ground residence makes available social support mechanisms, shared loyalties and solidarity. Residents were often spoken of as being part of the infrastructure of the camping grounds. They had active roles - they did not just live in the camp, but were a part of it. Titi demonstrates their role in keeping the community active and progressive.

Titi: There was nobody keeping the grounds, so we just started tidying up here, there and everywhere, and that’s our job, caretakers … We welcome all our visitors, which is good. They always come back, they do, they always come back.

Residents frequently described their camping grounds as clean and tidy, free from crime and rubbish. Characterising their housing in this way framed their sense of hope and satisfaction. Camping ground communities facilitated greater support, networks and greater security, especially for older residents. Participation in the organisation of the camp was associated with feelings of control and identity. Where camping grounds were seen to provide a sense of order and togetherness, there was a parallel sense of protection from negative social problems. Collective action and solidarity help residents to make their housing ‘good and healthy’ housing.

OWNERS’ ROLES IN HEALTH

Narratives also highlighted the role of the camping ground owners and managers in supporting the development and maintenance of the community structure. Chapter 5: Camping ground communities discussed how owners use selection, surveillance and control to maintain a problem-free community. Residents’ narratives of security were linked to owners’ roles and how the management practices of owners positively affected their housing experiences. ‘Good’ management essentially was a precondition to stable community and ability to develop social networks. Owners acted as effective social buffers. In contexts of relative deprivation and inequality, owners supported the social infrastructure of camping grounds by providing informal social control, an important attribute of social capital. Owners also contributed to the health of residents in more personal ways. While residents relied on each other, in many instances this expectation and delivery of care was extended to the owners as well. In various ways, the owners played definite roles in supporting residents. As residents replaced familial networks with relational networks, some of the onus regularly fell on the owners to have a duty of care. Many residents spoke of the pastoral care role of managers, how they acted as social workers and advocated on their behalf. Some of this was seen as reciprocal, for example, residents often received preferential rates over tourists as they maintained the economic viability of the camp. However, many managers’ roles were ‘over and above the call of duty’. Many owners took responsibility for residents’ actual access to social and health services through actions such as
providing transport. Owners provided a health resource to all residents through the sharing of information, provision of material and emotional support, and access to places and social connections.

**THE HEALTH OF THE CAMPING GROUND COMMUNITY**

The level of social capital in camping ground communities can be linked to resident’s collective health and well-being. This is reflected in stories where residents and owners link aspects of community in camping grounds with the overall well-being of the community. Narratives illustrate increased access to support and resources through the promotion of social norms and informal social control and the transmission of information and health care. Social capital attributes given to camping grounds offer potential explanations and mechanisms through which residents connect their positive health experiences, in line with literature that social capital is important to health of communities (Smith et al., 2005a). Narratives presented have highlighted some of the positive aspects of life in camping grounds, such as support, resilience and integration.

**Social trust, gender and weak boundaries**

Narratives have shown that living in a camping ground can provide healthy linkages between people and formations of a collective. However, not all residents experienced these relationships, nor did all have positive evaluations of community life in camping grounds. Kaka’s anecdote frames camping ground communities as complex.

Kaka: What do I like about living here? That I can be now, I can be here … It's the drama of the place [laughter]. See those two people, at each other's throats. He said, “If I can kill my wife”, boy those two, talk about con artists. They've got nine children between them, all fostered out throughout New Zealand. They’re living here the life of Riley, you know, and I think to myself, welcome to Planet Earth, the best TV station in the galaxy [laughter]. It's all bloody drama, it's all bloody drama camp grounds.

He makes light of the tensions that exist from living in a communal place, and highlights that one must be careful to move past assumptions that close geographical proximity creates always-positive social relationships. For a minority group of residents, camping grounds were not always their primary source of community and interaction. Some of these residents had little intention of creating close connections with others, and preferred to be alone. Others, who were socially based in their camping ground, also found some negative implications of place in shaping relationships.
Challenges related to social trust through maintaining contact, privacy and control. Some residents’ social connectedness in camping grounds was also shaped by gender and boundaries.

**Social trust**

A small group of residents indicated, despite the availability of social activity, that camping ground communities could be fraught with tension. These residents tried to maintain a stance of conviviality; they liked the everyday contact with other residents but at times it was 'a bit much'. Sharing space and the inability to maintain privacy was a central idea in these narratives. Some felt that their housing did not give them opportunities to contribute to their personal sense of control, nor was there a buffer between the close shared living quarters and stress. Personal privacy was in some cases an important element and often meant residents lacked trust in their community and chose not to become involved or make (further) commitments to the camping ground community.

Although narratives suggested that strong bonds were beneficial to residents’ health, contradictorily they were seen to create stress for some residents. Indeed some residents, following a move to the camping ground, felt healthier without the pressure of relationships with people in their previous housing, as Kakapo states: ‘It’s good, I’m by myself, I’ve got nobody to annoy me anymore’. Ruru and Kakariki however recount negative experiences of aspects of relationships between residents.

**Ruru:**

I have wonderful conversations with them, but the community’s too small to be visiting everyday. It’s caused problems, people trying to do that. It’s four o’clock in the afternoon, “Time for wee drinks, come on up”, but it doesn’t work like that. It causes all sorts of problems. But as long as you keep to yourself and just be friendly with everyone, it works, it does, but I’ve seen people crumble and pack up and go because they’ve tried to be busy, busy, and it just hasn’t worked. You can be too friendly and become too involved in others’ problems, and you say the wrong thing at the wrong time or you think it’s a right thing and it’s a wrong thing and it just doesn’t work.

For Ruru, previous interactions with others have eroded their sense of trust in the camping ground community. Conflicting interactions with other residents increased stress and tension, thereby contributing to poorer health. Other residents also told of camp sagas and stressed the importance of setting limits on intimacy. This less-positive view and experience of community was linked to people’s choice to be involved or not. Residents who wanted a degree of separation from other residents often withdrew socially. These moves were a typical coping strategy to deal with feelings of distrust, through unwanted social interaction and breaches of personal privacy.
Gender, social isolation and health

Gender was another conflicting attribute in the creation and maintenance of social bonds within camping ground communities. The older men living in camping grounds often told of social isolation and loneliness. They tended to face different issues than the women in sustaining local social networks. When faced with unemployment and family breakdown, which was a common pathway for men to be living in camping grounds, these men also experienced cuts with ties within their workplaces, work-based social networks, as well as family and friend social networks. Klineberg (2002) in his analysis of the 1995 Chicago heat wave, emphasised the significant mental and physical health impacts on men, particularly after separation, and linked this to the structures of traditional gender roles and divisions of labour. He defined: ‘living alone as residing without other people in the household; being isolated as having limited social ties; being reclusive as largely confining oneself to the household; and being lonely as the subjective feeling of being alone’ (p. x). This holds true in camping ground residents’ narratives and has significance for elderly men. Stories of loss of friendships, spending most of their time alone, and being ‘loners’ and ‘lonely’ made some of them more vulnerable to stressors such as isolation, depression, deprivation, fear of crime, and lack of support. As Klineberg (2002) states, this potential lack of active social networks leaves these residents more open to poor health outcomes without help to recognise problems and provision of immediate care. In addition, many did not have access to a telephone or transport and so their ability to have social networks outside the camping grounds was lessened or limited, resulting in a greater reliance on the community based in their camping ground, or to further their isolation.

This sense of isolation and depression was also reflected in the narratives of older single female residents, but was often reframed with a sense of independence. Ruru’s narrative illustrated the significance she placed on living alone, but simultaneously remaining a part of the camping ground community.

Ruru: I think I’m a loner, I like to be by myself, I just, I don’t know. I just like being by myself. I mean I know there’s people here if I want to go and have a yak, but I can’t be bothered with that. No, that’s not quite what I mean either, I like to be independent, I’m a loner.

The outcomes of social isolation for Ruru, and other women, differed from the men’s. The context of isolation within the camping ground was positively framed – loneliness versus the independence wanted and gained. Here, the conviviality provided by the camping ground was valued more than the potential for close companionship.
Boundaries

The fluid boundaries of camping ground housing were features that also worked to lessen, or undermine, the development of social capital in camping grounds. The physical proximity to others often meant that residents’ ability to control space is reliant on others. The regulation of privacy in camping grounds can be inhibited by place and the presence of others. In ‘normal’ housing, people use doors, walls, curtains and fences to control social interaction with neighbours and outsiders. Tui provides a contrary narrative.

Tui: It’s more communal living in a caravan. If you’ve got a flat somewhere you can just hide inside and not give a shit, but when you stay in a caravan place, you have to think about other people.

Other residents also felt unable to perform activities alone or to shield from others watching. A forced sense of community, where they shared facilities as a matter of necessity, worked to undermine their sense of control and privacy. The visible community common practices were mobilised not always through individual and collective needs and common interest, but did create the existence of tensions between sociability and privacy. So while some members may have viewed communal facilities and place opportunities for interaction as beneficial, others felt that these could undermine their privacy and in some cases could deter social interaction. For some, like Tieke, these tensions were apparent but negligible.

Tieke: You know, you do have your tiffs with them, tell them to get f*cked every now and then and that sort of thing, but a day later it’s all over and done with.

For others the ability to control personal boundaries was more problematic.

Pipipi: I’ve only had one run-in with one tourist. Some foreign tourist took my washing out of the washing machine, and started to wash their own. It was still all dripping wet, and put it in one of the fucking sinks. I nutted it. I nearly lost the plot, it was like fuck, “Don’t mess with my washing lady eh, you know, you don’t live here, piss off”. I wasn’t impressed with that, but you know, left it be, let them finish their washing first. You just have to bite your tongue in some of these cases eh.

The compromised nature of his personal and private space contributed to Pipipi’s feelings of anger and frustration. The focus on privacy and control is also a component in Titi’s account of social relations.

Titi: You all sort of interweave with each other, and try to be sociable with each other, but sometimes it’s like you got too many visitors on your deck [laughter].

For Titi, it was important to achieve a balance between sociability and privacy. However, the size, quality and permeable boundaries of space in camping grounds restricted abilities to control social interaction and regulate access to space. The shared and limited nature of housing space in
camping grounds and lack of personal control and privacy in immediate environments can have adverse effects on mental health through contributing to feelings of insecurity.

Living in a camping ground for a minority was an experience of negative social interaction where opportunities for creating and maintaining healthy relationships were undermined by issues of privacy and control over space and resources. The negative implications of these have been related to social isolation and loneliness, non-involvement (withdrawal) and frustration. However, the majority of residents had cooperative relationships and the few who did experience negative effects often employed coping strategies to minimise or regulate social interaction.

The narratives of residents show how camping ground communities work. The narratives presented in Chapter 5: Camping ground communities show how place-bound residents are and they gave an understanding of their housing experiences socially. The camping grounds residents told of what it meant to live in a camping ground; for many, they have access to community. By being a part of their camping ground they experienced meaning and available resources. Residents’ accounts of their own health were usually intertwined with stories of their housing and their relationships with others. Health was enabled through sense of community, social capital and social cohesion. The narratives portrayed a definite community feel of camping grounds, showing that camping ground residents’ stories and experiences cannot be looked at independently from one another. Indeed, they placed emphasis on the structure of the community having influence on their health, both individually and collectively. Camping grounds however are not only sources of community, but some residents find them socially problematic.

Residents talked of their health being affected by their participation in the camping grounds. The built environment of the camping grounds had an impact here through the development of social capital. The form of camping ground housing encouraged interactions between residents, thereby increasing sense of community and the development of strong bonds between residents. Participation in the social networks of camping grounds provided support, opportunities for roles and responsibilities in the community. Narratives showed mechanisms involved in links between different forms of social capital and pathways to better health – namely through the support given and gained, and sense of belonging. Day-to-day connections provided a source of sociability and decreased risks of isolation. Participation in camping grounds through carrying out roles conferred self-esteem, identity and fulfilment.

The extent to which residents’ health and well-being was affected by camping ground residence is both a consequence of these individual experiences of social networks and also of the shared contextual dimensions. The community structure of the camping grounds appeared to have protective health aspects. Norms and perceptions of informal social control shaped residents’ capacities to access and mobilise health resources. The active roles of owners in camping ground communities was believed to create supportive housing conditions and relations. The structural characteristics of camping ground communities were linked to positive assessments
of the camping grounds and influenced residents’ perceptions of stability and security. The effect of this was apparent in the fostering of alliances between residents and reductions in social fragmentation. Some residents however displayed concern about social isolation, with a particular focus on how camping ground residence may erode personal sense of privacy and control. A few residents’ perceptions of low social trust and weak boundaries restricted their abilities to establish social networks and generate social capital in their communities. For some men, the consequences of a gendered division of labour also implied fewer resources to develop relationships with others. Symptoms of loneliness and depression were related to social isolation in camping grounds – limited social integration was perceived by residents to lead to poor overall health and well-being.

Social factors and the presence of positive community characteristics were key factors in the relationships between camping ground housing and residents’ health. Residents’ accounts illustrated how they were able to access (or not) better health through the social networks and community structure of their camping ground. In most instances, health-protecting attributes were emphasised. Through camping ground communities – people and place – residents faced less social isolation. Increased social capital contributed to perceptions of ‘better’ physical and mental health.

THE PROBLEM & POLITICS OF CAMPING GROUNDS: INFLUENCES ON HEALTH

Camping ground residents indicated that the community and social features of their housing influence their health. They valued the linkages and relationships between residents and the owners of the camping grounds, and the connections with the places where they live. The narratives drawn on in this section now focus on the spatialities of camping ground residence – the complex relationships between camping ground residents, camping grounds and wider society, and how these housing situations are realised and negotiated by residents. Chapter 6: The problem & politics of camping grounds presented camping grounds as contested sites, where there are competing narratives of meaning from different groups and institutions. The construction and representation of camping grounds is political, with camping grounds framed as illegitimate and illegal through legislation and regulation. This places camping ground residents ‘on the margins’ of the housing market and within New Zealand definitions of homelessness. It was also identified how the problematisation of residents and residence created a politically and socially insecure
space for residents. These spatial aspects of housing restrict residents’ capacity to control and secure their housing (present and future) and their access to opportunities and resources.

Institutional processes shape camping grounds and the social value placed on them. The broader socio-political context of camping grounds thereby constructs camping ground residence as illegitimate and problematic, creating a context of marginalisation for those who live there. Lynam and Cowley (2007) describe marginalisation as: ‘a sense of being overlooked, categorised or misrepresented. It curtails opportunities for capacity building, and constrains ways in which relationships are established … It conveys the message ‘You don’t belong’ or ‘You are not a person of value’ (p. 148). The implications of legislation and the constraining effects on residents are discussed here, with particular reference to their (in)ability to secure their housing and their access to health and social services. Marginalisation and social exclusion – the social location of many camping ground residents – affects the ways in which residents access resources and opportunities, as well as influencing the ways their relationships are constructed.

**LEGISLATION & REGULATION**

People living in camping grounds are expressly excluded from coverage of the Residential Tenancies Act, and reside illegally in reference to the Camping Ground Regulations (and for some, the Reserves Act). This effectively means camping grounds residents (and owners’) rights and obligations are not outlined or defined as in normal tenancy arrangements, undermining the stability and quality of the housing of those living there. For example, many residents and service providers (and some owners) highlighted the lack of a formal process for terminating residence or increasing rents. Residents were not always completely passive regarding negative effects of this spatial structuring – they did negotiate regulatory processes in creative ways (such as moving caravans off site for one night after 50 days occupation), and some appreciated the ability to move on without notice and lack of bonds. They remain, however, out of place in camping grounds and without a legal security of tenure. This is also a defining aspect of homelessness and exclusion in the housing market. Social service providers recognised that the lack of rights as an ongoing problem.

*Tawa:* I think that one of the basics is having a clearly defined set of rights and responsibilities for these tenants, and that applies to owners as well of course … A lack of coverage by the RTA probably exacerbates [residents’] situations, but resourcing is a big issue. Guidelines and funding go hand in hand, don’t they?

