

Key Findings

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Findings from multiple streams of work

1. An evidence review of what housing interventions work in tackling poverty for young people both in the UK and abroad:
 - (a) A desk based literature review
 - (b) An online survey of housing providers in Europe

2. New evidence from housing providers: actions and outcomes for poverty experienced by young people - case studies
 - Emphasis today on case studies – but first a few contextual points from the other work

3. Quantitative analyses of housing and youth poverty in UK drawing on secondary datasets

Role of housing providers

- In the UK it is routine for social housing organisations to address issues critical to poverty such as financial exclusion, debt or unemployment. In some other countries social housing provision is more strictly “accommodation” focused.
- However, few housing organisations in the UK consider reducing poverty to be an explicit goal.
- Projects which help young people may not always be exclusively aimed at young people.

Why focus on youth poverty?

- Young people's incomes are falling, despite rises in other age groups
- Youth unemployment is 16.2%
 - 88% amongst young people who head a social housing household
- Young people are leaving home at older ages than previously, with more complex pathways to independence
- Vast majority of young people receiving some sort of state or parental assistance with housing
 - Only 10% of all young people are self-supporting

The impact of social housing

- In England, poor young single person households are:
 - Most likely to be tenants in social housing (71%), as compared to 26% of all young single person households, and correspondingly (evidence from the English Housing Survey 2012/13).
- Longitudinal analysis of young, single people across the UK between 2009 and 2015 (using the survey Understanding Society) – the impact of becoming a social tenant on wellbeing. Positive impacts on:
 - Housing quality
 - Gross income and financial prospects
 - Personal health

How are housing providers addressing poverty?

	Housing circumstances	Wider work of housing organisations
Direct impact on reducing poverty	<p>Low rent</p> <p>Housing within HB limits</p>	<p>Managing expectations regarding sharing and preparing for sharing</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Money management</p>
Impact on employment	<p>Stability to help find and sustain employment</p>	<p>Support (financial) during transition to work</p> <p>Employability skills</p> <p>Work placements</p>
Impact on wider material consequences of poverty	<p>Tenancy sustainment</p> <p>Homelessness prevention</p>	<p>Independent living skills</p> <p>Improve tenants' health and wellbeing</p>

Providing support in a harsh financial climate

- Welfare changes affecting young people
- Cuts to local services
- PRS hard to access in some areas – high prices

Case studies: approach and methods

- Chose innovative or unusual schemes (many award winners)
- Different ways of addressing youth poverty
- Chose schemes across Great Britain (3 in Wales, 1 in Scotland and 6 in England)
- Used a range of methods, including:
 - Interviews with scheme leads
 - Interviews and/or focus groups with clients (some with a longitudinal element)
 - Interviews with clients who were referred, but did not attend a course
 - Interviews with referral agencies
 - Access to anonymised administrative data

Case studies: what worked well in tackling poverty (1/3)

- Known and trusted organisations – local reputation
- Coordination between services – individually tailored support
 - Examples of good working relationships between arms of large organisations and between different organisations, such as:
 - Housing scheme and CAB
 - Housing and young people's drop-in
 - Housing provider and colleges
 - Housing provider and probation service
 - Housing provider and social services

Case studies: what worked well in tackling poverty (2/3)

- Housing that provides a sense of independence, whilst still offering support when needed
 - On-demand support (knowing support is there if needed)
 - *“Schemes like this are worthwhile because there are **people out there who do need that bit of help and support** because they haven’t got family or friends who can help them or support them and it is a really good way, **using it as a stepping stone** to get themselves in a position where most people want to be, which is having their own place, **being able to live the life they want to live and go on from there**” (Client, social lettings agency)*
- Housing that allows for changing personal circumstances – e.g. new partner, have a child
 - Allowing partners to live with a tenant
 - Offering support to partners

Case studies: what worked well in tackling poverty (3/3)

- Some successes with shared housing models – overcoming initial anxieties about sharing
 - Young people seeing the benefits of sharing
 - *“I’ve just turned 17 this week. To me, getting a single flat, when I’ve never lived on my own before is quite scary” (Client, supported housing)*
- Tenancy training courses that engage young people and allow them to learn in a fun, interactive and informal environment
- Individually focused employment schemes

Case studies: challenges in tackling poverty (1/2)

- Affordability of housing
 - Reliance on supply of substantially sub-market housing
 - Reliance on Housing Benefit exemptions – doesn't help young people escape poverty by finding work
 - *"It's risky to work" (Client, supported housing) – wants to find work, but had previously quit a job because he could not afford the rent on his wages*
- Risk of 'over-supporting' young people
 - Very low rent giving little incentive to move on
 - High rent and high quality services giving little incentive to work or move on
 - Paying apprentices more than the 'going rate'
 - Schemes blocking direct communication with landlords (re. maintenance)
 - Reliance on specialist services – no integration with wider society

