

Finding the Collective Voice — the role of family and community in improving housing options for adults with disability

by Susan Margaret Bailey

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

under the supervision of Dr Pernille H. Christensen Professor Shankar Sankaran Dr Michael Millington

University of Technology Sydney
Faculty of Design Architecture and Building

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I, Susan Bailey, declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Design Architecture and Building at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

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Production Note:

Signature: Signature removed prior to publication.

Name: Dr. Pernille Christensen

Date: 25. June 202

Signature:

Name: Prof. Shankar Sankaran

Date:

Signature:

Name: Dr. Michael Millington

Date:

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Name: Susan Bailey, Candidate

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Signature:

Name: Dr. Pernille Christensen

Date:

Production Note:

Signature: Signature removed prior to publication.

Name: Prof. Shankar Sankaran

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Signature:

Name: Dr. Michael Millington

Date:

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Date:

Signature:

Name: Prof. Shankar Sankaran

Date:

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Signature: Signature removed prior to publication.

Name: Dr. Michael Millington

Date:

Signature:

Name: Susan Bailey, Candidate

Date:

PREFACE

This doctorate study responds to the lack of housing for people with disability to address their needs or desires to have their own home. Governments in Australia have neither planned for nor invested in sufficient, good-quality housing for adults with a disability who are over 18 years of age and who live with family or friends but need or want to choose their own home. Some of these women and men (referred to as 'adults' in this thesis¹) are excluded from mainstream social housing systems and specialist disability housing such as group homes (National People with Disabilities and Carers Council 2009) because they are not considered homeless or needy enough. Yet many of them, and their families who encounter the costs associated with disability, are financially disadvantaged. This study presents 11 case studies where new homes were established for more than 44 adults. Few case study participants had the resources to purchase, build or rent the housing component to establish the adult's own home in the communities that support them day to day. Individual funding for the paid support component to enable adults to live independently from their family caregiver was made available in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory in anticipation of the emerging National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which commenced in 2013.² This thesis presents the creation of the adult's own home as a significant achievement of families — and of not-for-profit non-government organisations (NGOs). These new homes were conceived before NDIS funding was available where families and adults did not have sufficient financial means to fund paid support, housing or both. This study is relevant for adults who are not eligible for the NDIS, or who are eligible for NDIS funding for paid support but not eligible for NDIS funding for accommodation in Australia. The success of the recently established specialist disability accommodation (SDA housing) system in Australia, funded under the NDIS, is outside the scope of this study, although some of the housing in the case studies is now classified or 'enrolled'

¹ Daughters and sons with a disability are referred to as 'adults' or 'adults with disability' because they are over 18 years of age. This thesis also uses the terms 'daughter', 'son', 'child', 'children', 'person' and 'people with a disability' if appropriate in the particular context. In relation to NGOs, these adults may be called a 'client', 'person with a disability' or 'people with disability'. 'Person with a disability' and 'people with disability' includes children and other people with a disability who are not adults in a case study.

² Bostock et al. (2004, p. 48 citing Lord & Hutchison 2003) described the worldwide movement towards individual funding for support paid direct to the person rather than a service provider, including the grants paid to individuals for their purchase of support services in Western Australia from 1993.

as SDA housing. The SDA housing system, as well as policy that underpins it, will need regular, independent evaluation over the coming years.

This study of activities and strategies to secure government funding for housing and paid support has five aims. First, it investigates the role of families and NGOs as advocates and change agents. Both families and NGOs acknowledged, listened and responded to the voices of adults whose housing needs had been neglected by governments. These families engaged in advocacy to meet the housing needs of these adults, as well as the housing goals and objectives of their daughter or son. Second, this study explores the activities and strategies undertaken by families and NGOs as allies of the adults (Panitch 2008). Both families and NGOs garnered broader support for the objective of establishing the adults' own home and institutional support to commit funding to achieve this objective. Third, it listens to the voice of families and NGOs who were found to create new homes in new ways, where traditional disability services and housing systems had not done so. In this thesis, these separate housing systems and the housing assets within them—both mainstream and specialist disability housing are collectively referred to as 'social housing'. Fourth, this study acknowledges the lifelong service-providing and caregiving role of parents, other family members, carers and friends. It demonstrates the shifting roles of traditional institutions, whereby families became designers and/or providers of governmentfunded housing services and chose the key workers to deliver paid support. Parents worked within, around and across traditional service and system boundaries to secure resources and implement their designs, create more housing options and ensure better services when governments and service providers did not do so. Their volunteering, organisation, housing advocacy and home-making activities are different facets of unpaid caregiving. Fifth, this study