*Kaka also spoke of the lack of guidelines for people in which to operate.*
Kaka: We’re talking about camping grounds as survival units, and I believe there has to be a constitution, principles and policies for camping grounds throughout New Zealand that protect the individuals, and above all, when old folks are forced to go and live in camping grounds.

In relation to tenancy, camping ground residents faced issues similar in nature to private tenants; there is, however, a lack of legislative and resolution processes available to them. There is no definition of the rights and obligations of users and providers of housing in camping grounds in situations where this accommodation is being used other than for holiday purposes. The regulatory processes applying to camping grounds are central to residents’ situation of housing insecurity.

There is continuing conflict between the Camping Ground Regulations and trying to protect the rights of those living in camping grounds, so that it would prove difficult to implement any tenancy standards without changing this primary legislation. Furthermore, the effects of any changes may not fall neutrally on residents and their access to housing, and could result in more rigorous enforcement of the 50-day period. As Chapter 5: The problem and politics of camping grounds discussed, the actions of evicting people out of camping grounds through this legislation has little regard for the social and economic processes that formed residents’ pathways into camping grounds. The issues are further related to the provision of housing generally; Tawa provides a clear summation of the problem:

Tawa: We can provide better clarity in the law for their rights and responsibilities, and perhaps some kind of support for the people who are doing a bit of a social job, although they’re actually in business. But the real solutions lie elsewhere, you know, there is a need for better transitional accommodation, emergency accommodation, and all the supports that go around that. And there’s also a need for state housing, affordable housing, social housing, but authorities seem to be pulling out of that area in the last five or 10 years, and I have a feeling that must have created some kind of gap of unmet need.

The impermanent nature of this housing created significant distress for some residents, especially where they had little ability to access alternative, more secure housing. Where owners gave immediate preference to tourists, or had camping grounds for sale, or where councils had evicted other residents from local camping grounds, residents perceived themselves increasingly in positions of vulnerability. Many social service providers felt that the legislative frameworks around camping grounds puts residents unfairly at risk. The accounts from both shorter and longer-term residents suggested that insecurity of tenure in their housing for most was experienced as stressful, and could or was having a negative impact on their health. Some residents, for example, had faced continued exposure to negative events and conditions, such as discrimination and exclusion in the housing market, and had resulting feelings of a lack of control.
These perceptions of lack of control and of powerlessness over their present and future housing left some residents distressed and with a sense of fear.

The regulations and lack of housing security in camping grounds places limitations on residents. Through their disadvantage in the housing market, they can find themselves excluded and poor in options available to others. Howden-Chapman et al. (2000) state: ‘Home ownership provides a degree of control over accommodation – a secure sense of home – that is crucial to well-being’ (p. 137). Narratives of camping ground residents, in contrast, discuss a lack of security and control over their housing circumstances, of threats of involuntary relocation, and rent increases without warning, thereby describing housing situations which negatively affect their health and well-being.

ACCESS TO PRIMARY HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Camping ground residence also plays a role in shaping access to mainstream housing and social services. Matai’s narrative links socio-spatial aspects of camping ground residence with implications for residents’ access to opportunities.

Matai: It is seen like it’s not a real place, it’s not a real address. If you say that you’re living in a camping ground, instead of living at 84 Stewart St, where you have your own mail box, yeah, it’s seen as kind of the lowest part of accommodation. So the lowest level of accommodation is a camping ground.

The exclusion from mainstream society can lead to inequity in other social areas, including opportunities to find employment and access to public services, and therefore limit the opportunities to partake as equal members of their local communities. Several residents and service providers noted that residents faced reduced chances of being accepted for private rental properties because of their current housing circumstances, and also with Housing New Zealand Corporation because they were currently ‘housed’. One owner described how camping ground residents had recently been excluded from the local public library membership because the address was not considered permanent. Those living in camping grounds are exposed to forms of discrimination on the basis of their housing situation, demonstrating the role of marginalisation in access to services and resources.

Narratives demonstrated that many camping ground residents had difficulties in accessing primary health care services. The accounts of camping ground residents indicated space and place related factors that shape their access to care. System barriers and New Zealand’s policy environment were the most frequently mentioned problems. New Zealand’s primary health care system is based on local assessments of needs and efficient and effective distribution of resources.
(MoH, 2001). The Primary Healthcare Organisation (PHO) structure aims to align population needs with the distribution and allocation of resources. Primary health care is planned and delivered through PHOs on the premise of meeting community needs and achieving continuity of care through the enrolment of people in their local PHO. Camping ground residents’ narratives however indicate factors relating to this system as the most prominent barrier to them accessing primary health care, especially in regards to enrolment, availability and mobility. This has implications for their service use – how, when and who they seek out.

Being enrolled in a PHO did not always equate to camping ground residents having access to primary care. PHOs aim to serve the needs of their ‘enrolled’ local populations through ease of access and continuity of care (MoH, 2001). Camping ground residents however suggest that this focus on geographical areas in service provision did not necessarily ensure access. Shortages in available general practitioners and difficulties in accessing primary care was a common experience for camping ground residents. In particular, the ‘requirement’ to enrol impeded residents’ access and utilisation to these services.

Tui: Some doctors you go to, they go, “Are you registered with us? You can’t come here”. Well that can be tricky.

Kokako: The way I understand this PHO business, you have trouble getting in. If you’re in one doctor then you stay there. Yeah, it’s hard to get into another one.

Riroriro’s narrative shows how being mobile also has risks for accessing a space in a PHO.

Riroriro: [Access to health services] is the only trouble, got to tell you, try to get into a doctor [Sigh]. My wife’s got a doctor up here, she’s got diabetes a bit, so she’s got her own doctor [30 minutes away], but when you’re travelling around it’s blimmin’ terrible. It’s hard to get into a quack you know.

The Primary Health Care Strategy (MoH, 2001) states:

‘Enrolment will not reduce people’s choice of provider. They will be free to seek care wherever they wish regardless of which provider or PHO they have enrolled with … The enrolment system will allow them to see any primary health carer. The system will also allow people to change their nominated provider without difficulty and without having to explain or seek permission’ (p. 8-9).

In contrast to these aims of the Strategy, residents frequently spoke of not being able to secure a place within their local PHO, or even access one-off visits at a local general practice because they were not registered with that service. While enrolment was intended to be ‘voluntary’, residents spoke of being unable to access services when they needed them because of closed registers. Barnett, Smith and Cumming (2009) report that increasing PHO enrolments have resulted in stretched capacities in relation to space and workforce. The narratives of residents suggest that in reality, a focus on continuity of care through enrolment may be harmful to residents’ access to
services. This resulted in a phenomenon of residents maintaining enrolment in a PHO outside their locality. Several residents held PHO enrolment where they had previously lived, as Kokako’s narrative showed.

*You've got a GP here locally?*

Kokako: No, my one, he’s in [neighbouring town]. I stayed there because he’s looked after me for some many years. I know it’s inconvenient but it just feels worthwhile. It’s hard to get a spot here anyway.

Being linked to a particular general practitioner, while recognised as burdensome, did provide a sense of continuity for some residents. These residents spoke of the relative ease of gaining appointments in their enrolled PHO service, making them more likely to make contact with that service. They had developed relationships with their general practice over time and appreciated continuity of care through medical and personal knowledge.

However, most residents felt forced to maintain enrolment in their previously local PHO because they were simply unable to access primary care services any closer to where they currently lived. The distance between the camping grounds and services where they could access them created barriers to actual access. More indirect barriers to access such as time and distance posed barriers to receiving care when required. In some instances residents faced considerable travelling times and distances. For those who lacked access to transport (private or public), travelling to services was an immediate and ongoing problem, linking their living conditions to their access to care.

The barriers to access and necessity to enrol are not without costs to camping ground residents. Several residents told stories of not accessing services at all, and others indicated that they had tried to access care in other ways. A reliance on emergency services was a common implication of not being able to access general practices.

Matuhi: If it was that bad, there’s [hospital] just up the road down there, but I don’t know. If I just got sick then the mate would take us down in the car or a fucking ambulance, I don’t know … But in general doctor’s surgeries or whatever you call them, and dentists and stuff, I wouldn’t have a clue mate, my teeth are rotten, I haven’t seen a dentist in years, I should.

Piopio: But we know if anything happens the helicopter comes and the ambulance service here is great.

Tui: But, ah, there’s always accident and emergency services somewhere.

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62 This also raises questions of PHOs’ ability to provide specifically for the needs of their ‘local population’ if they have enrolled patients living in other areas.
These narratives link the perceived poor access and experience of primary health care services to a focus on emergency services. In addition to an inability or reluctance to present at services, some residents' preference for the informal support networks available in camping grounds may have lessened their desire or need to access formal services. Many of the camping ground residents spoke of the availability of care provision within the camping grounds. Kokako and Kereru's previous narratives showed the importance of Kereru's role in providing care for her neighbour Kokako. This happened within the camping ground against the assumption that residents have to go 'outside' to access services. Residents often mobilised health resources available in camping grounds, for example, the social support, reciprocity, emotional and practical health (such as transport to services), as discussed previously.

Primary health care has a capacity to reduce inequalities in communities and improve health outcomes for individuals. For camping ground residents in particular those faced with social marginalisation and exclusion, the health consequences of poor housing may be ameliorated by assurance to easy access to primary health care. However, the narratives of camping ground residents gave a picture of a group who has presumably high levels of unmet need and inaccessible (or not easy access to) primary health care services. Patterns of lower service utilisation may have effects on residents' health through poorer outcomes especially for older residents, those with chronic conditions, and children. The poor access for some to care may firstly be seen in view of their relative deprivation and housing insecurity, mobility and direct exclusion from some services. As such, these camping ground residents' ability to access care is affected by their housing. Residential movement and mobility does raise questions about the accessibility and availability of services when and where they are needed. Camping ground residents' living and housing conditions exacerbate problems with service access. Secondly, the effect of health system structures and how these are interpreted by individuals and their resulting strategies to seek care adds to the complex situation where this group is prevented from making contact with services when needed.

This section has focused on camping ground residents, but it may be a wider issue affecting other groups and individuals. Camping ground residents experience problems with access to services as a symptom of housing insecurity and mobility and of system structures. Access and coordination problems are exacerbated by a focus on enrolment in PHOs. The PHO structure may not be completely effective in working to reduce inequalities in health, especially for those in areas of service shortages and/or for those who move, for example those with high residential mobility or insecure housing. The situation also raises questions about the effectiveness of PHOs as a mechanism for improving, or ensuring, access to primary health care for all.

While these narratives illustrated precarious access to services, it is apparent that service access may also be an issue of invisibility. In many instances, camping ground residence (and residents) is hidden. Firstly, as this group is not likely to be counted (well) in national census
statistics, there is no overall knowledge about the extent of these housing circumstances. Secondly, there exists a failure on the part of many social service agencies to be aware of these housing circumstances. During recruitment for key informants in this research, more than 10 social service providers in Taone were unaware of the presence of camping grounds in their area, let alone the presence of residents in the camping grounds. This may be associated with stigma, where residents may withhold their address, or are reluctant to seek help. Incorporation of camping ground residence (where there are no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation) in the New Zealand Definition of Homelessness (Statistics NZ, 2009) gives a signal that camping ground residence may be given more attention in future.

This section has illustrated how spatial aspects of camping ground residence shaped residents’ health. Narratives signalled that camping grounds are contested spaces and political processes, legislation and regulations shape camping ground residents’ health. The illegality and illegitimacy of camping ground residence is related to the perpetuation of the nuclear family household and home ownership as social ideals. Through regulation and marginalisation, camping ground residence is framed as not normative. These broader socio-political conditions socially locate camping ground residents on the margins, reproducing and sustaining the social exclusion of many of these residents.

Narratives of residents and key informants demonstrate marginalisation as a social determinant of health, creating housing insecurity, reduced access to services and opportunities and contributing to residents’ disadvantage. Firstly, camping ground residents’ housing conditions allowed them neither housing security and tenancy rights, nor the ability to experience control in their current (and future) housing. Secondly, residents often faced barriers in accessing primary health care services. Access to primary health care was dependent not on geographical location of services, but residents’ ability to access those services through PHO enrolment. As residents were often enrolled in another area, they were less likely to access services if and when required, and often relied on emergency services and other residents. Moreover, a lack of a clear picture and knowledge of this population group factors into their housing situations as ‘invisible’. In these ways, where camping ground residents live has an effect on their ability to access health resources, and may result in unmet need. The contestation and problematisation of camping ground residence leaves residents with continued exposure to uncontrollable events and conditions. The context of this housing contributes to the vulnerability of many residents, their further marginalisation and distress.
PLACE, HOME & HEALTH

This section draws on the discussion in Chapter 7: Place & home, looking at how camping ground residents interact with their housing to focus on creating a sense of belonging. It was shown how, despite the various experiences and definitions of housing and home, including inherent contradictions, most residents were satisfied with their housing. Ideas of sense of place and identity will be linked here to residents’ perceptions of their health. The physical features of their housing situation – place – are presented within the narratives as significantly effecting the health of residents. Place is discussed in terms of environmental importance to health, access to resources and services, and management of the physical environment for health.

Residents’ sense of place in camping grounds is linked to their health. How their feelings of social connectedness (with others and the natural environment) and attachment to place correspond to their ability to be healthy is covered. Their participation – engagement with camping grounds as meaningful places – is seen as beneficial to their well-being. The role of their housing in shaping their access to services and amenities is looked at. Residents’ sense of identity (individual and collective) is discussed in terms of health. For some, the focus on place is a way of making sense of their place in the face of exclusion socially and economically from mainstream housing and the wider community. Residents held positive perceptions of the role of place in their health.

POOR QUALITY HOUSING & HEALTH

Existing public and academic narratives of substandard housing temporary housing and health would suggest that the physical standard of housing in camping grounds is detrimental to health. Examining the physical dwellings in which camping grounds residents live entailed looking at the actual dwellings, which included caravans (with and without annexes, rigid or otherwise), trucks, buses and relocatable homes. Many of the residents lived in conditions that would be considered marginal by current housing standards. These structures are temporary accommodation: they do not conform to building codes; and are not manufactured or designed for use as permanent dwellings. There is a range of dwellings used by residents, and Riroriro, the owner of a large new mobile home bus, defines his as a comfortable lifestyle choice.

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63 See Chapter 2 Literature review

64 The possible exception is relocatable homes in relocatable home parks. However, dwellings of individuals visited that were in relocatable home parks were not necessarily of a higher standard than other camping ground accommodation.
Riroriro: This is good, you’ve got to have comfort, can’t have damp [points to neighbouring caravan], in this we’re off the ground, a long way from the ground … I think I couldn’t live in a small caravan. You’ve got to have space, warmth, you’ve got to be able to enjoy it.

Riroriro pointed directly to the poor quality of many of the dwellings in camping grounds, and suggested this can be harmful to residents’ physical and mental well-being. While Riroriro enjoyed ‘superior’ accommodation, the majority of residents experienced exposure to health risks through their immediate physical environment. Their narratives pointed to the physical arrangements that had (or were expected to) result from a lack of insulation and structural permanence, and adequate space. Some also spoke of problems controlling noise from other residents and surrounds. The visible physical features of their dwellings played a direct role in their health, and they acknowledged very real potential health risks. For example, cold damp housing increases respiratory symptoms (Howden-Chapman et al., 2007); mould is increasingly thought to increase the occurrence of a range of respiratory problems by up to 50% (Weinhold, 2007). Therefore, a priori, the health risks of living in an uninsulated, cold, damp, mouldy caravan are obvious on this level – camping grounds can be construed as inadequate housing. This had particular implications for older camping ground residents, who reported more health problems, and struggled to maintain warmth in winter and control excess heat during summer periods.

**ACCESS TO AMENITIES & HEALTH SERVICES**

The spatial contexts of camping grounds limits, to various degrees, residents’ access to resources and services, thereby affecting their health status. There is an increasing body of literature\(^65\) that indicates that those who are homeless face limited access to health and social services. Concern over access to services was evident in the narratives of camping ground residents and was linked to service provision as previously discussed, but here it is also discussed in terms of the physical nature of the housing itself. For example, Kereru’s account of her neighbour Kokako’s chronic health conditions show place as a limitation on his access to health services.