Case studies: challenges in tackling poverty (2/2)

- Engaging young people to attend pre-tenancy training courses and other kinds of group work
 - Experimenting with making courses ‘compulsory’ for certain groups or moving on
 - Young people not always keen to be in groups
 - Need to find ways of coping with fluctuating attendance
 - Timing courses appropriately for moving on
- Meeting the needs of the online world (lack of WiFi in shared housing)
- Coordinating with wider education and training provision
 - Housing associations not as well linked into this sector as they need to be
 - Clashing styles of engagement

Case studies: considerations

- Finding a balance between:
 - Support and independence for young people
 - Housing affordability for the provider and the tenant
 - Encouraging attendance and over-incentivising/making it compulsory
 - Being flexible and having a specialism
- Managing expectations
 - Housing options
 - Tenure
 - Finding work
- The timing of courses
 - When's the most appropriate time/stage to start and finish the course

Moving out of poverty: change over ten years

- Using the ONS Longitudinal Study to analyse moving out of poverty between 2001 and 2011
- The Longitudinal Study links 950,000 individuals from one Census to another (from 1971 onwards), so that their circumstances can be followed over time.
- Given the lack of income data in the Census, being 'in poverty' was defined as neither in full time work, nor having a partner in full time work
- Necessarily crude, since two partners, both in part time work, might not be in poverty, and many in full time are officially 'in poverty' and eligible for tax credits.

The groups in the project

- Two groups were selected:
 - All those aged 16-25 in 2011 (and 6-15 in 2001)
 - All those aged 26-35 in 2011 who had been in poverty in 2001 (aged 16-25)
- Change in household composition, economic status, tenure, qualifications, and distance moved between 2001 and 2011
- Those aged 16-25 in 2011 included students (not in full time work), so the analysis split into three groups: not students and not in poverty, students in poverty, and not students but in poverty

Household composition: 26-35 in 2011

In poverty in 2001		
16-25 in 2001 and 26-35 in 2011		
in 2001:	in poverty in 2001 and 2011	in poverty in 2001 but not in 2011
	three out of five already had children	only one in five had children
	half of these were single parents	just under half were single parents
by 2011:	three out of four had children	just over three out of four had children
	nearly 2 out of 3 of the single parents in 2001 were still single parents	only half of the single parents in 2001 were still single parents
	1 in 4 among single parents had become a single parent since 2001	1 in 4 who had children in 2001 were single

Household composition: 16-25 in 2011

16-25 in 2011	
In poverty (and not student) in 2011	Not in poverty in 2011
just over a quarter were single and/or sharing	just over a quarter were single and/or sharing
just over one in ten were in a couple without children	nearly half were in couple without children
over half already had children	Under a quarter already had children
more than half of these were single parents	less than 1 in 20 were single parents

