Promoting Home and Self-Determination: Housing as an Active Site of Engagement in Fort Good Hope

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ABSTRACT

Homelessness, chronic housing insecurity, and poorly designed policy responses pose a profound threat to the health and wellbeing of communities in northern Canada. In Fort Good Hope, a Dene community in the Sahtu Region of the Northwest Territories, the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society (KGHS) is coordinating a community-led response to this housing crisis – a response that centres critical connections between Indigenous conceptualisations of home, community wellbeing, and self-determination. Yet, the KGHS is experiencing obstacles to this work.

Using housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement, this research draws on policy scoping and semi-structured in-depth interviews to map out current barriers to the self-government of housing in Fort Good Hope, and investigate how housing policy and governance in the NWT might be adapted to better support Indigenous home and self-determination.

The results show that the current system through which housing is delivered in Fort Good Hope is grounded in non-Indigenous epistemologies and characterised by federal and territorial government control, which leaves insufficient space for Indigenous worldviews, expertise and visions of self-determination. Moreover, using home to engage with holistic understandings of wellbeing and socio-cultural conditions in Fort Good Hope provides an opportunity to consider alternative pathways to Indigenous self-determination that extend beyond the state-led negotiation of self-government in the NWT.

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AHI – Affordable Housing Initiative

BIP – Business Incentive Policy

CARE – Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancements

CEAP – Canada Economic Action Plan

CIRNAC – Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada

CMHC - Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation

ECE – Education, Culture and Employment

GNWT – Government of the Northwest Territories

HAF – Homelessness Assistance Fund

HAP – Homeownership Assistance Program

HELP – Homeownership Entry Level Program

IAH – Investment in Affordable Housing

ICEHR – Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research

ISC – Indigenous Services Canada

KGHS – K'ásho Got’ı̨ne Housing Society

LHO – Local Housing Organisation

NDP – New Democratic Party

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

NRCan – Natural Resources Canada

NWT – Northwest Territories

NWTHC – Northwest Territories Housing Corporation

PATH – Providing Assistance for Territorial Homeownership

RRAP – Rehabilitation And Repair Program

SAFE – Securing Assistance For Emergencies

SCHF – Small Communities Homelessness Fund

SEF – Shelter Enhancement Fund

SSHAG - Small Settlement Home Assistance Grant

SSI – Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated

STEP – Solutions To Educate People

TRSP – Transitional Rent Supplement Program

UNDRIP – United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

YKDFN – Yellowknives Dene First Nation

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

In 1982 the Dene community of Fort Good Hope (Rádeyıl̨ı Kǫ), Northwest Territories (NWT), negotiated an arrangement with the Government of the NWT (GNWT) to suspend territorial government control of housing delivery and self-govern the delivery of the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) in Fort Good Hope. Utilising their control over the funding, design and administration of this housing program, the community delivered a set of log and wood-framed homes that supported the cultural, social, emotional and physical needs of residents. While the HAP program was discontinued in the early 1990s largely due to a lack of funding these homes continue to be cherished dwelling spaces in the community today. They are not only valued as high-quality physical shelters though, as they also reflect the resilient will of Fort Good Hope residents to be self-sufficient and deliver housing holistically within their epistemological framework of home. Indeed, for community members interviewed in 1988 for a study of the HAP in Fort Good Hope, "having control over HAP is all part of our desire for self-government or at least greater self-sufficiency."[1]

Self-governing the HAP in the 1980s offered some brief relief for Fort Good Hope from a top-down and inefficient norm of government-led housing delivery in the NWT, that repeatedly failed to meet the needs of residents. When the HAP ceased in the early 1990s, this norm of fragmented and ineffective governance resumed and continues to characterise housing delivery in the NWT today. In 2019, 42% of dwellings in the NWT had at least one major housing problem,[2] which was a significant increase from the 20% recorded in 2016,[3] illustrating the

[1] Rees, W.E. & Hulchanski, J.D. (1990). Housing as Northern Community Development: A Case study of the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) in Fort Good Hope, Northwest Territories. untitled (publications.gc.ca). Pp. 64.

[2] The NWT Bureau of Statistics who conduct these community surveys defines a major housing problem as an affordability, adequacy, or suitability issue. They provide the following parameters for defining these categories: "*Suitability is defined as having the appropriate number of bedrooms for the characteristics and number of occupants as determined by the National Occupancy Standard requirements. Adequate housing must have running water, an indoor toilet, bathing and washing facilities and must not require major repairs. Affordable housing costs less than 30% of household income where shelter costs include utilities, water, heat, insurance, property taxes land lease costs and rent or mortgage payments.*" NWT Bureau of Statistics. (2021). "Housing Conditions". [online]. Available: https://www.statsnwt.ca/Housing/housing-conditions/ (Accessed: 19/04/2021). Pp. n/a.

[3] Desmarais, A. (2019). "'This is a crisis': N.W.T. survey shows worsening housing conditions". [online]. Available: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/this-is-a-crisis-n-w-t-survey-shows-worsening-housing-conditions-1.5377616 (Accessed: 27/05/2020).; GNWT. (2019). "Housing Indicators: 2019 NWT Community Survey". [online]. Available: https://www.statsnwt.ca/recent_surveys/2019NWTCommSurvey/2019%20NWT%20Community%20Survey%20Housing%20Indicators.pdf (Accessed: 27/05/2020).

widespread nature of housing challenges in the territory. Meanwhile, in Fort Good Hope residents are confronting a crisis of housing insecurity and homelessness that repeatedly undermines the health and wellbeing of the community's population – with two thirds of the community's residents living in core housing need[4] in 2019, and a 2017 report revealing at least 75 community members, around 13% of the community's population,[5] were without a home.[6] The localised story of housing in need of repair here is even more alarming than the territorial statistics, with two thirds of Fort Good Hope's dwellings recording at least one major problem.[7] Of all the community's households in 2019, 57.7% were not adequate, 12.4% were not affordable, and 17.5% were not suitable.[8] It is important to note that these metrics of housing insecurity lack any contextual understanding of the northern communities to which they refer and have been criticised as such,[9] but nevertheless hold power as the only quantitative indicator of housing need in the region, hence their use here.