Kereru: The only problem [Kokako’s] found with the health system is if they wanted him to have oxygen 16 hours a day, they won’t let him have it in a caravan. He wouldn’t be able to live in a caravan and have oxygen 16 hours a day like they want him to have … The other thing is that if you needed home help or something like that, I doubt very much they’d bring it to a caravan rather than a house. Now I don’t see what the difference is, whether you’re living in a flat or a caravan, but I doubt very much whether they’d give it to you in a caravan.

\(^65\) See Chapter 2 Literature review
Kokako: Well both of them are like granny flats, it’s the same.

Kereru: Yeah, and a person needs help for a shower no matter where they are, and that’s probably why we tend to look after each other more, because nobody else is going to look after you.

Here both Kokako and Kereru recognise that Kokako will no longer be able to age nor die in his ‘home’, a source of distress for many elderly. This narrative reflects his downward mobility. While Kokako was able to receive a basic level of services, his physical dwelling restricts his options for long-term medical care. They showed frustration and distress that they would not be able to remain in their homes as they grow older. Moreover, this narrative shows the intersection of both place and space impinging on the health outcomes of residents. The narratives show how the regulations and requirements of health services flow through their place, lessening their options and choices. Non-local processes, by way of national external regulations, affect Kokako’s health; where he lives is not conducive to allowing him to have oxygen at home.

The difficulties in accessing amenities were also spoken of as an aspect that could compromise the health of residents. Most of the residents lived in dwellings without kitchens, bathrooms, reticulated water, or sewage. Many residents also described no access to a telephone, and several relied on others for transport. The separation of cooking and ablution facilities required movement outside the actual dwellings to access these everyday amenities. Rata, a social service provider, considers residents’ ability and motivation to use these facilities to be lessened by the physical dwelling and distance to facilities.

Rata: Ha, if you’re living in a damp cold place all the time, and then you’re in an enclosed caravan, if you’ve got a gas cooker in that, and in a camping ground, and the ablution blocks are a long way from where they’re actually staying, then you can bet your bottom dollar they’re not getting over there, and they’re not washing, ’cos it would be too much hassle.

Rata employs a structural explanation where the physical place where residents live and dwell plays a central role in the poor health of many residents, and the reproduction of social problems. Other providers suggested the physical nature ‘would be pretty depressing’. These narratives link housing and living conditions (such as cold and distance from ablutions) to unhealthy consequences and a culture of unhealthy behaviour (such as lack of sanitation). These place-related responses to the health issues of residents in regards to their housing were echoed by many owners.
THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH

The narratives collected described camping ground housing as not always problem-free, and how in many cases, it had significant impacts on the daily life (and health) of camping grounds residents. However, against public and private sets of narratives of living in camping grounds and temporary housing, place was talked of as being able to maintain and indeed improve the health of residents over a wide range of measures. All the residents interviewed believed that their physical health status had been maintained or improved upon moving into the camping ground, emphasising the positive role of place. Residents often described the role of place in the creation and maintenance of their health through their comparisons with their previous housing and other types or locations of housing. The narratives also illustrated temporal components of the relationship between place and health, with residents often making strong comparisons of then and now.

Residents quickly reframed any disadvantage with the physical dwelling structure. Camping grounds were spoken of as ‘healthy places’. Many residents spoke of the health benefits of living in caravans, preferring to focus on the ‘good’. For example, when asked how living in a caravan affected their health, many focused on the healing power of nature through location, and also attributed health to peaceful lifestyles. Living in camping grounds enabled most residents to live in health-enhancing environments. Residents directly linked the environmental aspects of camping grounds to their health, as does Riroriro in the following quote.

Riroriro: It improves [my health] if you ask me … With the camp being situated right here, right by the sea it improves my asthma ‘cos you know, away from all the smut and that from town.

Like Riroriro, many residents characterised their camping ground environments in terms of space, noise and pollution. Riroriro’s previous ‘unhealthy’ housing in town exemplified as polluted, crowded and noisy, contrasted with the freshness, spaciousness and ‘healthiness’ of her camping ground.

Tui: Just the whole atmosphere, especially here, I’m very relaxed. We’ve got tui66 right here beside us, come on the ground right beside you. You can’t find that in a house, wood pigeons too.

Residents lived in small enclosed dwelling spaces, but also experienced the opposite – spaciousness and interaction with nature concurrently. They made links between the natural physical contexts of place, such as bush, water and wildlife, and spaciousness and their physical and mental well-being. Some told of access to kaimoana67 and space to grow their own vegetables.

66 Native New Zealand bird.
67 Seafood.
Another key way residents talked of camping grounds as healthy was through reference to the water quality in their camping grounds, ‘We have such beautiful, purified water here’, symbolising camping grounds as unpolluted places. Blaxter (1990) discusses how lay definitions of health often focus on the role of the physical environment. Residents used the fresh sources of water as an example of the effect of the environment on their health. In this way, residents drew on medically legitimated discourses of relationships between physical environments and health and illness. They thereby constructed camping grounds as healthy places in contrast to other locations, which may be urban, crowded and polluted.

Residents spoke of life in camping grounds as ‘laid-back’, ‘cruisy’, or ‘holiday’ alternative lifestyles. These narratives drew on the physical characteristics of the camping grounds and extended these to create camping grounds as places where residents can have positive health experiences. Most resident explained how their living place had an advantage of being able to live ‘simply’ and ‘naturally’, as with Tieke:

Tieke: I think both mentally and physically it’s very good for you, yep, ‘cos your stress factors are limited down here … Hey, it’s great, in fact I would say that people would probably be healthier with this lifestyle, as opposed to town life.

Mohua extends her similar narrative of a ‘good, healthy lifestyle’ to the health of her grandchildren.

Mohua: They hardly ever get sick, they’re a lot healthier. They don’t get as sick as a lot of kids that don’t have this sort of lifestyle, coming to the beach.

Tieke’s narrative highlights the healing aspects of place for himself coping with a chronic illness. His use of marijuana is accepted by others in the camping ground. He finds this place more beneficial to his health.

Tieke: That’s another reason why I don’t want go to town, ‘cos there’s too many of this political correctness bullshit that we’re going through, you know.

Tieke speaks of a space and place he could not find in town. He also provides a view of camping grounds as places allowing recuperation and well-being, where residents can do what they need to do to be ‘well’. Living in a camping ground for Tieke, and other residents, promotes their overall health and well-being through their escape from urban constraints and to a place with holiday connotations. Narratives demonstrate camping ground life as opting out of the rat race to a place where one can move freely to exercise control over their own health and well-being.
MEANINGS OF PLACE, HOME & HEALTH

While the residents recognised constraints and benefits their housing placed on their health, the importance of both environmental and psychosocial outcomes of housing were recognised by the residents in their focus on the broad prerequisites for health. While the residents, throughout their ‘whole’ narratives, commonly provided accounts of adversity faced in camping grounds, there was also a sense of the importance of place and security or the provision of a safe haven from outside. Residents’ development of a positive sense of place stemmed from their experience of camping grounds, from the meanings ascribed to those experiences, and how camping grounds were able to make a positive difference to their well-being. An important dimension of this relationship between place and health is the social interaction situated in the camping grounds. Through everyday activities and social connections bounded in place, residents gained positive shared experiences. These are indicative also of sense of meaning and belonging in place. The social and emotional meaning attributed within and to camping ground communities signalled belonging and attachment to place – the camping grounds in which residents live. Involvement in the social and physical environment of the camping ground was also reflected in notions of home applied to camping grounds. Creating attachment and home through ascribing meaning to their living place, residents were protected from social isolation and vulnerability, which in turn met needs and enhanced their health and well-being.

PLACE, IDENTITY & HEALTH

Residents gained a sense of identity through association with camping grounds. Camping grounds are physical places, as well as providing residents with a place in the world. That is, camping ground housing also situates residents in a social setting, a place where identities are forged. Residents’ talk of belonging and ties to camping ground often illustrated identity formation tied to place and housing. They had frequent reference to ‘us’ and ‘we’ and ‘we’re all the same’.

However, individual and collective identities of residents are also shaped by historical, socio-cultural and political factors of wider society. Living in camping grounds is often looked upon by the press, researchers, policy makers, and the public as an inappropriate or unacceptable housing condition. Discrimination and attitudes towards camping ground residents as a socially excluded minority through stigma and public discourses results in actions taken against this group. Dominant narratives set camping ground residents apart by socio-economic status and their detachment from the norms of mainstream society. The discrepancies between political constructions and residents’ inside understandings have implications for the health of camping ground residents.
Camping ground residence can lessen people’s capacity to make choices and develop positive housing identity. For example, the meaning of living in a camping ground cannot be fully understood in terms of the simple generalisations presented by public and media narratives. These narratives do not always acknowledge the complexities of this type of housing, and may indeed further the disadvantage faced by some residents. For example, the stigmatisation of camping ground residence and residents restricted access to opportunities and isolated them from the wider community. In addition, the discursive stigmatisation can affect the self-image and mental health of residents from feelings of lack of control and helplessness.

All residents challenged these outside negative constructions however, re-presenting themselves to others and to themselves through their narratives. In positively defining themselves and locating themselves in ‘healthy’ places, residents chose not to identify with undesirable images. Many residents conveyed a reluctance to portray themselves as victims of their housing circumstances. Residents often attempted to also establish some form of hierarchy of health risk, in which their situation did not occupy the lowest rank. This sense of health hierarchy is evident in other comparisons made between the health of residents within camping grounds (‘They have real health issues’) and between camping grounds (‘This camp is better than that camp’). For example, Kereru acknowledges that ‘sick’ people do live in camping grounds, namely people with chronic conditions. She separates these however as ‘different’. Many of the residents had similar views about the existence of health issues, regardless of pathways into camping grounds.

Kereru: I haven’t had one bout of flu or colds or anything since I’ve been here, and you’d think you know, going in and out of the cold weather in the winter time and that would bother, but it doesn’t. You’ll very rarely actually find people in the camp who are sick, do you? I mean, except that, but that is a chronic situation, it’s a different situation, but just basic flu’s and colds and stuff, you don’t very often see them do you? Very rare, I mean [neighbour] never takes a day off sick, off work, he doesn’t, and [neighbour]’s never sick, no, none of them are. But I mean, I think the amount of fresh air we get, the wind that we’ve got here blows all the bugs away but [laughter].

Kereru’s narrative opens up several layers of meaning of living in a caravan. Firstly, her narrative, similar to that of many other camping ground residents, showed some sensitivity to a perceived suggestion that living in a camping ground may be detrimental to one’s health. Her narrative is in contrast to sets of understandings that temporary housing is unhealthy. She then acknowledged that the separation of ablutions and kitchen amenities as an inconvenience and possible health risk, as discussed earlier in poor quality housing, and then turned to the need to deal with other’s perceptions of caravans as poor housing. Here she was defensive and did not want other people to think it was an unhealthy place to live by reframing cold housing as fresh air ‘blowing the bugs away’. In refuting the claim, she used her own understanding and experiences, both as a registered health professional and camping ground resident, as evidence to point to the lack of ‘sickness’ for
herself and others in the camping ground. Kereru’s evaluation of the relationship between caravans and health was made explicit: everybody/outsiders think you get sick living in a caravan – but you do not. Other narratives similarly place anecdotal and personal experience in higher regard than academic public health evidence.

The narrative also illustrated the tensions created for residents by how other people perceive camping ground residents, the complexities of what ‘good’ housing is, and the relationships between health and one’s dwelling. Kereru’s narrative also showed her trying to locate herself within context, constructing her (and other residents of the camping ground) identity through her narrative. She described the ‘type’ of people that live there – they are ‘hard workers’, resistant to common ‘bouts of cold and ‘flu’. Importantly, these narratives show interconnections between place, space, identity and health of residents.

**PLACE, HEALTH & CAMPING GROUND RESIDENTS**

Camping ground residents’ narratives of health highlight the complex and contradictory relationships they have with the place and communities they belong to. Through these narratives they tried to make sense of the housing, and locate themselves whilst being located by others. In their negotiations they looked broadly at the characteristics of camping ground residence, and made links to their health and well-being. Their narratives pose a paradox in the meaning of camping ground housing. Firstly, camping ground residence can provide social connectedness, a sense of place and attachment, a chance to develop a sense of home, and confer positive identity and belonging, as opposed to previous exclusion. Concurrently though, it is understood to be limited in other ways, such as housing insecurity and stigma. That is, positive ‘benefits’ of camping ground residence are contradicted by the unstable nature of their housing situations, such as the illegality and poor physical structure. Secondly, another explanation for contradictions in narratives may be psychological adaptation. As residents’ housing generates negative external views and is subject to macro socio-political pressure, then adjusting and accepting housing circumstances may occur.

**At home in poor housing**

Kearns (2006) highlights a paradox of ‘being at home’ but ‘precariously housed’ in relation to Māori whānau returning to rural home land. He describes that while many may be living in temporary dwellings, they simultaneously experience a ‘deep sense of belonging’ and ‘being at
home’, as tāngata whenua\textsuperscript{68} in their turangawaewae\textsuperscript{69}. This has resonance with camping ground residents’ narratives, where they shared understandings of both tangible and intangible resources available in camping grounds that were significant to their health. Residents actively deconstructed and challenged outside views and displayed an awareness of the shortcomings in their housing but focused on the sense of belonging and place they had developed there. As Bolam, Murphy and Gleeson (2006) state: ‘It is not just the physical aspects of the spaces in which people live, but also how they feel about, identify with and act in their place of residence that affects their health’ (p. 400). In order to understand the paradox of being at home in temporary housing, a broader view of place, home and health may be required. Camping ground residents’ narratives present place and home in unconventional ways, and suggest that home places are not always completely idyllic, stable, or secure, but can still be constructed as ‘healthy’.

**Psychological adaptation to temporary housing**

While camping ground residents acknowledged marginalisation – the processes of social location placing them on the margins of housing – they did not necessarily internalise the stigmatisation. In contrast to the prevailing views, their responses were reactive and defensive in challenging these in their emphasis of the health-promoting aspects of camping grounds. They drew on their personal and shared experiences of their housing to positively present camping grounds. This may suggest a psychological adaptation to poor housing, especially where residents face limited options for pathways out. Narratives of being in control, of coping, and ‘getting on with it’ are examples of residents’ reactions and adaptation to the adversity faced. Another example of adjustment is narratives of personal responsibility from residents. Alongside the narratives of the health benefits of these living circumstances, many residents identified that for such housing to be conducive to health, a certain level of individual responsibility and capability is required. A sense of ‘survival’ was apparent in the narratives; to be healthy and ‘survive’ in these places, camping ground residents must actively manage their living space. They tended to emphasise agency and the belief that they had the power to make a difference. According to Blaxter’s (1990) research on lay definitions of health, working class people emphasise individual agency and family factors. Titi and Weka did this.

Titi: If you want to do it, you’ll do it, or if you have to do it, you’ll do it, I think it’s up to the individual really, you know, how they can survive.

\textsuperscript{68} Tāngata whenua: Indigenous peoples of New Zealand, literally ‘people of the land’.

\textsuperscript{69} Turangawaewae: One’s home area, literally ‘a place to stand’.
Weka: So I say it’s up to the individual, they all know what they’re supposed to be doing [to keep healthy].

Weka goes on to make obvious us/them comparisons, presenting individual choices and actions as key drivers in the relationship between place and health.

Weka: It can be bad for your health if you don’t know or if you’re not prepared for it. I’ve lived for a month in a tent, quite transient. Providing you look after yourself and are prepared for all conditions, you don’t have a problem health wise … It’s not what you’re living in, it’s how you act. It’s just simple things. I’m in a caravan, I’ve got everything I need here, but see I’ve got no stove. I don’t eat hot food, I eat everything cold. I’ve got no running water. I can do this forever, and it’s fine, so long as you’re eating properly, clean and dry, enough warmth, you’ll be right, eh?