³ Family and Community Services (FACS), a former agency of the NSW Government, defined social housing to include public, community and Aboriginal housing in NSW, all of which are described as 'secure and affordable rental housing for people on low incomes with housing needs'. FACS and other government agencies do not include specialist disability housing, such as group homes or other NDIS-funded (SDA) housing in the description of social housing (https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/housing/help/ways/social-housing, last viewed 2 October 2019). However, this thesis includes group homes and other SDA in the term 'social housing' in order to mitigate segregating housing systems in conversation, mindset and usage. The availability of capital funding for SDA does not of itself segregate that type of housing from other housing (e.g. AccessAccom's Penrith Sheffield Quarter combines SDA usage apartments with apartments for other tenants).

shares what these parents and NGOs have learned from the action they took,⁴ what worked and did not work, and the importance of the communities they supported or constructed.

Across each case study, self-determination, control and choice were highly valued. Parents frequently made decisions for or with their children. This included decisions made with and on behalf of a daughter or son with a severe or profound limitation relating to a disability. A severe or profound limitation is described by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) as a limitation with the greatest need for help, assistance or support with activities (ABS 2018). Due to the type of disability and support needs of each adult, it was the system-level activities of parents and NGOs that attain the housing and paid support. They enabled the transition away from living with families, and they created choice, which the adults were not able to do themselves. The researcher was cognisant that the interests and priorities of adult daughters or sons and their parents can differ (Curryer, Stancliffe & Dew 2015). However, it was not the purpose of this study to identify those differences, or to study the adults' participation in system-level choice (although data were collected on individual wishes and preferences communicated by the adults to their parents). In this sense, the study is not family research. Importantly, the new homes these parents and not-for-profit NGOs established brought more people and community into the lives of each family and adult.

⁴ They developed new, stronger tactics when their polite requests for assistance and better services failed (Panitch 2008, p. 7).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
STATEMENT OF THESIS BY COMPILATION FORMAT	iv
PREFACE	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	×
LIST OF TABLES	xv
LIST OF FIGURES	. xv
LIST OF APPENDICES	
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	
GLOSSARY	
ABSTRACT	
1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 ACTION TO CREATE PATHWAYS TO NEW HOUSING	
1.2 SUCCESSFUL CREATION OF NEW HOUSING MODELS	
1.3 BARRIERS AND ENABLERS	
1.3.1 Cluster of inputs and factors	
1.3.2 Barriers	
1.3.4 Emergence of new models	
1.4 DISABILITY MODELS AND DEFINITIONS	
1.5 OTHER DEFINITIONS	
1.6 THESIS STRUCTURE	
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 SELF-DETERMINATION, AUTONOMY, CHOICE AND CONTROL,	
AND EMPOWERMENT	25 25
2.3 VOLUNTEERING AND CAREGIVING	
2.3.1 Volunteering	
2.3.2 Caregiving	29
2.4 INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILTY	
2.5 HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK	
2.6.1 Structural barriers within government agencies	
2.6.2 Historical underfunding	
2.6.3 Outsourcing and privatisation	
2.6.4 Contracting and tendering processes	38
2.6.5 Who controls funding and contracting now?	39
2.7 HOUSING NEED AND SUPPLY	
3 RESEARCH DESIGN	43 ⊿a
3.1.1 Epistemology	
3.1.2 Implications for this study	