This housing crisis, the community argues, is rooted in the colonial mismanagement of the settlement and exacerbated by infrastructural damage from climate change induced permafrost melt.[10] Further, in Fort Good Hope this crisis of housing need is not limited to just physical shelter. Rather, housing intersects with other aspects of the social landscape such as education, employment, intergenerational trauma, addictions, domestic violence, and mental wellbeing, all of which play a role in shaping homelessness and housing insecurity in the community.[11] Such connections are not recognised however by the territorial government, which continues to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach to housing provision that is directed not by community voices and priorities but by decisions made in the territorial capital, Yellowknife, bears no sensitivity to the nuanced needs of the NWT's communities, and thus results in physically, contextually, and culturally inadequate housing that is unable to support a sense of home.

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[4] Core housing need is defined by the GNWT as living in homes that are overcrowded, in need of repair, or unaffordable. NWT Bureau of Statistics. (2021). "Housing Conditions". [online]. Available: https://www.statsnwt.ca/Housing/housing-conditions/ (Accessed: 19/04/2021).

[5] The population of Fort Good Hope in 2017 was 570.

[6] K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society & PlanIt North. (2017). The State of Housing in Rádeyıl̨ı Kǫ̨: Fort Good Hope Housing Assessment to Inform Community Planning.

[7] GNWT. (2019). "Housing Indicators: 2019 NWT Community Survey". [online]. Available: https://www.statsnwt.ca/recent_surveys/2019NWTCommSurvey/2019%20NWT%20Community%20Survey%20Housing%20Indicators.pdf (Accessed: 27/05/2020).

[8] GNWT. (2019). "Housing Problems by Type of Issue and Community, 2019". [online]. Excel document available: https://www.statsnwt.ca/Housing/housing-conditions/ (Accessed: 19/04/2021).

[9] McCartney, S., Herskovits, J. & Hintelmann, L. (2018). Failure by Design: The On-Reserve First Nations Housing Crisis and Its Roots In Canadian Evaluation Frameworks. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies.* 38(2); Pp. 101-124.

[10] KGHS & PlanIt North. State of Housing in Rádeyıl̨ı Kǫ̨.

[11] K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society. (2020). Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ̀: K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society Strategic Plan and Action Plan 2020-2025. KGHS-Strategic-Plan-2020-FNL-WR.pdf (cklbradio.com)

In an attempt to depart from this problematic housing governance system and its poor housing outcomes, the community of Fort Good Hope is once again trying to lead its own housing program and move towards a future of community-based self-government following the conclusion of currently ongoing self-government negotiations. The same foundations of resilience, innovation and self-sufficiency in Fort Good Hope that underlay the success of the HAP in the 1980s, today give rise to a community-led housing strategy directed by the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society (KGHS) that engages with housing as home. In this way Fort Good Hope is developing local responses to the housing crisis that focus on supporting cultural resurgence, connecting community, and facilitating individual agency. Thus far, the KGHS has held a forum to evaluate housing need and outline possible solutions; purchased a mobile sawmill for producing wood that can be used for construction and repairs; established the Kádúyíle transitional home for men; and developed a program for assessing the condition of homes and training local people to carry out the repairs and maintenance.[12]

Future plans of the housing strategy are presented in the KGHS' five-year Strategic Plan,[13] which outlines intentions to develop four new small homes for the men from the KádúyıĺeTransition home to move into; a safe home and second stage home for women and children; a revolving door loan fund for repairs and maintenance; a materials program to provide residents with local and affordable repair supplies; and four new self-build homes. Aligning with Jesse Thistle's[14] conceptualisation of Indigenous homelessness and home, the KGHS frames its plan around a holistic vision of home that extends beyond physical shelter and pushes back against the continuing legacy of colonialism in the community. This vision instead captures elements of kinship, connectedness, and self-sufficiency to inform programs that reconnect their people, enable responsibility, engage community, decolonise housing and land, communicate transparently, learn as they go, support the local economy, and meet diverse housing needs.

> The K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society enables Rádeyıl̨ı̨ Kǫ residents to live in and maintain safe, affordable homes. The Society delivers programs to address housing issues holistically, facilitating individuals to both secure homes and also to develop the skills, self-esteem and resilience needed to maintain their homes as nurturing environments for themselves and their families.

[12] Zingel, A. (2021). "Fort Good Hope recognized with $10K award for housing program". CBC News. [online]. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-good-hope-housing-award-1.6268675. (Accessed: 02/02/2022).
[13] KGHS. Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ.
[14] Thistle, J. (2017). The National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Toronto: York University Press.

KGHS Mandate[15]

Where inadequate, decontextualised and one-size-fits-all GNWT policy responses once stood, Fort Good Hope and the KGHS now shape their housing delivery around Indigenous conceptualisations of home that capture the values of kinship and connectedness which are central to the K'ásho Got'ıne Dene ontology and way of life.

In spite of these efforts, the ability of the KGHS to effectively self-determine housing needs and priorities in Fort Good Hope is hindered by a policy and governance landscape that, intentionally or not, obscures the sustainable self-government of housing. The KGHS grapples continuously with obstacles discussed later in this subsection which inhibit its efforts to work in accordance with the view of housing as home. Within the existing processes of NWT housing delivery, the balance of control remains largely outside of the community, while systemic procedures and regulations demand capacity not present in remote northern communities and delay KGHS efforts. Thus, in this thesis I set out to study this landscape of housing governance, unpacking the layers that construct it, identifying barriers to community-led housing within it, and exploring how it can support the self-determination of housing in the NWT.

Hinderances to the community-led housing efforts in Fort Good Hope that are at the centre of this study, derive then from a difference in housing ideologies. The current system of housing delivery in the NWT propels a way of thinking about housing that conflicts with the way of thinking about housing as home in Fort Good Hope that directs KGHS programming. Seeing housing as the connection point for many different needs in Fort Good Hope is something Arthur Tobac and James Caesar – directors of the KGHS and community partners in this research – implored me to share in from our very first communications in the Fall of 2019. During one particularly poignant call that was resumed a week after it started, after Arthur had received news of a young community member's death by suicide, he reflected with sadness and frustration on the critical role of home in creating self-worth, maintaining physical and mental wellbeing, supporting healthy relations, enabling engagement with education, and holding down a job. "It's not just about housing anymore, it's about our humanness," Arthur expressed to me in a later interview, before adding that "we just took on housing, how is it that all the social things are on our plate as well?"[16]

[15] KGHS. Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ. Pp. 6.
[16] Tobac, A. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.