Weka speaks of his internalised responses to his living space, presenting his and other residents’ privileged and not necessarily common knowledge of how to keep healthy in these conditions. The following narrative from Tui also shows some personal pride in discipline and experience of being able to cope and be healthy in temporary accommodation. For both these men there is an importance placed on planning and thinking about what it means to living in a caravan or other temporary dwellings permanently.

Tui: So I’m pretty careful. I know what I’m doing. But for some people who are just starting out, yeah, they could trip up here and there. A lot of them don’t have anything planned, like they’re both on the benefit, they’re getting money so they can rent a caravan. They think it’s all honky dory but they can forget about their health … You’ve got to be on to it, like if you’re living in a house, you’ve got your first aid box and you can make sure everything is clean and tidy. I can see a lot of people that turn up here not prepared for much. Now they stay in some of these little caravans, and they haven’t done the dishes, and you can see things starting to build up. And the flies, in a couple of months’ time it’s going to get that hot, you get bloody blow flies, and it’s going to get pretty wicked [laughter].

Tui saw that choice can be limited in some areas, especially for people who experience shortages in income. Tui maintained his own health in the limited space of his caravan by controlling the situation as best he could. He worked through preventative measures such as hygiene and first aid supplies and thereby lowered the risk of sickness related to temporary housing. He stressed that he has ‘been there, done that’, but others may be faced by difficulties and challenges in different ways. Where some people may be of the idea that living in a caravan is easier than living in a house, and reduces costs, it is vital that residents are proactive in their behaviours and management of their health. Tui believed that people can ‘forget about’ their health, but warned of underestimating the risks present, and residents must adapt and learn to deal with living in limited resources and space. Thus the effect of camping ground housing on health was to some
extent dependent on the individual resident’s acceptance and adaptation to their housing. It must be noted, however, that this individual agency does not mean that residents were more ‘accustomed’ to these housing standards. As Kearns et al. (2003) suggest:

‘It would appear that neighbourhood means no more or less to residents in poor areas as to the general population: residents in poor areas were neither immune or accustomed to poor neighbourhood conditions … Residents in poor areas respond to negative residential conditions in the same way as the rest of the population; they just experience those conditions more often than others’ (p. 849).

In conclusion, the narratives of camping ground residents show the role of place in their health, through the ways in which they use the camping ground on an everyday basis. Their narratives lead to an understanding of how place-bound they are, and how important their place is to the development and maintenance of their health and well-being. Place has particular significance for their health with respect to their physical dwellings, meaning and identity. The narratives of camping ground residents are consistent with the literature, which emphasises the role of place and environment in people’s health and health care experiences.

The importance of place for health provides another way to view the relationship between housing and health. Rethinking concepts of health within a broader conceptual framework of both place and space allows a deeper understanding of the contexts within which camping ground residents live. These residents reframe their poor quality dwellings and reduced access to basic amenities positively, focusing on meaning, the natural environment, and home as key factors in their ability to be healthy in poor housing.

CAMPING GROUNDS, RESIDENTS & HEALTH: A DISCUSSION

Narratives place camping ground residence within social, political, temporal and cultural contexts, and show individual (and collective) experiences of this housing. This chapter has illustrated the role of housing in the health of residents, and how it functions in their everyday life. In some ways, living in a camping ground affected residents’ access to opportunities, resources, housing rights, and consequently their health. Residents spoke of camping grounds as meaningful places, which could enable and fulfil their needs. For example, the majority of residents moved into
camping grounds in response to social exclusion, and gained a sense of social inclusion from being a part of their camp. Camping ground residents (re)framed their housing as more than the physical structure of their dwellings and link place to health. Moreover, their experiences were varied and contradictory. Camping ground residence could promote or work to the detriment of the health outcomes of residents. Overall, their narratives highlighted the complexity of the relationships between their health and their housing.

THE COMPLEX NATURE OF CAMPING GROUND RESIDENCE

Camping ground residence is a complex housing situation, and cannot be simply described as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ housing. Camping grounds shaped residents’ opportunities to negotiate and their ability to draw on health resources, and simultaneously increased their vulnerability in some aspects. For example, camping ground residence embedded residents in a social environment where they were ‘more’ able to make connections with their neighbours, and develop social ties which, on the most part, conferred a positive collective identity. Narratives also show how socio-political structures limit them in their housing. Wider level processes, beyond their individual characteristics, shaped their ability to access and maintain healthy housing, such as the Camping Ground Regulations. It may be suggested that ‘healthy’ housing gives residents both tangible and intangible resources from which to draw, for example, material resources (such as reticulated water and sewage), as well as social resources (such as social connectedness). Camping grounds contradictorily and concurrently play roles in constraining and enabling residents and their access to these resources. In these ways, narratives conceptualise camping ground housing as more than a dwelling, but as subject to a complex system of interrelated factors.

How these housing situations are sources of both health risk and sources of community and meaning has been described as a paradox. Even though most residents lived in dwellings of poor standard, they were able to have positive housing experiences. Narratives presented a situation where residents could be at home in the context of poor housing. They were able to, and desired to, develop a sense of home and stability in temporary housing. Furthermore, camping ground residents may be ‘out-of-place’ in camping grounds, and homeless by definition, through their position in society, but are also ‘in-place’ in camping grounds. Residents did acknowledge that their housing could be problematic, but also described them as meaningful places. These narratives can be seen as contradictory to mainstream notions of what ‘good’ or ‘healthy’ housing is. It may be that residents make the most of their housing, that they adapt to escape the reality of poor housing and stigmatisation, working to reconstruct camping grounds as ‘healthy housing’. Regardless, this paradox opens up definitions and broadens views of what home and place can
mean to different people in different locations and types of housing. While their basic shelter needs may not be met, nor housing security, higher levels of need can be met through camping ground residence. This questions the view that more intricate aspects of housing (such as creation of home) are built on more fundamental attributes (such as security of tenure, and access to reticulated water).

However, that fact that residents can achieve such things as notions of home and health in camping grounds does not diminish the role of poor physical housing or marginalisation. A certain level of basic amenities and resources should be available in all housing, and access to permanent secure housing should be available to all. For example, those who have pursued more active pathways into camping grounds presumably still have access to other housing (whether they realise these options or not), but other more socially excluded residents do not. It is these residents who are potentially more at risk of poor health through lack of access to resources in their housing and social location. Williams and Popay (1997) argue: ‘If public health research is to develop more robust and holistic explanations for patterns of health and illness in contemporary society, and contribute to more appropriate and effective policies, then the key is to build on lay knowledge; the knowledge that lay people have about illness, health, risk, disability and death’ (p.267). The narratives presented may call for further incorporation of these lay definitions and experiences in academic narratives.

Given these interconnections and complexities, it is difficult to untangle particular aspects of camping ground housing to specific health outcomes, and also many of these aspects may be seen as not mutually exclusive. This is also reflected in residents’ own views of health. Camping ground residents defined health broadly in terms of their place and community. Camping grounds were constructed as more than physical dwellings and locations, but as spaces they used and experienced. They held holistic views of how their housing affected them; being healthy was not just about having shelter, but having a sense of place and identity. Being part of their camping grounds allowed them a place where they could be healthy. They did not focus on the physical structure as the most central factor determining their health, but consistently talked about their health in complex ways. It was the complex and contradictory interplay of aspects (such as time, people, place and space) that made them healthy (or not).

Camping ground residence has, then, both positive and negative impacts on residents’ health. For example, the social connections and relationships with other residents were frequently described as determining the health of residents, and highlighted their housing as a social determinant of health. Their housing functioned as a mechanism that allowed them to draw on social support. For some, it allowed a safe place to deal with mental health issues, for others, a site of recuperation from relationship breakdowns, and for many, a place where they were with ‘like-minded’ people. However, camping grounds both provided and restricted ability to be connected with others and involved in social spheres.
Camping grounds had consequences for their privacy (or lack of), and implications for maintaining relationships with others (lack of space to invite and entertain others) and access to and inclusion in wider society (for example, through stigma). The interconnected nature is apparent here too – the sense of home and community held by many residents may have been mobilised through their pathways, say, in response to a previous lack, and indeed for some a limited capacity to achieve this elsewhere in the future. Similarly, narratives suggest: they would not have access to the natural environment if they were living in ‘normal’ housing; they would not know their neighbours if they lived in ‘town’; some would not even have housing without access to camping grounds; and some would not ‘enjoy’ the ability to move in and out so readily if they had tenancy agreements. Camping grounds may fulfil a need for certain people at certain times, and can provide for different people in different times and spaces. All residents sought to create a sense of home in camping grounds, focusing on what they were enabled to do through their housing, but were also aware they were not fully able to reach some aspects of healthy housing. It may be assumed that temporary housing takes away people’s ability or capacity to achieve health, but residents of camping grounds present their housing as home and as healthy. Furthermore, it gave them a space and place not available in previous or alternative housing to realise some of the higher notions (such as sense of home, social connections, and day to day support).

HOUSING, HEALTH & RIGHTS

Another framework to view camping ground residence through is housing rights. Adequate housing has been politicised as a human right, and New Zealand is party to that Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which Article 25(1) states: ‘Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services’. New Zealand is also a state signatory to the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of which Article 11(1) identifies the right of everyone to ‘An adequate standard of living for himself and his family including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to continuous improvement of living conditions’. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UNCESCR) (1991) defined these adequate housing rights as access at all times to security of tenure (not evicted without reason or harassed or threatened) and access to basic services (such as water, power and drainage). In addition, adequate housing is: affordable; habitable with adequate space, not cold or damp or polluted; accessible; located in an area where people can find work, have access to healthcare, schools, childcare, and social facilities; and culturally appropriate.

For camping ground residents, although they described their housing as ‘healthy’, there is an apparent lack of camping grounds as housing to fulfil the rights of residents. The housing context
in which they live places limitations on their rights, namely security of tenure, accessibility, habitable housing, and access to basic services. Camping ground residents’ accounts show their housing did not always meet their housing rights completely; the inability to access mainstream housing, coupled with the illegitimacy and illegality and temporary nature of their housing, means camping ground residence reduced residents’ ability to experience or achieve housing rights and healthy housing in all aspects.

Firstly, while residents had obtained a sense of place and identity, they remain at risk of losing this stability through wider socio-political structures and processes. The exclusion of camping grounds from the Residential Tenancies Act increased feelings of anxiety and distress for most residents. Through lack of legal protection, residents are not given opportunity to gain housing security. In this way, camping ground residence lessened residents’ access to this housing right, whether desired or not. That is, even though some narratives focused on the ability to move on, for example, without tenancy obligations, they did not actually have the ability to access this right in their current housing regardless. All residents were at risk of rent rises without warning and eviction without reason. The temporary nature of their housing placed many at risk of further homelessness. Their ability to exercise control and rights was dependent on the spatial context of camping grounds.

Secondly, the temporary nature and poor physical quality of dwellings affected the health of camping ground residents, and mould and dampness were visible. The elderly residents were especially vulnerable to cold. Residents spoke, though, positively of the ways in which their housing structurally determined their health, linking aspects such as views, coast and bush to their positive feelings of well-being. However, their positive views and reframing of their housing does not moderate their lack of rights or the importance of adequate or habitable physical structures. Camping grounds do not necessarily provide residents with places where they can experience adequate shelter. While it may be argued that temporary dwellings, such as caravans, are not designed for permanent habitation, this line of reasoning has no regard for the pathways in (and out) of camping grounds and does not lessen their rights to habitable housing or of the importance in reducing inequalities.

Thirdly, camping ground residents did not always have the right of access to basic services met through their housing. For example, many did not have access to a telephone, or private laundry, bathroom and kitchen facilities. This imposed on their privacy, and in some cases their desire or ability to maintain hygiene and sanitation because of access difficulties and fears of insecurity and theft.

Fourthly, in their locations residents’ ability to improve their health was increased (for example, they were able to draw on the social support offered by other residents), but they also experienced constraints in accessing services. In particular, they spoke of difficulties in accessing primary health care from where they were living.
Finally, camping grounds were ‘accessible’ housing for many residents. The right to housing in the first instance was met for many through relief from exclusion and lack of options in housing. Residents and service providers spoke of camping grounds as accessible housing in relation to pathways in, through low costs and lack of requirements compared to private rental housing and state housing. Men in particular faced higher levels of breach of rights, as they were not seen as priorities for Housing New Zealand Corporation (HNZC) assistance. Furthermore, camping ground residence in itself could shut off accessibility to housing and the capacity to secure more permanent housing. Some residents, as social service providers suggested, may become trapped in camping grounds through wider socio-political structures. For example, stigma might constrain residents’ rights to access future housing.

All people should be able to achieve housing security, living in adequate physical standards with adequate access to basic amenities and services when and where needed – they should have their housing rights fulfilled. Many camping ground residents however are constrained in their access to resources and opportunities through marginalisation and housing insecurity. As their narratives show, aspects of their housing are interrelated and their housing structures their ability to achieve adequate healthy housing (and hence rights). For example, access to camping ground housing allowed access to some housing, especially for those who lacked capacity to find more permanent housing (which potentially would meet more rights) through stigma, low income, low capability in negotiation and upfront costs in rental market. This ‘accessibility’ did effectively shut off the capacity for other rights to be upheld. That is, camping grounds provided shelter, links with others, meaning in lives through place, development of identities and being a part of a community, but restricted other rights such as access to services and amenities. Even though camping ground residents had housing that was ‘accessible’ to them, for some there were ongoing risks and unmet rights relating to security of tenure. Conversely, however, residents’ narratives suggest even if alternative housing had been ‘accessible’ (more rights fulfilled through structural permanence and residential security), their ability to maintain this and be ‘healthy’ may have been compromised. They may have faced risks of social isolation, economic burden from high renting costs; they may not have been able to maintain social connectedness, environmental benefits, and residential security, for example. The interconnections between rights and healthy housing are complex. That camping ground residents may reframe or positively evaluate their housing, despite unmet rights of adequate housing, does not reduce or question the need for everyone to be able to secure healthy adequate housing; it suggests that for camping ground residents at least, their ability to achieve health through their housing and resources is dependent on the context in which they live.
In conclusion, camping ground residents use their narratives to show how they view health and the meanings that they attach to their housing. Their narratives show how they form linkages between their health and attributes of the social and physical characteristics of the place. They place considerable importance on social relations, belonging to and being a part of the camping ground community. Even if they acknowledge that the chronic illness many of them have may be aggravated by their living conditions, the camping grounds were preferable to living on their own or living in town or in their own house. In fact, for some there was direct substitution – having company or living in a house.

Most contemporary literature on housing examines the quality of dwellings, their affordability, the location, and the type and security of tenure. The narratives of camping ground residents point to the complexities of meanings and processes associated with place, space and health. Residents were sensitive to the suggestion that living in caravans was detrimental to health. While they did link the physical characteristics of their dwelling to health, they placed more emphasis on the role of place in creating health, and how they could create health within this environment. The spaces or dwellings inhabited by camping ground residents affected many critical aspects of day-to-day living, such as health, safety, comfort, privacy, functional ability, and independent living. While inadequate amenities did undermine many residents’ sense of well-being, their narratives also showed the reverse – that many features of the place were beneficial to their health.

Both camping grounds and dwellings (caravan, bus, tent, cabin, relocatable home) are spaces and places which have a significant impact on the health of residents, whether viewed through the caravan as fundamental provision of shelter, or through the broad situational context of these housing circumstances. For some, these living situations are not conducive to health, in concurrence with contemporary literature on marginal living conditions, for example the socio-economic deprivation of many residents and the structure of their dwellings. However, the narratives of residents also showed that in many cases they think about health in sophisticated ways; their understandings about health link social, economic and environmental determinants of health.

The experience of living in a camping ground, in some cases, was presented as problematic, especially where it interfered with day-to-day activities, privacy and access to health services. However, residents use their narratives to also show various advantageous aspects of the camping ground setting, often allowing a better sense of health and well-being, or at the very least, a lack of deterioration of health status. The constructs of place and space are inextricably interwoven with
 health – while these living environments are not effortless, they do at the same time provide sources of meaning and health.