	3.1.3 Ontology	
	3.1.5 Subjectivity and objectivity in qualitative research	
	3.2 RESEARCHER AS DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT	44
	3.2.1 Implications for this study	
	3.2.2 Bias and reflexivity	
	3.2.3 Implications for this study	47
	3.2.4 Reflection on the effect of 'self'	
	3.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS	
	3.4 CASE STUDY AND INTERVIEW METHOD	
	3.5 ETHICS	
	3.6 SAMPLING	
	3.6.1 Selection criteria	
	3.6.2 Disability type	
	3.6.3 Characteristics of research participants	
	3.6.4 Sample	
	3.6.5 Family case studies by type	
	3.6.6 NGO case studies by service provider	
	3.7 Location	
	3.8 Interview procedure	
	3.9 DATA COLLECTION	64
	3.10 DATA ANALYSIS	
	3.11 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	68
1	INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP	75
•		
	A 1 INTRODUCTION	/h
	4.1 INTRODUCTION	
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	77
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	77 77
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	77 77 78
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	77 77 78 80
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship	77 77 78 80 82
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation	77 78 80 82 83
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change	77 77 78 80 82 83 84
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	77 78 80 82 83 84 85
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 85
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 85
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 85 86 86
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping	77 77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87 87
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87 87
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance. 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87 87 88
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance. 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline 4.3.8 Concepts from theory	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87 87 88 89 90
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline 4.3.8 Concepts from theory 4.4 CASE STUDIES	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87 87 88 90 90
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance. 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure. 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline. 4.3.8 Concepts from theory 4.4 CASE STUDIES 4.5 FINDINGS.	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87 88 89 90 93
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 86 87 87 88 90 90 93
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 87 87 88 89 90 90 94 94
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline 4.3.8 Concepts from theory 4.4 CASE STUDIES 4.5 FINDINGS 4.5.1 Control and choice and family governance 4.5.2 Action and transactions of parents to create new homes 4.5.3 Combination of inputs from different systems	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 87 87 88 90 90 93 94 94
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance. 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline 4.3.8 Concepts from theory 4.4 CASE STUDIES 4.5 FINDINGS 4.5.1 Control and choice and family governance 4.5.2 Action and transactions of parents to create new homes 4.5.3 Combination of inputs from different systems 4.5.4 Institutional entrepreneurship through change	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 93 94 94 95
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline 4.3.8 Concepts from theory 4.4 CASE STUDIES 4.5 FINDINGS 4.5.1 Control and choice and family governance 4.5.2 Action and transactions of parents to create new homes 4.5.3 Combination of inputs from different systems 4.5.4 Institutional entrepreneurship through change	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 87 87 88 89 90 93 94 94 94 95 96
	4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW 4.2.1 Governance 4.2.2 Family governance 4.2.3 Institutions of governance. 4.2.4 Institutional entrepreneurship 4.2.5 Social innovation 4.2.6 Activity theory of change 4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 4.3.1 Units of analysis 4.3.2 Research questions 4.3.3 Sample of research participants 4.3.4 Procedure 4.3.5 Backwards mapping 4.3.6 Activity theory for data analysis 4.3.7 Chronology and timeline 4.3.8 Concepts from theory 4.4 CASE STUDIES 4.5 FINDINGS 4.5.1 Control and choice and family governance 4.5.2 Action and transactions of parents to create new homes 4.5.3 Combination of inputs from different systems 4.5.4 Institutional entrepreneurship through change	77 78 80 82 83 84 85 86 87 87 88 89 90 90 94 94 94 95 96 96

4.6.3 Philosophies and values	100
4.6.4 Co-operative values and principles	102
4.6.5 Action and transactions: family governance and innovations	s103
4.6.6 Others who empowered parents to combine inputs from dif	
systems	
4.6.7 Inputs from different systems	
4.6.8 Scalable innovation	
4.7 CONCLUSION	111
5 POWER	114
5.1 INTRODUCTION	114
5.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	116
5.2.1 Barriers to housing with paid support	116
5.2.2 Challenging the status quo	121
5.2.3 Three-dimensional power	
5.2.4 Power-within, power-to and power-with	
5.2.5 Synthesis of power literature	
5.2.6 Entrepreneurial bricolage	
5.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
5.3.1 Units of analysis	
5.3.2 Procedure	
5.3.3 Activity theory for data analysis	
5.3.4 Chronology and timeline	
5.5 FINDINGS	
5.6 POLITICIANS, PARENTS AND THEIR COMMUNITY	
5.6.1 Role of politicians	
5.6.2 Role of parent advocates	
5.6.3 Role of community support	
5.7 DISCUSSION	
5.7.1 Power-over: barriers to housing	
5.7.2 Power-to: define the problem and the solution	
5.7.3 Power-to, power-within and power-with: bricolage	
5.7.4 Power-over: new barriers	
5.8 CONCLUSION	160
6 SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHP AND SOCIAL INNOVATION	163
6.1 INTRODUCTION	
6.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
6.2.1 Entrepreneurship v. social entrepreneurship	
6.2.2 Innovation v. social innovation	
6.3CASE STUDIES	
6.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	
6.4.1 Units of analysis	
6.4.2 Procedure	
6.4.3 Exploratory study	178
6.4.4 Ethics approval	
6.4.5 Activity theory for data analysis	
6.4.6 Concepts from theory	
6.5 DISCUSSION	
6.6 FINDINGS	
6.6.1 Cross-sectoral	
6.6.2 Open and collaborative	185