For Arthur and James, it is through self-government and self-determination that housing governance in Fort Good Hope can engage with housing as home and hold up housing not as a separate entity but rather as inextricably connected to other nodes in the community's social landscape. In other words, it is community control in Fort Good Hope that enables the prioritising of a K'ásho Got'ıne Dene ontology in housing delivery and the social effectiveness of subsequent programming; just as it did with the self-governed HAP, some 34 years before the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society was incorporated in 2016. As Rees and Hulchanski report in their study of the HAP: "The Fort Good Hope experience… present[s] a clear-cut example of how increased local control has led to superior program delivery and has enabled a housing program to address certain other chronic community problems and concerns".[17]

Thus, efforts to address more effectively Fort Good Hope's housing crisis are necessarily aligned with efforts to formalise the community's right to Indigenous self-determination, which currently takes the form of self-government negotiations. "What does the self-government of housing look like for you?" I asked Arthur and James during our interview from my office in St John's, Newfoundland, grateful for this precious time to connect, albeit in line with the new Covid-19 norm, over WebEx.

A few seconds passed as my question travelled across time zones to their office in Fort Good Hope. "Housing is such an important part of our ideas towards self-government" Arthur responds first, "without adequate or sufficient housing, there's so much social problems… self-government would take our housing and use it as a springboard for the social programs".

"There's a whole bunch of subject matters that are supposed to be negotiated" James adds, indicating the holism that self-government allows community governance to recognise, "and if you see, half of them are in some way related to housing so you know, in addressing housing you're also addressing other subject matters".[18] As such, this housing strategy is simultaneously and critically a plan for both meeting housing needs and pursuing Indigenous self-determination, that weaves together Fort Good Hope's aspirations for home, self-government and decolonisation.

Despite the importance of this work in Fort Good Hope to promote home and self-determine housing with an Indigenous epistemology, the KGHS is encountering barriers to its efforts. During one conference call in 2019 every story Arthur and James told ended with a question:

[17] Rees & Hulchanski. Housing as Northern Community Development. Pp. 90.
[18] Tobac, A. & Caesar, J. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.

Why is community planning being done in Edmonton, by people who have not been to the community? Why is money for housing from the Federal government not making its way into the community? Why are there hold ups with the Department of Lands? How do we get more money for building our own houses, or more cabins out on the land? Who is actually in control of which housing related processes? How do we promote responsible homeownership when it is unclear who is responsible for which housing needs? Afterwards, in a brief and ultimately unsuccessful effort to address some of these questions, it became apparent that very little is clear or documented about the system through which housing is delivered in the Northwest Territories and in which the KGHS is trying to participate - nor how prepared it is to support the self-government of housing. It seems that while the GNWT – and its Housing Corporation (NWTHC) that leads housing delivery in the region – may recognise that communities are in a better position than the territorial government to meet their own housing needs, it fails to afford the control of and access to processes that communities fundamentally require if they are to deliver their own housing.

Now, whilst many studies position home and community-led delivery as the sustainable solution to the northern housing crisis, little attention has been paid to the practical and ideological impacts of Indigenous self-government and self-determination on housing governance and policy in northern Canada.[19] Ongoing discussions around and practices to formalise self-government and self-determination transform the landscape in which northern housing problems are to be addressed, but academic conversations rarely put self-determination and housing in dialogue with each other. This gap in the literature leaves many questions around how to bridge the space made clear by the KGHS' experience, in between Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of thinking about and delivering housing. In response then to this gap and the questions and concerns raised by community research partners at the KGHS, this research project explores the junction between home, housing, and self-determination in the Northwest Territories. Engaging with remote research methods, I draw on policy scoping, archival research, creative writing, and semi-structured in-depth interviews with key informants involved in NWT housing delivery to investigate the system of decision-making and governance structures through which housing is delivered in the NWT - unpacking how it

[19] For the purpose of this thesis, northern Canada refers to the three territories (the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut) and the two provincial northern regions where Inuit are the demographic majority (Nunavik and the northern region of Labrador).

stands to promote or hinder the self-government of housing, and exploring how pathways towards the self-determination of housing might be better supported.

In this way, I use housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement[20] to explore and navigate the trajectory of Indigenous self-determination in the NWT. I draw this idea of seeing housing as an active site of engagement from the work of Zoe Todd who finds that the site of human-fish relations in Paulatuuq reflects the ways of thinking, priorities, values, and conflicts that should inform the broad politics of Indigenous reconciliation. For Todd sites of engagement are sets of relations between actors of various kinds, including non-humans, with "different cosmologies, worldviews, legal orders, and experiences while also contending with the colonial logics and power relations of the Canadian State." In this study, using housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement allows us to explore the space that emerges through this research between Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of thinking about housing and home, and consider how Indigenous conceptualisations of home manifest within, bump up against and disrupt settler-colonial housing governance.

In order to explore this space, I situate this work conceptually within scholarship on northern and Indigenous home and housing, and Indigenous self-determination. As I centre the connection between Indigenous home and self-determination drawn because both conditions promote Indigenous choices and ways of thinking, it is important to clarify how I mean to engage with epistemology in this study. Given that epistemology is how we know what we know, or how we think about something, I consider Indigenous epistemology to be a central pillar of the conceptual framework in this study of home and self-determination in Fort Good Hope. With that I employ the phrase 'an Indigenous epistemology of home' to refer to the Indigenous conceptualisation of housing as home; of housing as part of an interconnected web that constructs the societal fabric of Fort Good Hope; and thus, as the way of thinking that must direct self-determined housing governance. That is to say that an Indigenous epistemology and way of thinking about housing and governance as holistic and interconnected, is different to a non-Indigenous or Western epistemology and way of thinking about housing as a separate entity or isolated governance sector.

To that point, through the discussion of interview data and the experiences of the KGHS in this thesis, a binary emerges between the ways Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants

[20] Todd, Z. (2014). Fish pluralities: Human-animal relations and sites of engagement in Paulatuuq, Arctic Canada. *Études/Inuit/Studies*. 38(1-2); Pp. 217–238. Pp.224.

talk about housing and home. There is a clear expression of disconnect between self-determined Indigenous ways of supporting home and the current housing governance and policy of the no-Indigenous settler-colonial system. That, however, is not to say that such a defined binary exists between Indigenous and western epistemologies, which are in fact complexly entangled. Instead, it seems this binary is assisting Indigenous participants in explaining why Indigenous ways of thinking of housing as home are not being represented in current housing delivery. Using housing in Fort Good Hope as a site of engagement provides the space to explore the conflict of different ideologies around housing, home, and governance, and as such, it is important for me to maintain the binary that is expressed by research partners and participants between Indigenous and Western epistemologies.