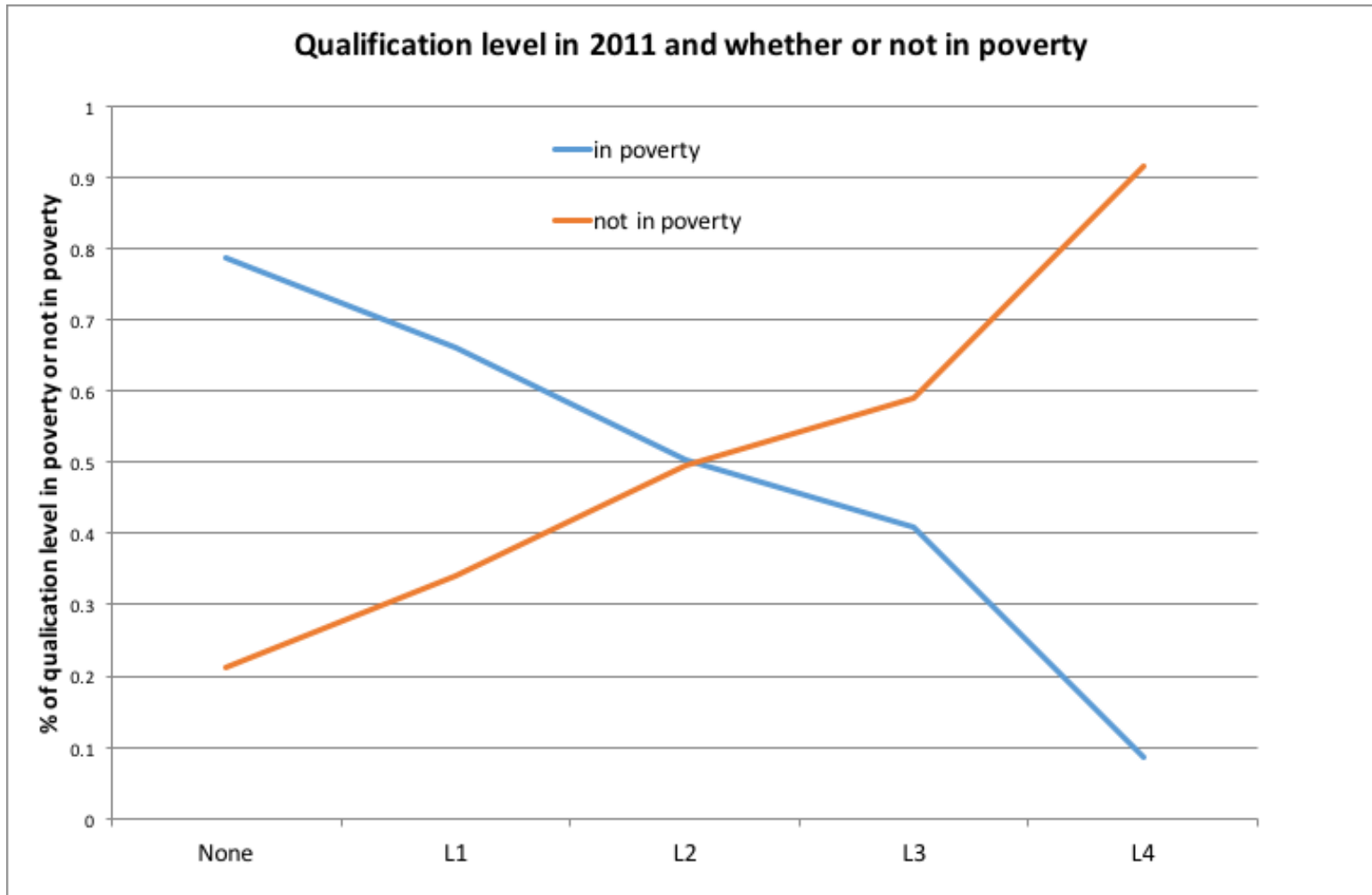
Economic status: 26-35 in 2011

In poverty in 2001		
16-25 in 2001 and 26-35 in 2011		
	in poverty in 2001 and 2011	in poverty in 2001 but not in 2011
in 2001:	half were economically inactive	only 1 in 6 were economically inactive
	roughly 1 in 6 were in PT work, 1 in 6 were job seeking and 1 in six were students	7 in 10 were students, 1 in 10 were in PT work, 1 in 20 were job hunting
by 2011:	half were economically inactive	less than 1 in 10 were economically inactive
	the % in PT work had doubled	three quarters were in FT work, 1 in 10 in PT work
	1 in 6 were seeking work over half had not changed their economic status	9 in 10 had changed their economic status