6.6.3 Grassroots and bottom-up	186
6.6.4 Pro-sumption and co-production	
6.6.5 Mutualism	
6.6.6 Creates new roles and relationships	190
6.6.7 Better use of assets and resources	191
6.6.8 Develop assets and capabilities	194
6.7CONCLUSION	196
7 BUILDING PERSON-CENTRED HOMES	198
7.1 INTRODUCTION	
7.2 LITERATURE REVIEW	201
7.2.1 Lack of choice	
7.2.2 Institution as structure or function	206
7.2.3 Negative attitudes, practices and rules	208
7.2.4 Building rules in Australia	
7.2.5 Livable Housing Design Guidelines	211
7.2.6 NDIS SDA Design Standard	212
7.3 METHODOLOGY	213
7.3.1 Units of analysis	213
7.3.2 Research questions	
7.3.3 Sample of research participants	
7.3.4 Procedure	215
7.3.5 Activity theory for data analysis	
7.3.6 Concepts from theory	
7.4 FINDINGS	
7.5 DISCUSSION	
7.5.1 Contradictory objectives	
7.5.2 Implementation of the model	
7.5.3 Community within a community	
7.5.4 Individual choice	
7.6 DESIRED OUTCOMES	
7.7 UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES	
7.8 CONCLUSION	228
8 CONCLUSION, CONTRIBUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	231
8.1 STRUCTURE OF THIS CHAPTER	232
8.2 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DISCIPLINE OF INSTITUTIONAL	
ENTREPRENEURSHIP	232
8.3 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD OF POWER	234
8.4 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DISCIPLINE OF SOCIAL	
ENTREPRENEURSHIP	235
8.5 CONTRIBUTIONS TO INNOVATION IN BUILDING PERSON-	
CENTRED HOMES	
8.6 EXPLANATION OF BARRIERS AND SUCCESSES	237
8.6.1 Housing as a barrier	237
8.6.2 Limited involvement of NGO service providers	238
8.6.3 Determination and persistence of parents	240
8.6.4 Least cost to government	241
8.7 CONTRIBUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	242
8.7.1 Theory contribution	242
8.7.2 Practice contribution	243
8.7.3 Policy recommendations	245

xiv

APPENDICES	285
REFERENCES	254
8.11 CONCLUSION	
8.10 FUTURE RESEARCH	
8.9 ACHIEVEMENT OF STUDY AIMS	249
8.8 LIMITATIONS	248

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Replacing unpaid caregiving with paid support	31
Table 2: Activity system framework to support control and choice	35
Table 3: Levels of reflexivity	47
Table 4: Types of disability	55
Table 5: Case study sample	57
Table 6: Family case studies by type	59
Table 7: NGO case studies by service provider	61
Table 8: Criteria comparison for judging quantitative and qualitative	
research	68
Table 9: Philosophies, values and partnerships	106
Table 10: Resulting theoretical framework	126
Table 11: Powerful NSW politicians	135
Table 12: Strategies to develop power	159
Table 13: Defining social entrepreneurship (Dees 1998)	168
Table 14: EMES social enterprise indicators	170
Table 15: Five types of social innovations (TEPSIE 2014, p. 10)	173
Table 16: Definitions of social enterprise, social entrepreneurship and s	ocial
innovations	175
Table 17: Key differences between the models	194
Table 18: Types of housing	233