With this all in mind, the aim of this thesis is to assist the KGHS in its work and Fort Good Hope in their efforts to move towards the self-government of housing, while bringing Indigenous self-determination, northern housing, and home into dialogue with each other. In this introductory chapter I provide some background for the landscape of housing in the NWT, introduce the objectives and questions to which this thesis seeks to respond, address the ethics of this study as well as my positionality in it as a non-Indigenous settler researcher, and explore the geography of Fort Good Hope in which this research is situated.

1.2. Background: A Northern Housing Crisis

Home is a familiar concept for many and yet it is simultaneously complex, at once referring to a place, to physical shelter, to space, to a feeling, to an emotion, or to connections. The importance of home has come into sharp focus during the time we have spent living through the global Covid-19 pandemic wherein strategies to keep populations around the world safe have been led by the health directive to 'stay home'. Notwithstanding the abundant literature that positions housing as a social determinant of health,[21] the global response to Covid-19 conveys now more than ever the critical role home and housing plays in promoting or undermining health and wellbeing.

[21] Tsai, A.C. (2015). Home Foreclosure, Health and Mental Health: A Systematic Review of Individual, Aggregate, and Contextual Associations. *PLoS One.* 10(4); Chambers, E.C., Fuster, D., Suglia, S.F. & Rosenbaum, E. (2015). Depressive Symptomology and Hostile Affect among Latinos Using Housing Rental Assistance: the AHOME Study. *Journal of urban health: bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine.* 92(4); Pp. 611-621.; Hernandez, D. & Suglia, S. (2016). Housing as a Social Determinant of Health. [online]. Available at: https://healthequity.globalpolicysolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Housing2.pdf (Accessed 06/12/2019).; Gan, W.Q., Sanderson, W.T., Browning, S.R. & Mannino, D.M. (2017). Different types of housing and respiratory health outcomes. *Prev Med Rep.* 7; Pp. 124-129.; Taylor, L. (2018). Housing And Health: An Overview Of The Literature. Health Affairs Health Policy Brief. [online]. Available at: https://www.healthaffairs.org/do/10.1377/hpb20180313.396577/full/ (Accessed: 06/12/2019).

In northern Canada, home has been shaped significantly by the colonial, social welfare interventions of Canada's settler government, whose development agenda engaged heavily with housing as a tool for social control. Under the post-war 'northern vision' beginning in the 1950s, state-sanctioned housing programs were introduced in the region to accelerate the settlement of previously nomadic Indigenous peoples – a process that had begun with the establishment of trading posts.[22] Dene Elder George Blondin writes:

> Before contact, my ancestors travelled constantly, following the caribou herds for meat or looking to find good year-round fish lakes. They were born on the land and died on the land. They roamed across Denendeh and settled nowhere. But when trading posts were built, people began to stay in one place.[23]

One such trading post, first of the North West Company and later of the Hudson's Bay Company, was established at what we now know as Fort Good Hope, in 1805. The initial policy intention of the fur trade was to keep Indigenous peoples on the land and participating in traditional activities. However, with the decline of the fur trade towards the end of the 19th century, the policy intention shifted as it became clear that containing Indigenous peoples on plots surrounding fur trade posts would allow the government to open up land for resource extraction.[24] Furthermore, settled communities enabled the imposing of European social and economic systems by an increasingly interventionist welfare state delivering health, education, and housing services.[25] With these interventions, Indigenous settlement facilitated the state's general advancement of a modernisation agenda that wanted Indigenous peoples to "become civilized in a white way and to fit into its idea of how society should be".[26]

The result, with specific regard to dwelling as Catherine Lafferty explains, is that "many Indigenous people in the NWT were forced to be dependent on a housing system that was created to control and assimilate them, part of a larger strategy to dispossess them of their land."[27] Any understanding or conception of home held by Indigenous peoples was ignored, as the government consistently delivered inadequate housing in northern Canada with no regard

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[22] Wenzel, G. (2008). Clyde Inuit Settlement and Community: From before Boas to Centralization. *Arctic Anthropology.* 45(1); Pp. 1-21.
[23] Blondin, G. (1997). Yamoria, the Lawmaker: Stories of the Dene. Edmonton: NeWest Press. Pp. vi.
[24] Damas, D. (2002). Arctic migrants/Arctic villagers: The transformation of Inuit settlement in the Central Arctic. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
[25] Christensen, J. (2013). 'Our home, our way of life': spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada. *Social & Cultural Geography*. 14(7); Pp. 804-828.
[26] Blondin. Yamoria, the Lawmaker. Pp. 222.
[27] Lafferty, C. (2020). "This House Is Not a Home". Briarpatch Magazine. [online]. Available at: https://briarpatchmagazine.com/articles/view/this-house-is-not-a-home. (Accessed: 05/12/2021). Pp. n/a. The author's Dene name is Katłįà.

for the region's climate or the sociocultural needs of residents such as multi-generational dwelling and preparing country foods on the floor. Poor construction materials,[28] Euro-Canadian housing designs and spatial orientations,[29] rigid payment schedules,[30] and the misplaced government desire to create a private housing market in the North,[31] all contributed to the deeply problematic outcomes that fell critically short of providing homes for northern and Indigenous residents.