The narratives of camping ground residents presented here show the meanings that they give to their housing and health. Their stories also illuminate the ways in which their individual and collective experiences exist in relation to wider social, political, and economic forces, and how these work to create their health and situate them within society. Housing should provide both basic necessities as well as have the capacity to provide for more complex functions, such as residential stability and security. Camping ground residence works to both constrain and enable residents in their everyday lives. For many, living in a camping ground improves their health through, for example, their sense of belonging and attachment to place. While they had various experiences of their housing, all acknowledged positive aspects of their housing. Camping ground residence did ‘solve’ some of the problems previously faced by residents, and they often experienced better health, challenging health risks conventionally associated with temporary housing. Residents were able to achieve higher notions of home and belonging, to perform roles, to do and be in their camping ground communities.

However, these health-promoting aspects often came at the expense of other functions of healthy housing. In contrast to outside negative views of camping ground housing, residents represented their housing as healthy. This was also in contrast to internationally accepted notions of adequate housing, where their needs and rights were not met at all (for example, security of tenure) or very minimally (habitable dwellings). Furthermore, the interrelated nature of aspects of camping ground residence has been highlighted, where residents’ ability to access positive gains in their housing compromised or diminished other aspects of healthy housing. Access to shelter often thwarted tenancy rights; where they faced social exclusion, they gained social inclusion, but often at the detriment of poor physical dwellings and shared amenities. The narratives of camping ground residents show the complexities and contradictions surrounding temporary housing – in this case, for those living in camping grounds. The interplay between context, camping grounds, residents, and health was intertwined and requires careful consideration. While all these aspects (pathways, community, place and space) are interconnected, a certain level of right should be available to be realised by residents. That is, it is not to say that because they live in a beautiful environment with social support that their poor dwellings and space on the margins of society are insignificant to their health. Camping ground residents do remain on marginalised space and place in their housing. Despite perceived benefits, camping ground residence can further housing and health inequalities faced by residents through continued exclusion and disadvantage in access to resources and opportunities available to others who experience more secure and stable housing.
CONCLUSION

What is the nature of camping ground residents’ experiences of living in camping grounds, in relation to their health and in the context of individual, local and national spheres?

Camping grounds fulfil a housing need for many New Zealanders. This research has looked at the interrelatedness of social, economic and political phenomena in the context of camping ground residence. This broad view has allowed an understanding of residents’ experiences and connections have been made to the socio-spatial context, meanings, institutions and socio-political structures at various levels.

Participant narratives have highlighted the broader socio-political context in which camping grounds in New Zealand operate, including the legal and regulatory frameworks, media and public narratives, and definitions of homelessness and healthy housing. Elements beyond the individual residents’ control were identified as creating threats to their housing and health. For example, the illegality of staying at a camping ground for more than 50 days through the Camping Ground Regulations (1985). Alongside this, key informants also recognised other social exclusionary processes through housing faced by residents, including poor physical housing standards and access to amenities, resources and services, and marginalisation and stigmatisation through outsiders’ views of camping ground residence. The dynamics of the housing market (including the (un)availability and accessibility of alternative housing) created a high demand on camping ground owners to provide long-term accommodation. While mutually beneficial to owners and residents, there was evident tension for camping ground owners between business interests and providing a social service, especially for ‘high needs’ residents.

The pathways of residents in, through, and out of camping grounds were also linked to social exclusion and structural effects (such as housing shortages, area effects, and access to opportunities and employment). The narratives showed the options of many camping ground residents to be limited, both in retaining accommodation, and in obstacles to move on. Ideas of place and community were also strongly linked to the health of camping ground residents. The physical infrastructure and dwellings were seen as problematic, in addition to the multiple
disadvantages and vulnerabilities of camping ground residents. The characteristics of health and social services were identified as potentially restricting residents from obtaining adequate access and benefit from services. Despite many disadvantages, residents identified positive, health-promoting characteristics of their housing situations. Firstly, camping grounds enabled access to community and health through social capital, sense of community and social cohesion. Secondly, camping ground residents developed an attachment to place, and positively defined themselves and their housing for health.

This research has allowed an examination of the stories of camping ground residents, owners and managers, and social service providers, and how various layers of context interact to shape the lives, experiences and health through camping ground residence. The analysis of the narratives of all participants, in relation to national and international literature from a range of disciplines, has helped bring together various perspectives in a comprehensive insight into the dynamics of life in camping grounds. This chapter draws together analyses from the preceding chapters, which have been framed by the research question and have provided a picture of camping ground residence in New Zealand. The chapter concludes the thesis with specific policy implications, reflections on methodology, and recommendations for further research.

THE RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

THE HOUSING PATHWAYS OF CAMPING GROUND RESIDENTS

This thesis has drawn attention to the interrelatedness of past and present housing experiences of camping ground residents, and is in agreement with claims that housing moves cannot be seen in isolation (Hartig et al., 2003). The narratives are consistent with a growing body of literature indicating that social and political barriers, not only a lack of money, exert influence on housing pathways (Clapham, 2002). This thesis demonstrates how economic, social and political housing frameworks may produce landscapes of exclusion in many pathways into camping grounds. Firstly, camping grounds have been shown to offer financially accessible and sustainable dwellings for residents. Secondly, disruption in social networks and deprivation were common examples of stress faced by residents that often precipitated moves into camping grounds. Thirdly, most residents faced a significant housing need prior to camping ground residence through an inability to access other mainstream housing. Exiting state mental health and penal institutions,
discrimination and unavailability of housing were identified as major issues, alongside the overt referral of people to camping grounds by government and non-government service providers. This thesis considered the role of social exclusion in housing pathways of camping ground residents. By exploring the narratives of residents, owners and social service providers, this research has shown that exclusion and disadvantage are not only inputs into, but are also outcomes of camping ground residents’ housing pathways. While not all residents were without options to acquire safe and secure housing (i.e. not homeless), many remained or continued living in camping grounds because of barriers to accessing other, more permanent housing. In this way, camping ground residence becomes a permanent housing situation with many residents caught in poor housing and high housing insecurity, a common research conclusion in this area (Meert et al., 2005; Bostock, 2001).

**HOW CAMPING GROUND RESIDENCE STRUCTURES ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY, COMMUNITY & LOCAL SERVICES**

Camping ground residence in itself can contribute to social exclusion and create barriers to opportunity. This thesis has discussed the marginalisation of camping ground residents, the ways social, legal, political structures and processes express social exclusion. The examination of both place and space also illustrated how personal experiences and meanings are interwoven with wider socio-political aspects of housing, for example, through residents’ opportunities to access permanent, secure housing based on the production, distribution, regulation and allocation of housing. The analysis of place meanings and community has illustrated how residents can ameliorate their sense of exclusion within camping grounds. A focus on the socio-spatial nature of camping ground residence has shown an interplay of these structures which are outside individual residents’ control. The marginalisation and exclusion experienced by many camping ground residents is linked to their housing pathways, and impacts negatively on opportunities to engage in society, which are not always readily available. However, this research has also acknowledged the availability of some resources to camping ground residents that would not be, or had not been, available in other housing. This section summarises the ways in which camping ground residence structures access to opportunity, community and local services.

**Access to opportunity**

Places have been described as socially constructed; camping grounds as places have been narrated as represented in many ways, including as sites of conflict and contestation. This thesis has shown
how camping ground residence is made illegitimate through social and political policies and structures. In line with previous research that shows the wide-reaching implications of housing for occupants, this thesis has shown the importance of viewing housing in broad terms. This includes looking at the physical characteristics of dwellings, the area or locality, and how the housing relates to occupants. Most residents described their camping grounds as ‘the best thing’ and were largely satisfied with their housing.

The socio-spatial aspects of camping ground residence were both an input and an outcome of processes of exclusion and disadvantage (as barriers to opportunity) experienced by most residents. Firstly, the socio-spatial representations of camping ground residence may produce spaces of marginalisation and exclusion for residents. Camping ground residence is embedded in social and political processes, which maintain the position of marginality of many residents, and make it difficult for residents to gain access to resources. The discursive constructions of camping ground residents and residence were primarily political and public narratives that associate a negative problematic image to camping grounds. Media respond to common understandings and so these media representations may resonate with popular negative stereotyping and be in part an outcome of popular views. Marginalisation – the processes of social location – arising out of these representations and actions are manifested for residents in a variety of contexts, such as downward mobility and experiences of being excluded on the basis of their housing in camping grounds. However, residents often challenged dominant outside understandings of camping ground residence. Furthermore, this research has shown that there is a range of people living in camping grounds, who may share their current housing experience but not necessarily other experiences such as poor access to resources. Nonetheless, the majority of residents are marginalised, and all faced certain labelling by others. The reproduction of negative place identities and of camping ground residence was noted as having ramifications of discrimination for residents, for example, in finding and retaining housing.

Secondly, barriers for residents to opportunities for adequate housing are reproduced in state actions and attitudes towards camping grounds. The role of central and local government have put into place policies that serve to prevent housing security for this group. These actions concern a variety of aspects of camping ground residence, including the Residential Tenancies Act (1986), the Camping Ground Regulations (1985), and provision of housing (for example, access and allocation of private and state housing). Camping ground residents lack rights in housing, and often the capability to obtain housing elsewhere. Within a situation of lack of tenure and housing insecurity, future opportunities to access adequate housing where diminished. While camping ground dwellings lack several of the physical characteristics usually associated with healthy housing, residents reframed their housing positively overall, as a place of relative control, independence and freedom. Camping grounds often provided access to diverse resources through community and the natural environment.
Thirdly, this research shows how pathways shape, and are shaped by, the construction of camping ground residence. In some ways, camping grounds are seen to meet a need for some groups, such as single men, the unemployed or those on low incomes, women seeking refuge from family violence, seasonal and contract workers, and older retirees. Several residents felt that this housing suited them; they were able to obtain and experience positive aspects. What the housing was – for example, a caravan – was important to some. Suitable location and affordability relative to income were noted, but alongside physical adequacy and basic security, however, how well these needs are met for all remains of concern. Camping ground residence also can impinge on other rights, such as security of tenure. It is not people’s right or choice to live in inadequate housing, or to experience homelessness. Furthermore, pathway narratives suggested that the exclusion from adequate housing might be ongoing for many residents who face barriers in moving out of camping grounds. The pathway narratives show reasons for camping ground residents to be presumed insecure, and with a lack of opportunity, given the insecurity of tenure, and broader social exclusion, that shapes the pathways of many into and out of camping grounds.

Access to community

Many camping ground residents told stories of exclusion after the breakdown of relationships and from mainstream housing. Following this, residents often experienced challenges in maintaining social networks because of unemployment, age, family violence, alcohol and drug use, mental health issues, and a lack of economic resources – all common characteristics shaping a lack of choice and capability. Crow (2004) states: ‘The exclusivity of certain social networks and the unacceptable conditions attached to being a member of some others are both contributory factors to people becoming marginalised and socially isolated’ (p. 13). For the majority of participants who lacked housing resources, camping ground residence was a response to structured exclusion from mainstream society and housing. Social exclusion in camping grounds was discussed in terms of material and social deprivation.

This does not mean, however, that they remain socially excluded within camping grounds. Indeed, camping ground residents were able to create a sense of community despite exclusion from wider society. Camping ground residents have access to community within camping grounds. Within camping grounds, residents and owners actively constructed community, often making comparisons and contrasts with mainstream housing and previous experiences. Camping ground residents were able to experience a sense of community within the context of camping ground residence; many were able to perform roles, have pride of place, to ‘do’ and ‘be’ in camping grounds. In some ways, prior exclusion was not exacerbated because of the social relationships developed and levels of social capital in camping ground ‘communities’. Social networks in camping grounds therefore provide what Cattell (2004) describes as the dual role of
social networks in providing a link between macro and micro factors. Phillipson, Allen & Morgan (2004) describe social networks as: ‘the relation of personal troubles of milieu to public issues of social structure, but at the same time they can be part of the process of coping with or resisting structural inequality’ (p. 157). Residents’ sense of belonging referred to the characteristics of place and their common experiences, association and identity in camping grounds. Narratives show how residents’ importance of lifestyle and social aspects of camping ground residence, and how collective actions and notions of community are manifested in camping ground communities. However, social cohesion with wider society remains weak; camping ground residence can limit wider social integration.

Findings of this research reflect Kellett and Moore’s (2003) thesis that: ‘being at home is more than having adequate shelter, and is as much about being placed in a particular social world’ (p. 123). The narratives presented also give insight into the paradox of experiencing community belonging in housing situations of relative social exclusion and disadvantage. In this way, camping ground residence can be seen to simultaneously or concurrently both promote social inclusion and contribute to social exclusion.

**Access to local services**

Camping ground residence was seen to structure access to local services, namely primary health care. Residents had developed a usual source of care, and most did have enrolment in a PHO, however, this did not necessarily translate to access to primary health care, and narratives suggested a dependence on emergency services. Even though there may be services in their geographical area, other factors influenced residents’ access to care. Residents spoke of easier access to appointments shaped by relationships with practices where they are enrolled, but these were problematised by issues of distance, transport and time. Camping ground residents’ actual experiences of health services was often characterised by poor service coordination, travelling, and troubles with enrolment. Camping ground residents suggested drawing on social resources within camping grounds was, in some ways, shaped by the nature of the organisation of health services through PHOs. Hence, in addition to material and social deprivation, many residents may also experience primary health care services that do not respond well to their needs, if and when required. This was in line with Lynam’s (2007) observation that: ‘those facing exclusion and disadvantage lack resources to participate in community health partnerships, thereby contributing to inequalities’ (p. 138). These findings demonstrate the potentially crucial role of social exclusion (camping ground residence) in access to primary health care. Furthermore, a lack of access to primary health care could further inequalities experienced by residents.

In sum, this thesis has highlighted the socio-spatial nature of camping ground residence, which results in the differential distribution of housing resources, for example, housing security
and adequate housing. Narratives reveal how camping ground residence both constrains and provides opportunities for residents. Even though 'housed', camping ground residents often lacked opportunities available for those more permanently housed, which questions the adequacy of their housing circumstances, and relates to wider issues of inequality and deprivation. In some ways, camping ground residence contributes to inequalities between those in adequate housing and those in temporary housing.

**SOURCES CONTRIBUTING TO DETRIMENTAL HEALTH EXPERIENCES, & SOURCES THAT HELP RESIDENTS MOVE TOWARDS HEALTH & WELL-BEING**

Narratives showed the embeddedness of housing and health experiences in social, political and economic structures as well as the local physical environment. The emphasis on space and place for the health of camping ground residents is important as it shapes their health both positively and negatively. Residents defined their health in broad interconnected terms, making precise identification of those sources that contribute to detrimental health conditions and those that helped them move towards health and resilience difficult to separate. Nevertheless, residents, owners and social service providers all reported both aspects of camping ground residence that worked to undermine the quality of residents’ daily lives and consequently their health, and also how camping grounds provided health-promoting aspects such as community and aspects of home. This research suggests that camping ground residence has an important effect on the health of residents, with residents often claiming no negative health effects. Here, the physical dwellings, sense of place and home, and community are used as examples of particular ways camping ground residence shapes, and is shaped by, the health of residents regardless of an active or forced pathway in.

**Physical dwellings**

It has been the view of this thesis that healthy housing should provide both basic necessities as well as have the capacity to provide for more complex functions, such as residential stability and security. The dwellings provided in camping grounds were often very basic and residents often lacked basic amenities such as reticulated water and sewerage, telephone, and access to private bathroom and kitchen facilities. The problematic nature of the dwellings was furthered by substandard physical conditions such as dampness, poor state of repair, crowding, noise and safety. They worked to counter their sense of exclusion by highlighting the advantages of their current housing. Despite the challenging living space, residents focused on their survival
capabilities, and access to social resources within the camping ground communities, often disputing the physical nature of their dwellings as central to their health experiences.