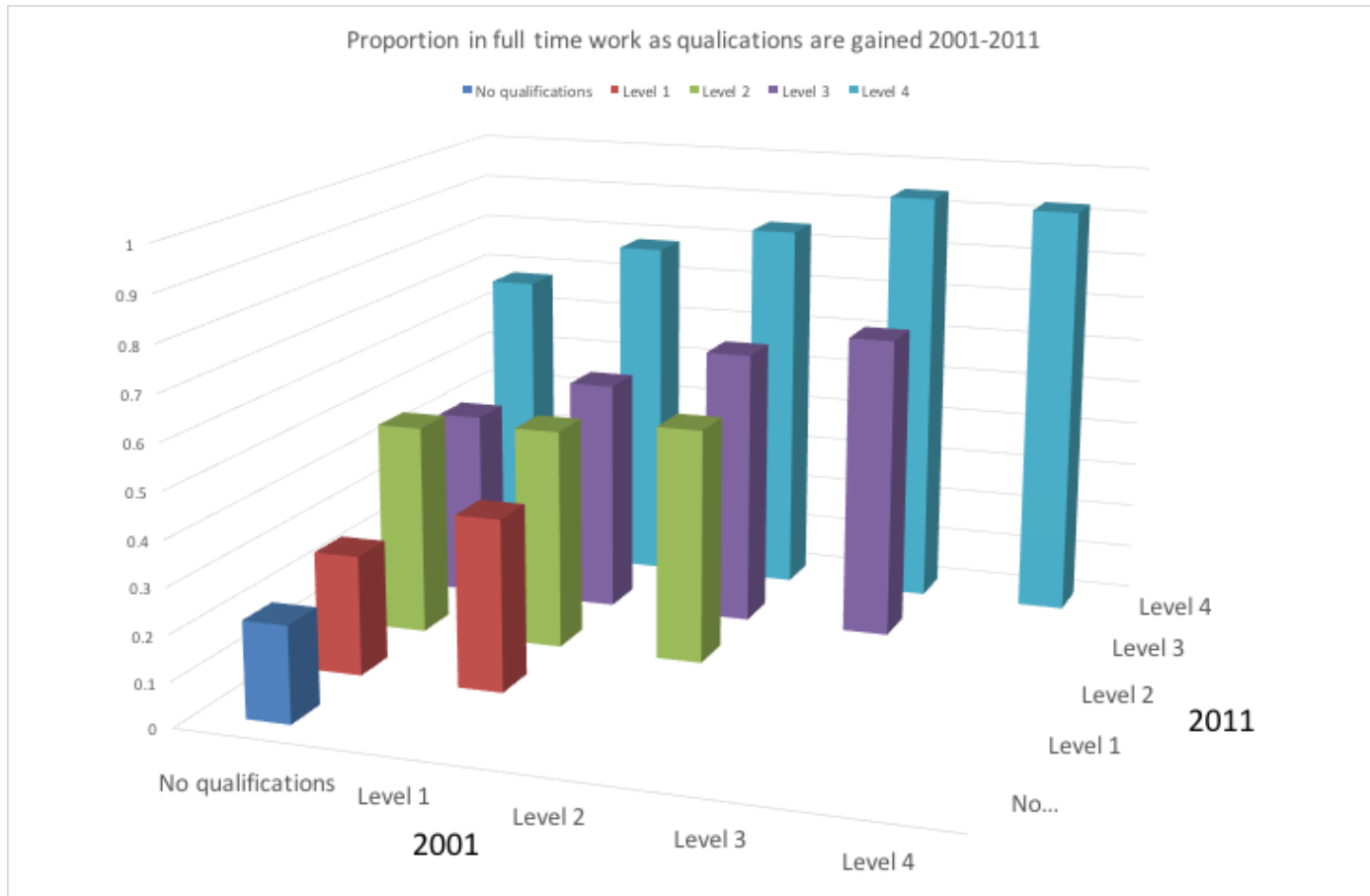
Tenure change 2001-2011

In poverty in 2001		
16-25 in 2001 and 26-35 in 2011		
	in poverty in 2001 and 2011	in poverty in 2001 but not in 2011
in 2001:	3 in 5 were in social housing	1 in 5 were in social housing
	1 in 4 were in the PRS	3 in 5 were in the PRS
	1 in 5 were owner occupiers	1 in 5 were in owner occupation
by 2011:	over half of owner occupiers had left: just under half for the PRS, just over half for social housing	7 in 10 were still in owner occupation, and 1 in 4 had moved to the PRS
	over half of private tenants had left: 1 in 3 to owner occupation, 2 in 3 to social housing	3 in 4 had left the PRS, virtually all to owner occupation
	over a quarter of social tenants had left: 1 in 3 to owner occupation, 2 in 3 to the PRS	just under half were still social tenants, but 2 in 5 had moved to owner occupation