This inadequate model of housing delivery continues today to undermine the connections between housing, home and wellbeing for Indigenous peoples in northern Canada, as it has since the 1950s. The physical unsuitability of units not designed to withstand a northern climate, with ill-fitting windows and doors that allow heat to escape, or that have no power or plumbing while they await major repairs, threatens the physical wellbeing of residents with stress, mould-related respiratory diseases, and tuberculosis.[32] Meanwhile, the cultural inadequacy of northern housing policy challenges the spiritual, emotional, and mental wellbeing of northern and Indigenous residents due to the lack of support for Indigenous notions of home that extend beyond the single nuclear family shelter to connect to the land, cultural practices and traditions, community, and extended family.[33] Collectively, the problematic nature of northern housing policy rooted in the colonial agenda gives rise in northern Canada to pervasive housing insecurity and overcrowding, and drives increasing rates of visible and hidden homelessness – populations in which Indigenous peoples are critically over-represented.[34]

In response to this northern housing crisis shaped by decades of inadequate policy and governance, northern and Indigenous housing dialogues are increasingly centring Indigenous understandings of home. Métis-Cree scholar Jesse Thistle proposes a conceptualisation of home understood as "circles of interconnectedness that together form the heart of healthy

[28] Buchanan, E.J. (1979). Arctic Housing, Problems, and Prospects. (Unpublished Master's thesis). Department of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia.
[29] Dawson, P.C. (1995). "Unsympathetic Users": An Ethnoarchaeological Examination of Inuit Responses to the Changing Nature of the Built Environment. *Arctic*. 48(1); Pp. 71-80.
[30] Robson, R. (1995). Housing in the Northwest Territories: the Post-War Vision. *Urban History Review.* 24(1); Pp. 3-20.
[31] Collings, P. (2005). Housing Policy, Aging, and Life Course Construction in a Canadian Inuit Community. *Arctic Anthropology.* 42(2); Pp. 50-65.
[32] Brockman, A. (2017). "Living with limited running water, 1 light bulb and a wood stove in Fort Good Hope, N.W.T.". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-good-hope-housing-1.4434760. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).
[33] Alaazi, D., Masuda, J., Evans, J. & Distasio, J. (2015). Therapeutic landscapes of home: Exploring Indigenous peoples' experiences of a Housing First intervention in Winnipeg. *Social Science and Medicine.* 147; Pp. 30-37.
[34] Christensen, J. (2017). No Home in a Homeland: Indigenous Peoples and Homelessness in the Canadian North. UBC Press: Vancouver, Toronto.

Indigenous social and spiritual emplacement,"[35] rejecting Western, non-Indigenous ideas around housing, home, and homelessness upon which northern housing policy is founded. Despite previous recognition by policymakers of the difference between housing and home,[36] policy has fallen short of reacting. Thus, scholars increasingly call for the orientation of northern housing delivery around Indigenous home and homemaking practices, via contextualised and culturally supportive programming.[37]

Alongside these calls – and drawing on established pathways between improved Indigenous wellbeing and self-determination[38] - it is recognised that the most effective way for Indigenous conceptualisations of home to be prioritised is for communities to have greater control over their housing delivery. To this end, recent scholarship has positioned community-led housing as critical for improving northern and Indigenous housing outcomes, and sought to advance the engagement of First Nations in housing delivery processes such as housing design[39] and needs assessment.[40] Furthermore, the recognition that communities are best placed to meet their housing needs gains practical legitimacy as land claim agreements provide funds and the negotiation of self-government provides structures to enable, formalise and stabilise community-led housing operations.

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[35] Thistle. National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness. Pp. 15.

[36] NWTHC. (1987). Building houses, communities and our future: a new approach to housing in the Northwest Territories. Available: https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/archive/provincial_housing/ca2_nt_hc_87b73.pdf. ; Rees & Hulchanski. Housing as Northern Community Development.

[37] Christensen. 'Our home, our way of life'.; Christensen, J. (2016). Indigenous housing and health in the Canadian North: Revisiting cultural safety. *Health & Place.* 40; Pp. 83-90.; Lauster, N. & Tester, F. (2014). Homelessness and health in the crowded Canadian Arctic: Inuit experiences. In Hwang, S.W., Guirguis-Younger, M. & McNeil, R. (Eds.), Homelessness and health in Canada (87-109). Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.; Thistle. National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness.; Penfold, H., Waitt, G., McGuirk, P. & Wellington, A. (2020). Indigenous relational understandings of the house-as-home: embodied co-becoming with Jerrinja country. *Housing Studies.* 35(9); Pp. 1-16.

[38] Walker, R. (2008). Aboriginal Self-Determination and Social Housing in Urban Canada: A Story of Convergence and Divergence. *Urban Studies.* 45(1); Pp. 185-205.; Auger, M., Howell, T. & Gomes, T. (2016). Moving toward holistic wellness, empowerment and self-determination for Indigenous peoples in Canada: Can traditional Indigenous health care practices increase ownership over health and health care decisions? *Canadian Journal of Public Health.* 107(4-5); Pp. e393-e398.; Katz, A., Enns, J. & Kinew, K.A. (2017). Canada needs a holistic First Nations health strategy. *CMAJ.* 189(31); Pp. E1006-E1007.; Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. (2019). "Northern Policy Hackathon: Recommendations On Housing". The Gordon Foundation. [online]. Available: https://gordonfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TGF_Booklet_Hackathon_Recommendations_2019.pdf (Accessed: 05/05/2020); O'Sullivan, D. (2019). "How to improve health outcomes for Indigenous peoples by making space for self-determination". The Conversation. [online]. Available: https://theconversation.com/how-to-improve-health-outcomes-for-indigenous-peoples-by-making-space-for-self-determination-120070 (Accessed: 01/06/2020).; Moodie, N., Ward, J., Dudgeon, P., Adams, K., Altman, J., Casey, D., Cripps, K., Davis, M., Derry, K., Eades, S., Faulkner, S., Hunt, J., Klein, E., McDonnell, S., Ring, I., Sutherland, S. & Yap, M. (2020). Roadmap to recovery: Reporting on a research taskforce supporting Indigenous responses to Covid-19 in Australia. *Australian Social Policy Association.* 56; Pp. 4-16.

[39] Larcombe, L., Coar, L., Singer, M., Denechezhe, L., Yassie, E., Powderhorn, T., Antsanen, J., Avery Kinew, K. & Orr, P. (2020). Sekuwe (My House): building health equity through Dene First Nations housing designs. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health.* 79(1); Pp. 1717278.

[40] McCartney, S., Herskovits, J. & Hintelmann, L. (2021). Developing occupant-based understandings of crowding: a study of residential self-assessment in Eabametoong First Nation. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment.* 36(2); Pp. 645-662.