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Activity system as analytical tool	10
Figure 2: Activity theory identifies resolved contradictions	67
Figure 3: Connected, interdependent activity systems	89
Figure 4: Benambra Intentional Community inputs	92
Figure 5: Karen Connaughton's individual timeline (Case #2)	98
Figure 6: Cross-case comparison of source of housing (#1, #2, #3)	107
Figure 7: SILC's family governed models are individual and scalable	110
Figure 8: Timeline Case #3	147
Figure 9: Timeline Case #2	150
Figure 10: Timeline Case #1	153
Figure 11: Spatial and temporal activity Case #3	158
Figure 12: Enabled Housing Model #1	182
Figure 13: Co-resident Support Model #2	193
Figure 14: RASAID contradictions	218
Figure 15: Three elements of home — pre-NDIS	233
Figure 16: Housing pathway elements — post NDIS	245

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: STUDIES OF UNPAID CAREGIVING	. 286
APPENDIX B: ETHICS APPROVAL UTS HREC REF NO. ETH17-1412	. 288
APPENDIX C: FAMILY CASE STUDY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	. 289
APPENDIX D: NGO CASE STUDY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	. 292
APPENDIX E: NOTE OF MEETINGS OF S. RICHARDS, CASE #2	. 294

The thesis is written in Australian English. The spelling and terminology in Chapters 4–7 will be changed to their US equivalent when submitted to US journals.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

400	A
ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics	
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
ADHC	Ageing, Disability & Home Care, a Department of Family and Community Services (NSW)
CDLS	Cornelia de Lange syndrome
CHP	Community housing provider
CRA	Commonwealth Rent Assistance
DADHC	Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care (NSW)
DSP	Disability Support Pension
EMES	European Research Network (named after the emergence of social enterprises in Europe research program)
FACS	NSW Department of Family and Community Services
HILDA	Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia
HOME	Home Owners Mutual Enterprise
HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
ISL	Individual supported living arrangements
ILO	Individual living options
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme
NFP	Not-for-profit
NGO	Non-government organisation
NSW	New South Wales
PaRA	Parent-assisted residential accommodation
PwD	People with disability
RASAID	Ryde Area Supported Accommodation for Intellectually Disabled Inc.
SAIF	Supported Accommodation Innovation Fund
SDA	Specialist Disability Accommodation
SDAC	The Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
SIL	Supported Independent Living
SILC	Supporting Independent Living Co-operative
SRV	Social Role Valorisation

SSDAAG	Sutherland Shire Disability Accommodation Action Group
TEPSIE	Theoretical, Empirical and Policy Foundations for Building Social Innovation in Europe
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States of America

GLOSSARY

ACT Housing	The agency of the ACT Government that manages public housing in the ACT.
Ageing, Disability & Home Care (NSW)	Formerly a division of the NSW Department of Family and Community Services that funded or provided disability services and support accommodation including group homes.
Benambra Intentional Community	The public housing development in which the intentional community is located in Canberra.
Carer and caregiver	A person who provides care, support and other assistance to a person with a disability. Caregiver is a term used to refer to unpaid parent caregivers.
Community housing	Community housing is a type of social housing rented by a community housing provider to people who need housing. Some of the properties rented out by community housing providers are owned by or subject to the interests of a government agency or government-owned statutory corporation of a state or territory government.
Community housing provider	A community housing provider is a company or cooperative registered as a community housing provider under the <i>Community Housing Providers</i> (Adoption of National Law) Act 2012 (NSW) and the National Regulatory System for Community Housing. It is a non-government organisation that provides a type of social housing on behalf of a state or territory government.
Commonwealth Rent Assistance	A non-taxable income supplement paid by the Australian Government to eligible people to help them pay rent, excluding rent for public housing.
Disability ACT	Disability ACT was the ACT Government agency that funded disability services in the ACT before the NDIS commenced.
Disability Royal Commission	Australia's Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.
Disability Support Pension	An Australian Government payment to help cover rental costs for eligible people.