In exploring the interrelationships between health and camping ground housing, it may have been expected that this thesis would have a greater focus on the physical characteristics of dwellings, as they are of temporary nature and do not provide the same level of shelter and amenity as ‘normal’ housing. However, the material and physical characteristics of the dwellings were not considered, or at least put forward by residents, as integral to the health of residents.

**Place & home**

Camping grounds were linked to development in individual and collective resident identities, as Easthope (2004) states: ‘A sense of place forms out of a feeling that you belong to a particular place and feel comfortable there because part of how you define yourself is symbolized by certain qualities of that place’ (p. 130). Nearly all camping ground residents defined camping grounds as ‘home’ through their experiences of social relations and the physical surroundings. In this way, the camping grounds as place held health-promoting aspects for residents. The majority of residents interviewed had a strong attachment to their camping grounds, and spoke of the influence of the surrounding natural environment on their health. Residents felt enabled in their sense of belonging and attachment to place. This in turn builds their capacity and health; their sense of well-being was engendered by place and attachment. As Australian researcher Newton (2008) states: ‘Emotional and spatial aspects of security and belonging to home are as relevant to residents in caravan parks as to those living elsewhere’ (p. 222).

**Community**

Camping ground communities provided health resources for residents. As Dorvil et al. (2005) stated: ‘Beyond the physical environment, housing also situates the residents in a social setting. This translates into a sense of belonging … There is an ‘us’ as a reference point’ (p. 510). Camping ground communities have been identified as a means of enhancing the residents’ health by way of a supportive community present. Residents draw on social and community resources within camping grounds to improve their health. The narratives of camping ground communities are furthered by the discussion of owners’ specific management roles. These communities also allowed a sense of belonging, and fellow residents and owners were a major source of support. All the owners also acted as social workers and advocates for a vulnerable population with little other support. These communities were perceived as health promoting, a sense derived from belonging in community, having support and social connections. The close proximity of other residents and the layout of the camping grounds influenced residents’ participation, and while there were
various experiences of health and community, all appreciated the opportunities available. So even if the social support was never used, it was there if needed. These narratives are in contrast to dominant notions in academic literature that social exclusion and deprived neighbourhoods implies impoverished social networks (Cattell, 2004).

**Stigma and exclusion**

More broadly, the socio-spatial context of camping ground residence can have effects on residents’ health. The majority of residents living in camping grounds are faced by problems such as poverty, substandard housing and homelessness. It has been shown how this housing situation can effectively constrain many aspects of their everyday life and well-being. Social exclusion, and broader dimensions which relate to issues of identity, economic resources, and social positioning, can work to the detriment of residents’ health. For example, access to health services and mainstream housing, and effects of statutory central and local government frameworks. In particular a lack of secure tenure has an impact on residents’ capability to develop and maintain control of their lives. As Somerville (1998) notes, insecure tenure ‘has far-reaching health consequences’ (p. 773).

Furthermore, the stigmatisation of camping ground residence may result in negative health outcomes. Camping ground residents’ identities are shaped by and reflected in their housing circumstances, and are developed relative to others. Residents worked to develop positive sense of place and self, reflecting that perceptions of inequality can have both positive and negative health effects, as Cattell (2001) suggests, ‘Deprivation can be both a source of hopelessness and a source of social action. Much depends on the way that residents perceive the way that inequality is structured and on their response to it’ (p. 1513).

**SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS**

Most residents stated that they were happy with their housing, and viewed camping grounds as ‘ok’ places to live; they noted an improvement in their health associated with their pathways into camping grounds. This research has highlighted some of the positive aspects of living in camping grounds, such as community support and the development of positive individual and collective identities, associated with improved health. Camping ground housing did ‘solve’ some of the problems previously faced by residents – many experienced better health – but not through ways conventionally thought. Camping ground residence restores some aspects of health, but reduces others. The narratives show camping grounds residents used the network of health resources available in their camping grounds to cope with poor housing and social exclusion. Residents
expressed a sense of belonging and attachment that was linked to the physical and natural environment, their dwellings and the social relationships they had with others in their place.

Community and place effects may mediate some of the negative aspects of camping ground residence. Focusing attention solely on the constraining aspects, for example, the poor physical structure of many of the dwellings, does not give a full picture of how housing constrains and enables residents, or promotes or works to the detriment of their health. For example, the natural environment was seen a resource that was enabling for some residents. However, the value of sense of community, social capital and place attachment in camping ground residence should not detract attention from the inherent insecurity of this housing, nor the poor physical dwellings and wider deprivation faced by many of the residents. Furthermore, as Cattell, (2001) states: ‘There is much evidence to confirm that even if networks can ameliorate the harsher health effects of poverty and deprivation, they are, nevertheless, no substitute for a more equitable distribution of resources nationally’ (Cattell, 2001). These are all interconnected aspects of healthy housing. That is not to say that because they live in a beautiful environment that their poor dwellings are insignificant to their health. A certain level of standard is required for them to function healthily, all components are connected and are important: pathways; social aspects and community; place; and space. While camping ground residence provides sources of community, meaning and identity, benefits of place may not necessarily compensate for detrimental effects of inadequate dwellings and access to amenities, or a lack of security of tenure. In addition, the socially exclusionary nature of many residents’ pathways into camping grounds is problematic.

Furthermore, residents experienced residence in different ways to each other and their own narratives also held contradictions within. In contrast to notions of home as secure, camping grounds fulfil notions of home despite characteristics of marginalisation, insecurity, instability and negative place identity. In some ways, narratives have contradicted the dominant ‘poor housing – poor health’ hypothesis, and that camping grounds are not necessarily an unhealthy option.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

‘Prevention is the key to ending homelessness, and housing is the key to prevention’ (Bratt et al., 2006, p. 335).

The intersection of health and housing, in particular temporary and inadequate housing, has been recognised. This section considers the implications of the interpretations of residents’, owners’
and key informants’ narratives for housing and health policy in New Zealand. The potential of
this research to inform and add understanding to New Zealand housing policy, and relevance of
topic to public health policy is discussed. This research has largely similar findings to research on
caravan parks in Australia in regard to the marginalisation of caravan park residents, with
differences noted in costs and legislation. The vast majority of New Zealand camping grounds are
primarily for holiday accommodation, with some permanent residents for economic viability. This
forms the basis of a key difference between the New Zealand and Australian context: ideas of
what camping grounds’ anticipated use is.

CAMPING GROUNDS AS A ‘HOT SITUATION’

‘Social problems lie in and are produced by a process of collective
definition. The process of collective definition is responsible for the
emergence of social problems, for the way in which they are seen, for the
way in which they are approached and considered, for the kind of remedial
plan that is laid out, and for the transformation of the remedial place in its
application’ (Blumer, 1971, p. 301).

Callon’s (1998) idea of hot and cold in respectively describing controversial and settled situations,
has particular relevance to the disagreements surrounding the correct purpose of a camping
ground.

‘In hot situations, everything becomes controversial … these
controversies, which indicate the absence of a stabilised knowledge base,
usually involve a wide variety of actors. The actual list of actors, as well as
their identities, will fluctuate and the course of the controversy itself and
they will put forward mutually incompatible descriptions of future world

There are disagreements as to what camping grounds should be used for (holiday
accommodation), or not used for (permanent housing); this incompatibility is a marker of a hot
situation. In terms of camping grounds, there are tensions between discursive and inside
understandings of camping ground residence. This thesis has presented residents’ experiences that
have not been previously represented in literature, highlighting the incongruences around camping
ground use. It has been shown that camping grounds are socially constructed places, and that
narratives, government documents and legislation illustrate this (re)presentation as an ongoing
and conflictual process. The legislation regarding camping grounds attempts to settle on paper
what is not settled in reality (Latour, 1999), to concretise the anticipated usage of camping
grounds as holiday sites and bracket out permanent camping ground residence as illegitimate
usage. That is, appropriate and intended use of camping grounds is continually (re)defined
through, for example and most recently, the Department of Conservation’s report on camping grounds, and the Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill (2009). These socio-political processes (legislation, regulations and exclusion) consciously or unconsciously categorise and marginalise camping ground residents.

The narratives of camping ground residents that appeal to home and attachment contest the meanings of camping ground residence that are implicated by others as an unhealthy, unsavoury place. Camping ground residence in itself also works to (re)present camping grounds in opposition to meanings and use associated with New Zealand culture and holiday, and as unhealthy and inappropriate housing. This research does not conclude that camping ground residence is unproblematic, rather that there is danger in solely focusing on outside understandings. The narratives of camping ground residents show, as Mazanti et al. (2003) suggest, how outside constructions of deprived communities may be misleading. Neither can socio-economic variables be simply equated with social meanings of space and place (Mazanti et al., 2003). Residents, while frequently stating their satisfaction and connections within camping grounds, did allow a sense of disadvantage in relation to access to services and resources, and social exclusion. In addition, camping grounds may be different and conflicting things to people all at once.

Yet, as Cloke (2008) argues in terms of rural homelessness, ‘the spatialities of homelessness convey political and social significance that transcends some of these other practices more obviously related to the politics of pleasure’ (p. 241). Camping ground residents live on constructed boundaries between private and public spheres. Narratives of categorisation directed at and experienced by camping ground residents contribute to their marginal social position; these discourses often go unchallenged, perpetuating assumptions about camping ground residence as undesirable and their residents as problematic citizens. Furthermore, there is often little regard to wider structures shaping camping ground residence, as Kearns (2006) surmises: ‘What political commentary and public opinion invariably miss is the ‘structure’ component of the structure/agency equation’ (p. 259).

**HOUSING PROVISION & POLICY**

Given the clear relationship between health and housing, meeting housing need is paramount to public health. Camping ground residence questions the adequacy of housing provision in terms of allocation, availability and affordability. The findings of this research have indicated that housing policies have been primarily targeted at one dominant sector of society. Greater attention to experiences of housing pathways and apparent barriers imposed on vulnerable groups through
insufficient and/or inappropriate housing provision could better inform health and housing policy.

Area effects and communities have become a research and policy focus, and this research provides evidence for the role of the socio-spatial context and social exclusion in influencing individual and community health, in addition to the socio-economic deprivation faced by many residents. This research concurs with academic consensus that material-structural and psychosocial aspects of neighbourhoods are interconnected aspects of the (re)production of health inequalities (Bolam et al., 2006; Ellaway, McKay, Macintyre, Kearns & Hiscock, 2004). The barriers to opportunity, community, and local service faced by residents, shaped by the social structure, gives evidence for the need to focus on people’s participation and engagement in society. Social structure, as Marmot (2000) concludes, contributes to social isolation and associated negative health effects.

Furthermore, this research provides some indication that there is still a line drawn between deserving and undeserving poor in housing provision, where HZNC asserts that the latter are not a priority, so are hence largely excluded from housing support. Similarly, the private market easily excludes some from rental housing. In terms of the adequate provision of housing, questions are raised as to the ethics of social service providers (government and non-government) actively referring people to camping grounds. While the motivation may be a lack of alternatives, this is surely contrary to service policies. Furthermore, there is little support or communication with the owners and managers of camping grounds in regards to the placement of the ‘hard to house’ in camping grounds. The actions of social services in placing clients in camping grounds undermine residents’ ability to achieve long-term sustainable healthy housing. There are evident issues of supply, quality, security of tenure, cost in private rental market, especially for low income and otherwise vulnerable groups. The use of camping grounds as emergency housing also indicates a real shortage of emergency housing. In sum, concerns have been raised about the suitability of camping grounds, firstly about the use of camping grounds as a last resort (next step rough sleeping), and secondly the propensity for further homelessness.

This housing situation needs acknowledging and response, residents to be recognised and provided for. Housing policy responses require action at individual (personal/household), community (local, social service provision) and macro-societal level (policies of including government and other institutions, public and private). Access to secure and stable housing must be regulated and provided for at higher levels of government (local and central) through actions such as: increased supply of affordable housing; investment in low cost rental housing, and emergency accommodation; safe-guarding housing rights; reducing deprivation and ensuring health of communities; and the creation of a sound, accessible, and appropriate housing stock. Attention also needs to be paid to housing sustainability, especially for people with mental health issues who are particularly vulnerable to loss of accommodation during periods of inpatient care.
Overall, the implications of this research align with policies of reducing inequalities, through strengthening social networks, addressing inequalities through structural change, and improving the accessibility of services.

**SOCIAL EXCLUSION**

Narratives of camping grounds residents frame housing as more than a means to an end, but as a process towards creating home. Meeting housing need is fundamental, as Bratt et al. (2006) state: ‘Dealing with a homeless individual’s or family’s personal problems, whatever they may be, is almost impossible without the stability provided by reliable housing’ (p. 326). Camping ground residence for some is the site of a cycle of deprivation, social exclusion and poor health. This lends itself to the conclusion that housing policy should therefore take into account the socio-spatial structuring of housing, and the need to view housing as a means to reduce social exclusion and deprivation. Social service provider narratives suggest a wide policy response is needed to address socio-economic determinants of health. ‘Housing policies often neglect the impact of stable housing on employment, social support, access to transport and educational opportunities’ (Howden-Chapman et al., 2000). As Bratt et al. (2006) assert, government stated commitment to fulfilling housing as a right must be resourced and funded and acted upon. A further challenge may be to use the strengths available in communities, such as the positive features of camping ground communities, in working to counter social exclusion.

**HOMELESSNESS**

‘While homelessness is complex, both as a mass phenomenon and in the life of a family or individual, the key lesson of the displacement school remains true: housing lies at its crux. At the most simplistic level, if you have housing, whatever else your problems, you are not homeless; if that housing and your tenure in it are relatively stable, you are far less likely to become homeless in the foreseeable future’ (Bratt et al., 2006, p. 326).

This research provides support for the inclusion of camping grounds in the New Zealand Definition of Homelessness, and that the dichotomy of voluntary versus involuntary choice too simplistic to portray complexities in housing pathways. The pathways into camping ground residence (homelessness) need to be recognised so as to reduce risks of homelessness in New Zealand. Camping ground residents themselves should not be the focus of policies, but approaches must be balanced with the nature of housing and housing pathways should be considered the basis for policy.
LEGISLATION & REGULATION OF CAMPING GROUNDS

In terms of camping grounds, there has been a punitive reaction to residents, and little acknowledgement of housing solutions to address the ‘problem’. This research has shown the narratives, policies, and practices that give rise to social exclusion effectively marginalise camping ground residents. The complexity of camping ground residence means there are no simple solutions. For example, a more rigorous enforcement of the Camping Ground Regulations (1985) through evicting residents overstaying the 50-day period, without providing alternative permanent stable housing, undermines residents’ rights to accessible, affordable housing. Similarly, there is a situation in New Zealand of mutual dependency between owners of camping grounds and long-term residents.

Any suggestion to enforce the Camping Ground Regulations (1985) does not take into account the inherent risks to residents’ housing rights. While various states of Australia have implemented tenancy legislation covering the rights of caravan park residents, there is anecdotal evidence that residents still face housing insecurity and vulnerability to eviction as they are subject to high levels of discretion of owners and a 90-day probationary period. In New Zealand, the concurrent lack of available alternatives to more secure housing must firstly be dealt with. Furthermore, policy needs to keep perspective of the importance of ‘home’ present in camping grounds in potential changes to legislation and enforcement of the Camping Ground Regulations (1985). Regardless of whether residents chose to live there or not, camping grounds are the home of many residents, and their present place in society. This research gives indication for addressing social exclusion in housing at all levels, and that housing must be an intersectoral approach focusing on housing rights.

In sum, camping ground residence must be acknowledged as much more complex and significant situation than is portrayed in public and political narratives. Furthermore, without moves to ensure adequate provision of housing for all members of society, camping grounds will continue to form part of housing provision in New Zealand, namely as a low cost accessible housing option for socially excluded, marginalised population groups. Ideally, current practice should be aimed at finding permanent, secure housing, and on assisting people in sustaining tenancies.
Camping ground residence was used as the point of entry in interviews, but most often brought forward a full range of stories including of social networks and relationships, identity, environment, all which were seen to represent residents’ health and well-being. This population’s needs are understood in reference to wider social and political forces, including housing and health policies and local council regulations. This thesis examined narratives in order to identify critical constructs and factors, and those ideas underpinning the research, of place, space, community, and pathways are shown to be useful (while at times complex, contradictory and ambivalent) in furthering understandings of relationships between health and housing.