However, barriers experienced by the KGHS in its work towards community-led housing in Fort Good Hope illustrate the inability of the current system to support Indigenous self-governance of housing. Challenges encountered with the acquisition of land, the accessing of flexible and sustainable funding, and the navigation of planning and construction demands, all point to the need to better understand the structures and decision-making processes of the NWT. At the same time, there are challenges issued by critical Indigenous scholars that require attention in the context of self-governed housing in the NWT – challenges to the assumption of state-defined self-government agreements as the only pathway for Indigenous peoples in Canada to realise their right to self-determination.[41]

1.3. Research Objectives and Questions

This research is part of a story, the story of Fort Good Hope and the KGHS, and their resilience in a system that offers little space for Indigenous worldviews and expertise. My supervisor, Dr. Julia Christensen, was connected with James and Arthur, our community research partners at the KGHS, in 2018 when they identified a need for some research to assist their development and implementation of Fort Good Hope's community housing strategy. Thus, the purpose of this study is to aid the KGHS in its efforts to support self-determination by investigating the system of housing governance in the NWT and ultimately how the self-government of housing fits into it. Within this aim lies two main objectives: first to understand how the current housing system supports or hinders the self-government of housing; and, second, to explore how the self-determination of housing in the NWT could be better supported. I realise these objectives by using housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement to examine the space for Indigenous self-determination in the NWT made by settler-state provided structures and narratives. In this study, the active site of engagement approach allows me to use housing – that is housing policy, programming and delivery in Fort Good Hope as well as physical housing shelters and options – as a lens through which to explore the dynamics of self-determination in the NWT, shedding light on the possibilities, the assumptions, and the challenges.

In so doing, I bring Indigenous home and northern housing into scholarly dialogue with Indigenous self-determination and self-government. Much of the research on northern and

[41] Alfred, T. (2005). *Wasase: Indigenous pathways of action and freedom*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.; Alfred, T. & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being Indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. *Government and Opposition.* 40(4); Pp. 597-614.; Simpson, L. (2011). Dancing on our turtle's back: Stories of Nishnaabeg re-creation, resurgence and a new emergence. Winnipeg, MB: Arbeiter Ring Publishing.; Coulthard, G. (2014). Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, MN.

Indigenous housing supports the notion that communities are best placed to meet their needs,[42] while Indigenous governments and organisations elevate the connections between housing and self-determination as essential for sustainable community development.[43] Despite this, academic inquiry is yet to consider what the self-determination and/or self-government of housing in northern Canada might look like nor how it can be achieved within the current governance landscape. With this gap in mind, this research engages with and aims to develop a greater scholarly understanding around the distinct but intertwining trajectories of self-determination and housing in the Northwest Territories. Beyond this contribution to academic knowledge, this research also aims to hold up the voices of community housing actors in the NWT who highlight the inability of the governance system to support the housing and self-government aspirations of First Nations, and produce knowledge that supports them in their assertions.

Based on these aims and objectives, this research is guided by my efforts to answer the following questions:

1) What is the current process of decision-making required to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope?
2) What are the key policy and governance barriers that prevent the self-determination of housing in Fort Good Hope?
3) How might housing policy and current structures of governance be adapted to better support 'home' as it is articulated in Fort Good Hope?
4) How is housing policy itself an 'active site of engagement'[44] for understanding the dynamics of self-determination in the Northwest Territories?

1.4. Research Methods and Ethics

To answer these questions, I use policy scoping, archival research, creative writing, and semi-structured in-depth interviews to map the system of NWT housing delivery and

[42] Christensen. 'Our home, our way of life'.; Christensen. Indigenous housing and health.; Lauster & Tester. Homelessness and health.; Riva, M. (2016). Housing interventions in the Arctic: Baseline results of a study assessing the impacts of moving to a new house for Inuit health and well-being. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health.* 75, 116.; Riva, M., Larsen, C.V. L. & Bjerregaard, P. (2014). Household crowding and psychosocial health among Inuit in Greenland. *International Journal of Public Health.* 59(5); Pp. 739-748.

[43] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. (2019). Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy.; Northern Housing Forum. (2019). Northern Housing Policy Recommendations. [online]. Available at: https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/polar-polaire/documents/pdf/northern-housing-forum/NHF%20-%20Policy%20recommendations%20-%20EN%20-%20FINAL.pdf (Accessed: 07/02/2020).; Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. Northern Policy Hackathon.

[44] Todd. Fish pluralities.

understand how the self-determination of housing in the NWT could be better supported. Policy documents, grey literature, media commentaries, and archival materials are all used to trace the historical and present policies and agendas of housing delivery in the NWT. I used a creative, journalistic form of writing to make sense of the resulting data set and map the process by which housing comes to be delivered in Fort Good Hope, as well as to expose the barriers that hinder the community-led housing efforts of the KGHS. Semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted remotely with key personnel involved in the governance of housing in the NWT are used to enhance this mapping story, and then investigate the future of housing and its self-determination in the NWT. By engaging with governing actors involved in housing delivery at the community, territorial, and federal government levels, this research is able to present an informed account of the systemic landscape within which the self-government of housing is set to operate.

The application of these methods is guided by my research approach to study up,[45] which focuses this inquiry on northern housing policy and the system that delivers it in the NWT, rather than on the residents of Fort Good Hope themselves in their facing of the inadequacies of these mechanisms. In studying up I seek to align with an anti-colonial research methodology, rather than reproduce the harmful impacts of extractive northern research conducted by non-Indigenous settler researchers on northern Canada that have been well documented.[46] That being said, as a non-Indigenous, non-Canadian settler scholar conducting northern research, I am set firmly within the academic system that has burdened, fatigued and harmed Indigenous peoples in northern Canada through deeply unethical research endeavours. Thus, I have a responsibility to take seriously the colonial context of this study and my position in the northern research landscape, and make a commitment to be reflexive, honest, and ready to learn from my discomfort. I situate myself and this study within an emerging field of critical northern research, which demands ongoing and critical reflection on all parts of the academic inquiry

[45] Studying up was originated by Nader, L. (1972). Up the Anthropologist: Perspectives Gained From Studying Up, and identified by Zahara, A. (2016). Ethnographic Refusal: a how-to guide. https://discardstudies.com/2016/08/08/ethnographic-refusal-a-how-to-guide/ to be an important decolonizing research methodology.