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Family and Community Services (FACS)	FACS was a department of the NSW government until its functions and responsibilities were transferred in 2019 to a newly formed cluster agency called the Department of Community and Justice.
Group home	A dwelling where a number of people with disability live together in a domestic setting with or without paid support whether or not payment for board and lodging is required.
HILDA survey	The Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey is a household-based panel study conducted annually since 2001. It collects information about economic and subjective wellbeing, labour market dynamics and family dynamics. It is funded through the Department of Social Services. The Melbourne Institute at the University of Melbourne designs and manages the study.
Housing NSW	A division of the NSW Department of Family and Community Services.
Housing Pathways NSW	Housing assistance system in NSW for the management and administration of applications for government-funded mainstream housing.
National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)	The statutory agency that implements the NDIS and administers the allocation of NDIS funding.
National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)	The Australian Scheme that provides individual funding for paid support and SDA housing in Australia.
NSW Housing Register	A single list of people approved as eligible to wait for social housing and remain on that list. The NSW Housing Register is an element of the Housing Pathways NSW system for the management and administration of housing assistance.
Pathway or housing pathway	A person's experience of housing over time. The term can also refer to a policy pathway to ensure people can access housing, and the system that provides policies, processes and other tools to assist people into housing or, conversely, restrict access.

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Participant	Person eligible for NDIS. Not all participants will be eligible for SDA housing or SIL support in an SDA house.
Productivity Commission	The Australian Government's advisory body on microeconomic policy and regulation relating to social and environmental issues.
Public housing	Rental housing owned and managed by FACS or another government agency.
Quality and Safeguards Commission	An independent agency that regulates, audits and enforces quality and safety of NDIS supports and services.
Specialist disability accommodation (SDA)	NDIS housing payments for specialist disability accommodation and the SDA housing itself.
SDA Design Standard	The SDA Design Standard (edn 1.1 issue date 25 October 2019) applies to specialist disability accommodation (SDA) where an application for enrolment is made from 1 July 2021 (https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/housing-and-living-supports-and-services/specialist-disability-accommodation/sda-design-standard).
SDA housing	Specialist disability accommodation funded by SDA under a rental model.
Social housing	Government-funded subsidised housing for people on a low income — particularly people who receive Australia's Disability Support Pension, Newstart or Job Seeker. This thesis uses the term to include group homes and other SDA as well as public housing and community housing.
Supported Independent Living (SIL)	Individual funding for independent living supports under the NDIS.
Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC)	A survey undertaken and published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics semi-regularly. SDAC surveys were conducted in 2012, 2015 and 2018.

ABSTRACT

This study explored the activities, strategies and transactions of parents and not-for-profit non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that acquired resources and created the power to establish new homes for adults with a disability. The study used theories of institutional entrepreneurship, power, social entrepreneurship and social innovation to explain the interaction between families, the state (as provider of individual funding for paid support or housing) and NGOs to create more housing for adults with a disability. These families and NGOs took action when traditional specialist and mainstream housing systems were constrained and difficult to access. Innovative models of housing, support and community were created or supported by these families and NGOs working with other people, organisations and institutions. These initiatives, which combined resources and inputs from different sectors and systems to meet housing needs in new ways, are presented in this thesis.

Qualitative data collection involved semi-structured interviews and document analysis in 11 case studies where new homes were established for more than 44 adults. In six family case studies and five NGO case studies, parents and NGOs were economic actors and bricoleurs who became innovators who refused to accept limited financial resources as a reason why these adults could not have their own home. Cross-case analysis using Engeström's (2001) culturalhistorical activity theory revealed the importance of: family advocacy, empowerment through collective action with other families, allies and resources drawn from the parent or NGO's community or network; institutional entrepreneurship through organisation forming, new models of housing with paid support and governance models; institutional support from like-minded politicians, bureaucrats and NGOs; and bricolage, where families and NGOs combined bits and pieces of resources and other inputs to establish housing and deliver paid support in new ways. Families and NGOs in the case studies were empowered to attain new homes through their persistence, individual funding received from government, and capital funding where needed.

The study demonstrated that the institutions of family, the state (through government and politicians) and the not-for-profit sector (through NGOs) can achieve new models of housing and support when they collaborate, combine

resources and act together without regard for sector boundaries. In short, these actors achieve more together than they could achieve alone. To encapsulate their efforts, this study presented the development of their organised action, purposeful networks, collaboration and shifting power relationships, giving effect to the voice of parent advocacy, collective action and family groups.