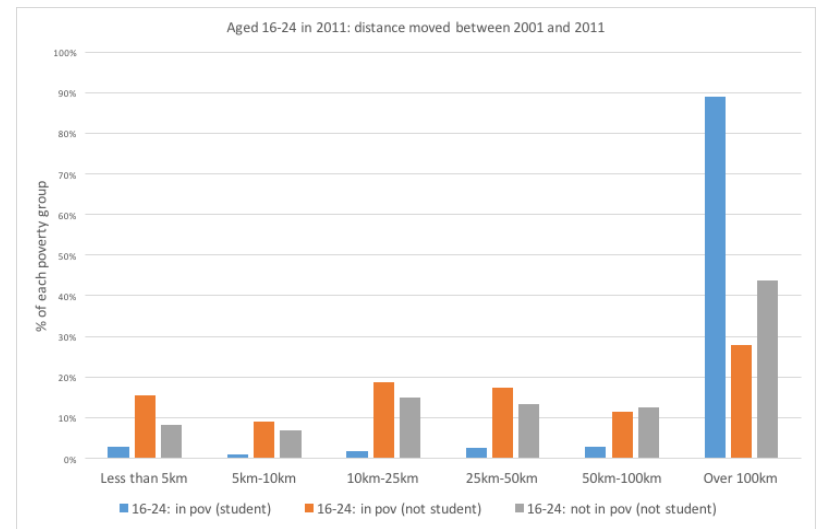
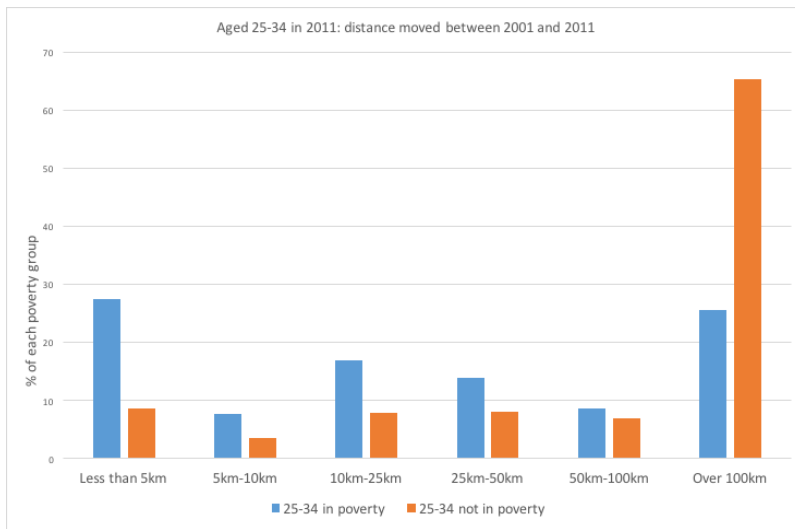
Qualification level and poverty: 26-35 in 2011



% in FT work as qualifications increase



Distance moved between 2001 and 2011



Overview

- How can the statistical analysis inform the work of housing providers?
- Are the ideas being employed by our case study schemes transferrable to other areas?

How can the statistical analysis inform the work of housing providers?

- Supporting family formation
 - Supporting couple formation, not just mums and babies – but schemes that allow partners to move
 - A challenge in shared housing where partners may pose risks or costs on other tenants
 - Providing move-on for couples
 - Working with both halves of a couple – joint solutions to finances and work

How can the statistical analysis inform the work of housing providers?

- Encouraging education and training
 - Impact on poverty is not immediate, but evidenced very clearly in the longer term
 - A much bigger focus on some schemes than others
 - Some difficulties when HB covers very high rents which is at risk if clients work. Studying OK though as long as still eligible for HB (not most students in higher education)
 - Shared housing can promote a culture of going out to work or study each day (or not)

How can the statistical analysis inform the work of housing providers?

- Facilitating moves to new areas
 - Most young people were from the local area where housed
 - Very hard at present for young people reliant on supported housing or trying to access social housing
 - Hard to move area unless can find housing privately.
 - Joined up working between providers in different areas – some housing associations could be well placed to help here, more so than local authorities

Can we transfer good ideas to other areas?

Local economies and policy differences

- Some schemes rely on availability of low(ish) rent housing, affordable to young people on low wages and/or housing benefit.
- Wages levels vary less than rents – so high rent areas have worst affordability, but also the best employment opportunities.
 - Study in low rent areas, then move for a job?
- Policy context is different in Wales and Scotland – Supporting people funding provides services not easily funded in England

Can we transfer good ideas to other areas?

The role of housing providers

- Housing providers are often well-placed to initiate and deliver support to young people at risk of poverty.
- They are not well-placed to deliver a nationwide coordinated service – schemes are therefore often ad hoc, and localised.
 - Not strategic in terms of where they are set up.
- Transferability therefore depends on happening to be a suitable organisation to spearhead a new programme in their local area

Key conclusions

- Lack of understanding amongst young people on causes of poverty – incomes and expenditures
- Sustainability of schemes
 - Cost effectiveness – what is the cost per client?
 - Is the scheme providing good incentives to train or work?
 - Potential for shared housing to provide genuinely low rents?
 - Is it providing the right financial incentives to encourage young people to move on at the right time?
- Engaging young people
 - Styles of working that are ‘not like school’
 - Value of increasing confidence and interpersonal skills
- Importance of timing and co-ordination of employment, housing and wider support

Questions and Discussion

1. Should housing providers tackle youth poverty?
2. Which initiatives by housing providers have the greatest impact and why?
3. Do you agree that initiatives by housing providers are *ad hoc* and would be better as part of a strategy?
4. What do you think limits the sustainability of the initiatives?
5. What factors would you stress as influencing the “transferability” of valuable initiatives by housing providers?