Narrative analysis proved an effective way to understand the variety of meanings attached to camping ground residence, and in considering physical, social, political dimensions of residence, and showed the importance of having a holistic approach in viewing dwellings and residents in the socio-spatial nature of housing. Narrative analysis allows us to see how camping ground residents live within the stories they told; their sense of self and health is marked by their stories of camping ground residence. This analysis has been useful in understanding residents’ experiences of camping ground residence and meanings attached to these experiences, by drawing on both their individual stories and their collective understandings. These stories were also richly contextualised and placed alongside key informants’ understandings, giving understanding not just of individuals’ experiences but the meaning of the socio-spatial nature of camping ground residence and these contextual effects on their health. This research places the meanings and experiences of residents at the centre of analysis, and reflects a person-in-context approach allowing connections to be made between social structures and individual experience and direct and indirect effects on health (Bolam et al., 2006).

The complex interplay of factors that shape housing pathways of camping ground residents is important in a public health approach that emphasises the multilevel determinants of health. In particular, the analysis of narratives gives insights into the relationship between housing and wider society, and attention to outcomes of the housing market. This thesis demonstrates the contribution that qualitative research, in particular narrative analysis, can make in exploring relationships between people’s experience of place, often unobserved in quantitative research. The analysis of narratives offers a perspective of the relationship between health and housing, and can contribute towards current understandings of health inequalities. This thesis also presents the potential of narrative analysis as a window into the meanings of individual and collective housing experiences, and as an appropriate means of exploring residents’ own experiences, taking account...
of complexities and contradictions, and how they positioned themselves, and were positioned by dominant others.

While this research has provided some understanding of how pathways, place, community and socio-spatial processes impact on the health of camping ground residents, it is difficult to separate housing situations from other deprivation faced by the residents. Bratt (2002) describes this situation: ‘Research that attempts to ascribe causality to particular housing conditions struggles with the question of how to disentangle the host of variables that may be responsible for observed outcomes. Clearly, it is never possible to isolate the specific housing condition or to fully control for the characteristics of the occupants’ (p. 15).

Residents, owners, and key informants provided a very large set of narratives, all of which could not be included in this thesis. Those stories that have been excluded were simply in response to constraints in the amount of material that could be included. That is, selection of narratives was not based on their ‘richness’, but a necessity in selectively choosing illustrative narratives. It is thought, however, that a greater depth of understanding of camping ground residence has been obtained, and justice done to participants in presenting their stories. As discussed in the literature review and methodology chapter, meanings of place are constructed and reconstructed through social interaction. The analysis of narratives has started with the stories that were shared, to develop abstract categories necessary to integrate, describe and understand these narratives, and to identify and present patterned relationships. In a similar way, the generation of conclusions is shaped by my own feelings and experiences, and the interpretation and impressions of participants’ stories as a researcher.

Although this research is not necessarily representative of other people living in camping grounds, it does provide an initial understanding of camping ground residence in New Zealand. Furthermore, the group of residents interviewed did not include seasonal or contract workers, or other more short-term residents, nor any people who had experiences of forced relocation out of camping grounds. Even so, this research has provided access to a set of narratives emerging from group of people who would be unlikely to contribute to research in other contexts.

Above all, however, the research provides an illustration of the building of connections between the researcher and participants at meetings key to the success of the research process. This focus on partnership allowed participants to share stories easily. All participants were enthusiastic about the opportunity to tell their stories, and openly and willingly introduced me to other residents: ‘Oh, you’ve got to go and talk to **’ and, ‘Come on, I’ll introduce you to **’. Participants often expressed their appreciation in an emotional sense and made positive comments about the interview, and the insistence on return visits highlighted the positive nature of the process of the research.
FURTHER RESEARCH

‘Housing research is crucial to broader policy-making since housing is the fulcrum around which many economic and social factors are balanced’ (Grimes et al., 2004).

It is likely that problems of inadequate housing, homelessness, and an imbalance of housing resources will continue, or even intensify during an economic recession. Nevertheless, efforts to understand the socio-spatial nature of housing, and the implications for those excluded, are still useful in providing an evidence-based, solution-focused base for housing policy and interventions. Very little research has been conducted regarding temporary and inadequate housing in New Zealand, giving rise to an abundance of potential research topics. However, this study indicates that concepts of place, space, pathways and community are suitable places to begin. It is not surprising that the findings of this research raise many questions for further study, and that further research is required to draw more firm conclusions. The suggested areas for further research have potential to further understanding of local and national housing issues, and for a wider contribution to consideration of the socio-political factors affecting housing and health. Given that housing affects every part of human experience, gaps in existing knowledge should be an interdisciplinary task and incorporate integrative frameworks.

THE ENUMERATION OF HOMELESSNESS

In the Australian context, Chamberlain (1999) asserts that more reliable information is required on homelessness to ensure a meaningful debate and appropriate policy responses. In New Zealand, there is believed to be a significant undercount of those homeless, and there are several deficiencies in national census data sets. Indeed there is no reliable overall figure of people living in camping grounds or other homeless situations, nor an indication of their characteristics. Better alignment between Census coding and the New Zealand Definition of Homelessness, and careful and consistent identification and collection of statistics of dwellings in motor camps through the national Census is an obvious starting point. In addition, there is no empirical data on the mobility of camping ground residents, duration of stays in camping grounds, and housing situations following camping ground residence. A greater degree of research focus is required to deal with this ‘statistical ghetto’.
SOCIAL EXCLUSION & HOUSING PATHWAYS

This research calls for a greater emphasis on inside understandings of housing and community. A better understanding of the effects of social exclusion and deprivation from individuals’ and communities’ perspectives in needed to create a complete picture of the various meanings and experiences, and the development of identities in relation to housing. For example, it is generally thought that stable, secure housing enables residents and communities to enjoy positive social and mental health. This research has highlighted, however, a paradox of being at home in poor housing, which warrants further investigation. More information on the characteristics and situations of those facing social exclusion in housing would be useful. Future research is required into the housing pathways of camping ground residents, those exiting state institutions, and the impacts of the prevalence and duration of homelessness, as well as the suitability and sustainability of housing for this group.

The role of social service providers in referring people to camping grounds offers another avenue for future research. Over the course of this research, anecdotes emerged of people staying longer as mental health inpatients due to no available housing, of people exiting prison and being directly placed in camping grounds, and of young people under Child, Youth & Family care being housed in camping grounds and boarding houses. Clear understanding of (re)housing processes and transitions from institutions (for example, mental health units, and prison) are needed to establish a picture of unmet housing need and required resources, and the appropriateness and sustainability of such placements. In addition, what happens to those who are unable even to access camping ground housing (given the high levels of discretion available to camping ground owners)? Similarly, what are the housing pathways of those evicted or forced to move out of camping grounds? What are the enabling characteristics and circumstances of people who have moved on to more permanent, secure housing?

This research was unable to gain a clear picture of children living in camping grounds. As a particularly vulnerable group, camping ground residence may have particular health effects through residential mobility, access to health and education services, instability, and poor physical housing quality.

HOUSING & ACCESS TO SERVICES

Camping ground residents’ narratives suggest that the contexts within which they live shape their access to primary health care in complex ways, calling for further research into the relationships between place and access, and how social context may lead to inequalities in service access and outcomes. Very little has been published on the role of residential mobility and temporary
housing and associated barriers to accessing services. A better understanding of how people’s, especially deprived communities’, patterns of use and access to primary health care is structured is desirable. The effects of provision of primary health care through PHOs may need to be monitored for effects relating to continuity of care, access from different locations, and residential mobility. Effects of both accessibility and availability beyond geographical location and economic factors are crucial and may require more complex place-based approaches to provision.

**CONCLUSION**

Housing, it appears, is a key enabling or constraining force for all of this – the place where what we can do and be is, or at times is not, realised.

This thesis has concluded with discussion of the impact of the politicisation and problematisation of camping grounds on residents themselves, on how space and place are used with power relations to regulate and control residents, which has implications for their resources and opportunities, and ultimately their health. Camping ground residence relates to residents in complex ways, both positive and detrimental to their health. This research largely confirms findings of Australian research on caravan parks, through highlighting the diverse and complex but marginal positions of camping ground residents. This research has described and analysed the experiences of a group of people living in camping grounds, and gives some insights into the health of these people. It has explored the health issues, concerns, actions, and values of these residents, and how camping ground residence shapes their health, and vice versa. Account has been taken of the processes by which camping grounds become ‘home’ and are ascribed meaning.

The narratives of participants have provided a picture of housing circumstances on the margins of society and especially for those socially and economically excluded from the housing market. Residents have focused on the process of community and home and place making rather than the physical nature of their dwellings. Hence, this research has shown the ways in which social connections within camping grounds, and attachment to place, enable many residents to achieve a sense of social inclusion and support and health. Camping ground residence is shaped and defined by residents, but also by outsiders’ use and conceptualisations. In this way, camping grounds have also been described as sites of conflict, where residents often had to negotiate and construct their housing in opposition to wider, more dominant views. That is, while the term ‘camping grounds’ suggests that ‘the ground’ is the main amenity that is supplied for the temporary activity of ‘camping’, contrary to these connotations, camping grounds provide
permanent accommodation for a population. Camping ground residence is also embedded in specific political, social and cultural definitions and legal and regulatory frameworks. Narrative analysis has enabled a focus on the relationships between people and place, the recognition that camping grounds are not static phenomena, and that making sense of living in a camping ground is a complex process. These narratives show variability and contradictions in views of place, how different residents may perceive camping grounds differently but still feel at home, and highlight the ways in which camping grounds can simultaneously shape both negative and positive health experiences.

This thesis has illustrated residents’ individual and collective experiences of camping ground residence, drawing attention to the complexity of this housing situation in relation to health, a complexity acknowledged in the literature review. There is difficulty in isolating specific factors of camping ground housing for health, as the interconnections between all aspects of camping ground residence is what shapes residents experiences. Furthermore, the narratives arising from these interconnections cannot be isolated from the socio-spatial and political contexts of camping ground residence. As Jessop and Penny (1999) state: ‘Narrative studies stand at the intersection between the personal and the political, stories and history, context and narrative, the teller and the told, identity and representation’ (p. 213). It has been shown how camping ground residence is constructed and experienced, how residents’ identities are located, and how camping ground residents work to achieve a sense of home, belonging and health. Camping grounds are described as complex and fluid and a place formed through socio-spatial and relational processes. The health of camping ground residents is shaped by their housing, but they also have an effect on the camping ground, of which they are a part.


Airey, L. (2003). ‘Nae as nice a scheme as it used to be’: Lay accounts of neighbourhood incivilities and well-being. *Health & Place, 9*, 129-137.


## APPENDIX ONE

### Participant characteristics

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Participant information sheet
10 October 2006

Camping ground residence & health

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind.

Who is carrying out the research?

The research is being carried out by Chrissy Severinsen, a PhD student from He Kainga Oranga/Housing & Health Research Programme, Department of Public Health at the Wellington School of Medicine & Health Sciences (University of Otago).

Why am I doing the study?

There is a large amount of information on how people’s housing affects their health. However, it is not clear exactly how housing and environments affect health. This research will look specifically at what it is like to live in a camping ground, and how this affects people’s health. This research will look at the stories of camping ground residents, and the experiences of local community service providers, to identify any issues relating to living in camping grounds in New Zealand.

What do I need to do?

If you agree to be part of the study you will be asked to share your experiences with the researcher. Chrissy will arrange to interview you kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) which should take around one hour. If you agree to do this interview you can withdraw from the interview at any time. You can refuse to answer any question. With your permission, Chrissy would like to take notes so that she can remember what you’ve said. Again with your permission, the interview will be tape-recorded. You will be given an opportunity to check the typed up interview notes to make sure they are correct. Interviews will take place at a time that suits you, at the camping ground or suitable alternative location.

What you say will be confidential to Chrissy and her supervisors. No details which identify you will be written up or passed on. A summary of the research will be available to you at the end of the research. Original tape recordings and full transcripts will be destroyed at the completion of the study, with only a written copy of what was said in the interview kept in which participants cannot be identified. This will be destroyed after five years. Computers used for the research will be password protected.
How do I take part?
Please complete the attached consent form and return it to Chrissy.
If you agree to take part in the study but later change your mind you are free to withdraw from the study at any time or to not answer any questions that you do not wish to answer.

What do I do if I have any questions?
If you have any questions about the research please contact Chrissy Severinsen:
Email    chrissy.severinsen@otago.ac.nz
Phone   06 353 7320
        021 125 7287
Or leave a message with [camping ground owner] and Chrissy will get back to you.

You can also contact the supervisors of this research:
Professor Philippa Howden-Chapman
Email    howdenc@wnmeds.ac.nz
Phone   04 385 5541  extn. 6047

Dr Kevin Dew
Email    kdew@wnmeds.ac.nz
Phone   04 385 5541  extn. 6046

Thanks for your time.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Department of Public Health, University of Otago.
Participant consent form
10 October 2006

Camping grounds residence & health

I understand the interview I will take part in is part of the research Camping ground residence & health being conducted by Chrissy Severinsen.

I have read the information sheet and I have had a chance to have any questions answered. I know I can ask more questions at any time.

I am completing this interview voluntarily and know that I can stop at any time.

I can refuse to answer any questions, and choose not to carry on with the interview if I decide.

I understand that the original tape recordings and full transcripts will be destroyed at the completion of the study, with only a written copy of what was said in the interview kept in which I cannot be identified. This will be destroyed after five years. Computers used for the research will be password protected.

I will be given a summary of the research when it is finished.

I understand that the results of the study will be available in the University of Otago library. I understand that I will not be identified in any report.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understood this consent form and that I have agreed to complete the interview.

Participant

Date
Interview schedule: Key informants

Mihi: Introduction, consent form, process

Tell me about your organisation.
What is your organisation’s role in housing? Your specific role?

This next set of questions is about your organisation’s involvement with people living in camping grounds.
Who do you see living in camping grounds?
What is the age range of people seen by your organisation for these type of housing issues?
How would you describe the living arrangements of people living in camping grounds?
How does your organisation serve groups such camping ground residents, and those living in temporary accommodation?

Camping ground owners that I have talked to have spoken about the demand they have for permanent accommodation. What do you know about this?
Do you think this has changed over time? Does it change throughout the year?

One of the key issues in my research I want to learn about is the health issues of people living in camping grounds. These might be difficult questions for you to answer.
I have read about people living in temporary accommodation having poorer health outcomes. What would you know about that?
What do you think are the main health issues facing the permanent residents in camping grounds?
Did these issues exist for people before they moved to the camping ground?
What would you say about the social support and connections of people living in camping grounds?

In terms of housing pathways, how would you describe the people seen by your organisation?
I’m curious to how people come to living in camping grounds...
Do you think it their preference to live in this type of housing?
Do you think any want to move into more permanent housing, like a flat or a house?
What do you think about their ability to do this?
What is really interesting to me is what it is like to live in a camping ground, and relationships between people in camping grounds.

What is your opinion about that? What is it like for people to live in a camping ground?

How well do camping grounds meet their residents’ needs (noting legal frameworks, security of tenure etc)?

In what ways does living in camping ground/residential mobility structure access to opportunity? For example, it has been highlighted that people may have difficulty opening a bank account or securing rental properties where a ‘temporary’ address, such as a camping ground, is used. Also, stigma.

Do you think living in a camping ground has implications for other health-related outcomes, for example access to community services, health care?

I’ve got a question about the importance of living in a camping ground permanently as a health issue. There has been a bit in the media about temporary housing and the effect this has on people’s health. I’m really interested in your opinion of this. How do you view the importance or significance of the issue in your position as … involved with these residents?

In terms of tenancy relationships, tell me about the issues faced by residents.

In terms of tenancy relationships, tell me about the issues faced by camping ground owners/managers.

How do these issues relate to a lack of coverage by the RTA?