[46] Cameron, E. (2012). Securing Indigenous politics: A critique of the vulnerability and adaptation approach to the human dimensions of climate change in the Canadian Arctic. *Global Environmental Change.* 22(1); Pp. 103-114.; Carlson, E. (2017). Anti-colonial methodologies and practices for settler colonial studies. *Settler Colonial Studies*. 7(4); Pp. 496-517.; Leeuw, S.D., Cameron, E.S., Greenwood, M.L. (2012). Participatory and Community-Based Research, Indigenous Geographies, and the Spaces of Friendship: A Critical Engagement. *Canadian Geographer.* 56(2); Pp. 180-194.; Moffitt, M., Chetwynd, C. & Todd, Z. (2015). Interrupting the northern research industry: Why northern research should be in northern hands. *Northern Public Affairs.* 4(1). http://www.northernpublicaffairs.ca/index/interrupting-the-northern-research-industry-why-northern-research-should-be-in-northern-hands/

process in order to move towards an anti-colonial and non-extractive northern research nexus.[47] Furthermore, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic near the start of this project added new layers to my reflections and heightened the importance of my commitment to ethical conduct, demanding greater and deliberate engagement with the direction to "step lightly."[48]

1.5. Study Site: The Geography of Fort Good Hope

Fort Good Hope, or Rádeyılı Kǫ[49] by its Dene name meaning 'where the rapids are', is a K'ásho Got'ıne Dene community on the east banks of the Mackenzie River in the Sahtu settlement region of the Northwest Territories (Figure 1). The community gets its Dene name from its connection to the Ts'udé Nilıné Tuyeta – known in English as the Ramparts River and wetlands – which is a sacred harvesting site for the K'ásho Got'ıne Dene and an Indigenous and territorial protected area as of 2019.[50] Fort Good Hope is accessible by air year-round, winter road during their long, cold winters, and by river barge during their short summers.

The settlement of Fort Good Hope was established by the North West Company in 1805 as a fur trading post that would become the centre of a vast trade network in the region. When the fur trade began in the 17th century, European settlers established a great number of posts across Canada at which Indigenous peoples came to trade furs in exchange for goods that "made their lives easier,"[51] like tobacco, knives and cloth. As the trade expanded Northwards, Indigenous peoples in Denendeh and other areas of the Mackenzie Basin in northern Canada were encouraged to maintain their ancestral way of life, sustaining trapping, and bringing in furs to the trade posts, unlike elsewhere in southern Canada where Indigenous peoples were settled on tracts of land to discourage their nomadic lifestyles, and aid colonial administrators in the selling of land for settler farming activities.[52] However, with the discovery of minerals and oil

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[47] Castleden, H., Morgan, V.S. & Lamb, C. (2012). "I spent the first year drinking tea": Exploring Canadian university researchers' perspectives on community-based participatory research involving Indigenous peoples. *Canadian Geographer*, *56*(2), 160–179.; Goldhar, C., Frenette, A., Pugsley, A., Browne, D., Hackett, K., Madsen, V., McNaughton, G. & Christensen, J. (2022). Critical Northern Geography: a Theoretical Framework, Research Praxis and Call to Action in our (Post)Pandemic Worlds. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies.* 21(3); Pp. 270-283.

[48] Desbiens, C. (2010). Step lightly, then move forward: exploring feminist directions for Northern research. *The Canadian Geographer.* 54(4); Pp. 410-416.

[49] Both names are used interchangeably by community residents. I have chosen to use Fort Good Hope in this thesis for clarity and consistency across the territorial and federal governance and policy spheres with which this research interacts.

[50] Brockman, A. (2019). "'It's beautiful': Fort Good Hope elders welcome N.W.T.'s newest protected area". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fgh-ramparts-protected-area-history-1.5377161. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).; Peacock, E. (2019). "Fort Good Hope celebration makes Sahtu protected area a reality". Cabin Radio. [online]. Available: https://cabinradio.ca/26074/news/environment/fort-good-hope-celebration-makes-sahtu-protected-area-a-reality/. (Accessed: 20/09/2020).

[51] Blondin. Yamoria, the Lawmaker. Pp. vi.

[52] Neu, D. (1999). "Discovering" Indigenous Peoples: Accounting and the Machinery of Empire. *The Accounting Historians Journal. 26*(1); Pp. 53-82.

Figure 1: Map of the Northwest Territories.[53] Map amended to highlight the location of the study site, Fort Good Hope.

[53] Statistics Canada. (2021). 2021 Census of Population products: Northwest Territories (Territory). [online]. Available at: 2021A000261.pdf (statcan.gc.ca) (Accessed: 13/03/2021).

in the Yukon and the NWT through the 20th century, the settler colonial administration found a need to control the land in northern Canada, and the Indigenous peoples who had inhabited it since time immemorial.[54]

Treaties provided the Crown a mechanism for gaining this control and were offered to Indigenous peoples as a measure of protection for their traditional way of life and from increasing encroachment by white trappers, prospectors and miners. In the Mackenzie District, the Dehcho, Tłı̨chǫ, Gwich'in and Sahtu peoples signed Treaty 11 with the Crown between 1921 and 1922 in order to in their minds, formalise their rights to the land and their freedom to trap and hunt on it.[55] However, like other numbered treaties signed between the Crown and Indigenous peoples this agreement was presented to Indigenous signatories with hidden terms and consequences. The Crown increasingly imposed limitations on Dene hunting and harvesting practices and coerced leaders into giving up title to their ancestral territory, thus ceding land from First Nations in order to pursue resource extraction and provide land to settlers.[56]

After the written terms of Treaty 11 were first revealed to an assembly of Dene chiefs in 1969, a long fight ensued for the rights to land their ancestors had called home since time immemorial. During this time, the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Dene in Fort Good Hope demonstrated the strength of their political will to protect their land, traditions, and values. From 1974 to 1977 Justice Thomas Berger led the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry to investigate the impacts of a proposed gas pipeline running through the Yukon and Mackenzie River valley. During an unprecedented consultation process that saw Berger travel throughout the Western Arctic listening to the voices of Indigenous peoples whose ancestral homelands the pipeline would cross, Chief at the time and now Elder of Fort Good Hope Frank T'Seleie delivered a powerful address:

> Whether or not your businessmen or your government believes that a pipeline must go through our great valley, let me tell you, Mr. Berger, and let me tell your nation, that this is Dene land and we the Dene people intend to decide what happens on our land… Our Dene nation is like this great river. It has been flowing before any

[54] Fumoleau, R. (2004). As Long As This Land Shall Last: A History Of Treaty 8 And Treaty 11, 1870-1939. 2nd Ed. University of Calgary Press.
[55] Treaty No. 11. (1922). Available: Treaty 11 (dehcho.org)
[56] Fumoleau. As Long As This Land.; Yakeleya, R. & Stewart, S. (2021). We Remember the Coming of the White Man. 2nd Ed. Uproute Books and Media.; Last, J. (2021). "100 years of Treaty 11: The complicated legacy of Canada's last numbered treaty". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/100-years-of-treaty-11-2. (Accessed: 05/12/2021).; Desmarais, A. (2021). "Living with Treaty 11". CBC News. [online]. Available at: Living with Treaty 11 | CBC News. (Accessed: 04/11/2021).