How often does your organisation deal with enquiries relating to camping ground residents?

What is the extent of the issues?

What other organisations do you see working with this issue?

Is there anything about camping grounds and health that I haven’t asked that you think is important?
Interview schedule: Camping ground owners/managers

Mihi: Introduction, consent form, process

Firstly, I’d like to ask you some questions about your camping ground.
How long have you owned/managed this camping ground?
What did you do before that?
I’m really interested as to how you came to run a camping ground…
What has it been like running the camping ground?
Tell me about your role as manager/owner.

I’d like to talk now about the residents you have living here at the camping ground…
How many people have you got living here?
How has that changed over time? Does it change throughout the year?
Tell me about the age range of the people living here.
What kind of jobs do they have?
How would you describe the living arrangements of these residents?
You have cabins, tents, buses and caravans here? How many, if any, are owner-occupied?

What is really interesting to me is what it is like to live in a camping ground, and I’m also wanting to know about the community aspect of life in camping ground. What is your opinion about that?
What is it like for people to live in a camping ground?

One of the key issues in my research I want to learn about is the health issues of people living in camping grounds. These might be difficult questions for you to answer.
I have read about people living in temporary accommodation having poorer health outcomes. What would you know about that?
What do you think are the main health issues facing the permanent residents in your motor camp?
Did these issues exist for people before they moved to the camping ground?

This next set of questions is about what we call housing pathways. This means what sort of housing people used to live in, where they live now, and future housing types, and how people make decisions about this.
How would you describe the patterns of moving of your permanents?
I’m curious to how people come to living in camping grounds. Is it their preference to live in this type of housing?
Do you think any want to move into more permanent housing, like a flat or a house? What do you think about their ability to do this?
Why do your residents live here? In [location]?
Finally, a question about the importance of living in a camping ground permanently as a health issue. There has been a bit in the media about temporary housing and the effect this has on people’s health. This is certainly not supposed to be critical, but I’m really interested in your opinion of this…

Is there anything about camping grounds and health that I haven’t asked that you think is important?
Interview Schedule: Camping Ground Residents

Mihi: Introduction, consent form, process

How did you come to living in this camping ground?

Can you tell me what it is like to live in a camping ground?

Health
How does living in your [caravan] affect your health?
Did [any] health issues exist for you before you moved to the camping ground?
What in your home helps you to stay well?
What do you think would make this camping ground a healthier place to live?
Does the [caravan] get too hot or too cold? Is it mouldy or have condensation?

Tell me about the rules of the camp (management, legal frameworks, security of tenure).
How do you feel about privacy living here?
How safe do you feel safe here?
What would you do if you didn’t feel safe here?

What do you like about living in the camping ground?
What do you dislike about living in the camping ground?

Access to Services
What do you do if you get sick?
Do you have a local GP?
Do you have access to transport? How do you get around?
Do you share bathroom facilities? Shared/communal facilities. How is this?
Do you have access to a phone?

Employment?

Pathways
How did you come to living in the camping ground?
How did you come to living in [location]?
Where did you live before?
If you had to move out of here, would you have anywhere else to go?
Where would you go?

Community/Social Capital
Tell me about your relationships with the owners/managers.

Participation
Are you involved in any local organisations/clubs/marae?

Social networks
Personal networks (within and outside neighbourhood)
Do you have much contact with other residents?
How do you get along?
Have you maintained contact with family or friends since arriving here?
Have family or friends visited you here?

Bonds and attachment
Do you feel you can rely on others living here at the camping ground?
Is there help available to you if you need it?
Do you think there is a sense of community within the camping ground? (sharing of values, membership, emotional connections)

Social support

Commitment
How long have you been living here?
How would you feel about moving?

Interactions with others

Is there anything else about living in camping ground that we haven’t talked about?
Submission to the working group for the New Zealand definition of homelessness

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To the working group for the definition of homelessness,
The definition is really great, thank you for all your work on it.

The four conceptual categories are intuitive and clear.
We support the inclusion of people living in housing that is of such poor quality that it should be condemned.
We also support the inclusion of the phrase “no options to acquire safe and secure accommodation” in the body of the definition. It is important to be clear that homelessness relates to financial and social resources, not just dwelling type.
This phrase needs to be included in all four dwelling categories – at the moment it is missing from 4: Substandard housing.
We suggest that the phrase “having no usual residence” is unnecessary. Many people in temporary shelter will report it as their usual residence, but they should be classified as homeless.
People living in extremely substandard housing (as their usual residence) will be counted as homeless if they have no means to move on. “No options to acquire safe and secure accommodation” is enough to exclude all those who have access to a decent private house that they have the legal right to live in.

It should be made clear somewhere that the definition excludes civil defence emergencies.

We understand the conceptual framework to be based on two criteria:

1. Dwelling type
2. Individual’s situation (having no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation)

We really support this conceptual framework. However, the diagram on page 3 of New Zealand definition of homelessness: Proposed final draft (hereafter referred to as Proposed final draft) does not represent the second criterion. We suggest it should look like this:

**Conceptual framework for homelessness**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People without a private dwelling</th>
<th>People living in a private dwelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living rough</td>
<td>Temporary shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substandard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We wish to recommend a number of changes at the sub-category level which we think are important for local and national policy purposes. These changes all concern 2: Temporary shelter.

We also make a number of recommendations for minor changes to other parts of the definition.

1. Each sub-category should relate to one dwelling type and be clearly labelled

This is not explicitly stated in the Proposed final draft but we think it is the intention of the definition.

Each sub-category of the definition should relate to a dwelling type that is qualitatively different to the others. This is necessary for conceptual clarity and to align with the existing classification of dwellings in the Census.

For policy purposes it is important that each dwelling type can be considered separately.

We also think it is important that each sub-category has a clear label. The sub-categories under categories 1, 3 and 4 are clear: living “on the street”; improvised dwellings; night shelter; sharing another household’s home; and living in substandard housing. Category 2 is more messy.

Here is our recommendation for 2: Temporary shelter, with each sub-category followed by an explanation/definition in brackets:

c: night shelter (no 24-hour access to accommodation, intended as temporary accommodation)
d: homeless hostel (NGO-run, 24-hour access to accommodation, intended as temporary accommodation)
e: boarding house (privately-run, intended as temporary accommodation)
f: camping ground/motor camp (privately-run, intended as temporary accommodation)
g: refuge accommodation for victims of violence  (for victims of violence only, NGO-run, intended as temporary accommodation)

h: marae (Māori dwelling type, NGO-run, intended as temporary accommodation)

These sub-categories correspond more closely to the Census dwelling type classifications. The sub-categories d. homeless hostel and g. refuge accommodation for victims of violence are obviously not discrete Census classifications but conceptually they are discrete types of temporary shelter. Data for these categories should come from administrative sources (and possibly for h. marae too).

There are quite a few other changes contained in the box which we explain over the next seven points:

2. Night shelters are a type of temporary shelter, not living rough

“Living rough” is synonymous with “sleeping rough” - with “rough” meaning “outside”. The term “living rough” came about in recognition that people surviving on the streets carry out all of their activities in public space, not just sleeping. Living (or sleeping) rough means living in the streets or public spaces without a shelter that could be defined as living quarters.

Living rough does not include people living in a night shelter. It does not make sense intuitively or in relation to international definitions. Night shelters can be defined as living quarters (they are buildings with all amenities). ETHOS includes night shelters under Roofless, but as a separate category to living rough. The ABS Primary homeless definition equates to a and b but does not cover c. night shelters.

We assume that the inclusion of night shelters under this category follows the ETHOS Roofless category – recognising that residents lack 24-hour access to a dwelling. However, the terms Roofless and Living Rough are not equivalent and cannot be interchanged.

Night shelters are a form of temporary shelter. Kate Amore recently talked to members of the Dunedin Night Shelter Trust about the definition of living rough. They were strongly opposed to the classification of their residents as living rough. Although residents do not have access to the shelter during the day, they can store their belongings there and have a secure, supervised place to stay at night with all amenities. Moreover, the shelter co-ordinator works with the residents to help them find longer-term accommodation. They thought that their shelter would fit better under 2: Temporary shelter.

3. The definition should be based on a single point in time

It is mentioned on page 7 of the Proposed final draft that a time-based criterion is not favoured. The conceptual framework does not include time. However, the definition currently contains two time-based phrases - these should be removed.

“Moving between various forms of temporary shelter” (d)

Moving between various forms of shelter is a process that occurs over a period of time. On page 5 of the Proposed final definition it is stated that: “People moving between the different living situations would be classified according to their current or latest living situation.” As a cross-

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section at a single point in time, only the current living situation is relevant to the definition of homelessness.

Whilst some homeless people are moving around between forms temporary shelter, many others are not. It is the temporary shelter that defines homelessness, not the moving around.

The “moving around…” phrase borrows from Chamberlain and MacKenzie’s definition of Secondary homelessness. It is redundant in their definition and will be similarly so if included in the New Zealand definition of homelessness.

The ABS homelessness count does not count those who are moving between various forms of temporary shelter: it counts those who are staying in a form of temporary shelter on Census night.

On page 6 of the Proposed final draft it is stated that: “Both the criteria that the person must be moving around and that they must be without “options to acquire safe and secure accommodation of their own” will tend to exclude anyone who is between places, such as students staying with friends while looking for a flat, or someone staying in a boarding house having recently moved into the area.” We would argue that the criterion of moving around is not required to exclude these people, in fact they may move a few times before securing permanent accommodation. The important factor that separates these people from the homeless is their situation (ie. their options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation).

“Staying long term in a homeless shelter or homeless hostel” (e)

A person staying in homeless hostel without options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation should be classified as homeless, no matter how long they have lived there.

4. Homeless hostel

This is label we have given to dwellings such as Epsom Lodge in Auckland that are:

- Targeted to homeless people
- Run by an NGO
- Residents have a private room to which they have 24-hour access
- Intended as temporary accommodation

Many of these dwellings will not have „hostel“ in their title, but the category needs a simple label. There may be a better term than hostel.

Other dwellings that we know of that would fall under this category are hostels for homeless young people, temporary housing for homeless families, temporary housing for homeless mental health consumers, hostels for homeless women. We would estimate that there are only a handful of these types of dwellings.

5. Transitional supported accommodation

We do not support the term “transitional supported accommodation” included in sub-category d. – it should be removed.

The assumption underlying this definition is that the people captured by it are those in need of a policy response to their homelessness.

Hostels such as Epsom Lodge can be seen as transitional supported accommodation – they support people to transition from the streets to permanent accommodation. However, we think the label “homeless hostel” is better.

Most types of supported accommodation should not be included in a definition of homelessness, even if they are temporary/transitional – e.g. IHC homes, houses for people with disabilities,
prisoner reintegration houses, refugee reception centres. These are already parts of government systems that are mandated to transition the residents to permanent accommodation.

Moreover, they can be considered “institutions” from which individuals will be discharged at a certain time. You make it clear on page 7 of the Proposed final draft that until you are discharged into homelessness, people living in institutions are not homeless. We agree – and follow the same line of argument for ‘halfway houses’.

We understand there is no technical definition of “halfway houses” but from Shane’s knowledge it refers to reintegration / recovery situations. The only example we can think of is Housing New Zealand Corporation housing for prisoner reintegration. This is a central government system with a mandate to find permanent housing - all of the residents have options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation. People living in “halfway houses”, so defined, are not homeless.

Residential detox centres could also be considered “halfway houses” according to Shane’s definition. These centres only accept people with a usual address - sometimes this address is a homeless hostel, but they do not accept people from the street. Regardless of these policies, residents of these centres should not be considered homeless until they are discharged into homelessness.

6. Boarding houses and motor camps/camping grounds

Residents of boarding houses and motor camps/camping grounds (without options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation) are homeless for two reasons:

○ They live in dwellings intended to be temporary

○ They have no security of tenure (not covered by the Residential Tenancies Act)

There should be no time component here (cf. ABS’s Tertiary homelessness). People in this situation are homeless no matter how long they have lived this way.

The inclusion of these categories in the definition is essential if it is to achieve consistency across urban and rural situations. Most of New Zealand lacks dedicated homeless shelters and hostels (e.g. Rotorua, Hawke’s Bay). Even in areas where homeless hostels exist, the demand is far greater than the supply. Many homeless people are living in boarding houses (including cheap motels and certain backpackers) and camping grounds.

Chrissy Severinsen is in the later stages of her PhD project looking at permanent residents of camping grounds and certainly agrees that they are homeless in the New Zealand context. Legally, people are not allowed to live “permanently” in camping grounds – but many do because they have no other accommodation options. It is inherently insecure – they have no rights as tenants, they often have to move out to make room for tourists over the summer months. They live in a situation intended to be temporary, using common facilities (e.g. toilet blocks). The proposed amendment to the Residential Tenancies Act is to cover boarding houses. This would mean that residents of boarding houses who have a formal tenancy agreement should not be defined as homeless because they have security of tenure and there is legal recognition that the boarding house is, for that resident, intended to be permanent accommodation.

Please define how the proposed changes to the RTA will change the definition of homelessness, whether you follow our recommendation or take a different approach.

7. Refuge accommodation for victims of violence

Under the principle of simplifying the sub-category labels, we think “shelter or” is unnecessary. The common term for this dwelling type is a refuge.

8. Marae
To make it clear that this is included in the definition, it should be listed as part of the definition, even if it not a widespread practice. Currently, it is the only dwelling type ostensibly included in the definition that is excluded from the text of the definition.

To be consistent with the other sub-categories, this sub-category should be labelled “marae” (small “m” because it is plural and all the other sub-categories start with a small letter).

It is not necessary to repeat “temporary accommodation at” – the whole category is qualified by “temporary shelter” and “no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation”.

That is the end of the more substantial changes we recommend for 2. Temporary shelter.

In the next section we make more simple recommendations for the rest of the definition.

9. Abandoned buildings (”squats”)

These are often used by people living rough and should be listed in the definition.

According to the glossary it seems these would fit within b. improvised dwellings because they lack some or all of the usual household amenities.

10. Substandard housing

We understand this category is yet to be technically defined. We would recommend that only residents of housing that would be considered “uninhabitable” should be included as homeless; however this comes to be defined. People living in leaky, uninsulated, mouldy houses are in substandard housing that puts them at significant health risk, but they are not homeless.

There are likely to be cultural differences for those choosing to live in more traditional ways (e.g. using a river rather than piped water).

11. Consistent application of the phrase “no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation”.

There is a variation is the body of the definition - consistency in wording across categories would be ideal.

p. 4, 3: Sharing another household’s home

Change “secure safe and secure private accommodation” to “acquire safe and secure private accommodation”

As mentioned earlier, the phrase “no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation” should also be included in the body of the definition for 4: Substandard housing.

12. Typo in 4: Substandard housing

The sub-category is currently “a. Living in substandard housing”.

Here is what the definition would look like with our recommended changes made:

Lines that have been changed are highlighted blue:

1: Living rough

Living rough means having no usual residence that could be described as living quarters (or options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation), including:

a. living “on the street” i.e., places of habitation with no dwelling such as city streets, parks, bus shelters, doorways, train stations, under bridges, in caves, under hedges
b. improvised dwellings not built for habitation such as cars, tents, shacks and garages, in abandoned buildings (“squats”) (other than those designed as or converted legally into dwellings)

2: Temporary shelter
Living in temporary shelter means living in a dwelling that is intended to be temporary with no options to acquire safe and secure private accommodation, including:
   c. night shelter (where occupants need to leave each morning)
   d. homeless hostel
   e. boarding house*
   f. motor camp/camping ground
   g. refuge accommodation for victims of violence
   h. marae

3: Sharing another household's home
People invited by another family or household to stay temporarily in their home. They have no options to acquire safe and secure accommodation.
   i. sharing another household’s home

4: Substandard housing
A property is defined as substandard where the faults of the property pose a life endangering or significant health and safety threat to the occupants. The residents have no options to acquire safe and secure accommodation.
   j. living in substandard housing

* may be excluded if covered by RTA amendment