> of us can remember. We take our strength and our wisdom and our ways from the flow and direction that has been established for us by ancestors we never knew, ancestors of a thousand years ago. Their wisdom flows through us to our children and our grandchildren to generations we will never know. We will live out our lives as we must and we will die in peace because we will know that our people and this river will flow on after us.[57]

In his final report, Berger indicated that he had listened to the testimonies of devastation the proposed pipeline would cause, recommending a ten-year moratorium on the development of a pipeline until Indigenous land claims could be settled.

The continued fight for their rights and values gained significant ground in 1993 for Fort Good Hope and the other four Sahtu Dene communities[58] with the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement. The signing of this agreement provided the Sahtu Dene and Métis with title to 41,437 square kilometres of land and 1,813 square kilometres of subsurface rights, whilst also providing for the negotiation of community-based self-government agreements by all five communities. With the land claim agreement in place, this trajectory of resilience and political will to protect K'ásho Got'ıne Dene rights in Fort Good Hope continues today with the ongoing pursuit of self-determination through the negotiation of self-government, and indeed such efforts as those directed by the KGHS to manage their own housing.

Today, Fort Good Hope is home to 601 people, 545 of whom (91%) are Indigenous,[59] while North Slavey and English are the primary languages spoken.[60] The people of Fort Good Hope connect strongly with their Dene and Métis traditions and values, with almost half the population engaging in hunting and fishing, three quarters consuming country foods, and all taking great pride in self-sufficiency and resilience – principles in which the community has a rich cultural history. Ceremonies and celebrations such as the one that followed the establishment of the Ts'udé Nilıné Tuyeta protected area in November 2019, are led into song and dance by the Fort Good Hope drummers. The social landscape of Fort Good Hope is characterised by strong family and community networks of support, evident for example in the

[57] Watkins, M. (1977). Dene Nation: the Colony Within. University of Toronto Press. Pp. 12-18.
[58] The Sahtu region encompasses five communities: Colville Lake, Délıné, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells and Tulit'a.
[59] Most of Fort Good Hope's Indigenous population identify as First Nations, but there are a small number of Métis and Inuit.
[60] GNWT. (2022). Fort Good Hope Statistical Profile. Available at: https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.statsnwt.ca%2Fcommunity-data%2FProfile-Excel%2FFort%2520Good%2520Hope_2022.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK.

pervasive sharing of harvested traditional foods.[61] Meanwhile, the community's economic landscape is similar to that of other northern communities, with a significant informal economy around hunting and fishing, and a formal economy characterised by employment in territorial government positions, in public works and labour, in education, and in services,[62] though higher than average[63] unemployment rates.

The landscape of housing in Fort Good Hope with which this study engages is shaped by these cultural, social, and economic characteristics of the community. The strength of cultural connections in Fort Good Hope plays a significant role in shaping the housing needs of residents, as the community indicate in their housing strategy that makes commitments to providing cultural support such as traditional on the land workshops for members transitioning from homelessness back into society. Strong social networks also play a part in shaping Fort Good Hope's housing as the willingness to share and help each other wherever possible works to reduce the visibility of homelessness in the community, which presents as couch surfing or living with parents instead of the visible or rough homelessness that is more frequently found in urban areas.[64] Additionally, the requirements of housing delivery in Fort Good Hope are heavily influenced by the community's economic landscape. Like most communities in the NWT, as a non-market community the private housing market that dominates housing provision in southern Canada is almost absent in Fort Good Hope, whose residents are subsequently reliant on the public or government provision of housing options.

Housing delivery in Fort Good Hope is also shaped by a specific governance landscape in the NWT that is transitioning from the settler government administration of services towards First Nation self-government. Using funds acquired through the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the Yamoga Land Corporation incorporated the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society in 2016 to address the housing needs of beneficiaries in Fort Good Hope. In turn, the KGHS works with Fort Good Hope's Chief and Council to build consensus around community housing objectives and the strategy through which they are to be realised. At the same time, the GNWT – specifically the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWTHC) – remains responsible for administering a large portion of existing

[61] McMillan, R. & Parlee, B. (2013). Dene Hunting Organization in Fort Good Hope, Northwest Territories: "Ways We Help Each Other and Share What We Can." *Arctic*. *66*(4); Pp. 435–447.
[62] GNWT. (2019). NWT Community Survey 2019. [online]. Available at: community - Fort Good Hope.pdf (statsnwt.ca) (Accessed 10/08/2022).
[63] That is the NWT average. In 2019 27.8% of Fort Good Hope's labour force were unemployed compared to the NWT average unemployment rate of 10.7%, while 50% of Fort Good Hope's labour force were employed compared to the NWT average employment rate of 65.7%. Data from Fort Good Hope Statistical Profile: Fort Good Hope_2022.xlsx (live.com)
[64] KGHS. Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ.

housing services in the community, with the Local Housing Organisation branch in Fort Good Hope managing around 80 public or rental housing units. The federal government meanwhile provides funding both to the territorial government through a bilateral agreement and directly to the KGHS through Service Canada or the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Moreover, housing governance in Fort Good Hope is shaped significantly by the strong political will of the community to protect their rights and way of life. The resistance and resilience reflected in Frank T'Seleie's words to the Berger inquiry would later characterise Fort Good Hope's decision to self-govern the Homeownership Assistance Program in the 1980s, following the community's dissatisfaction with the territorial government's inadequate delivery of housing. As discussed at the outset of this chapter, the community-led delivery of HAP housing in Fort Good Hope marked the resilience and determination with which residents elevated their core value of self-sufficiency to build their own homes. Indeed, the KGHS cites these efforts as the inspiration for the incorporation and direction of its work.[65]

1.6. Thesis Overview

The following five chapters in this thesis will examine the landscape in which the self-determination of housing in Fort Good Hope is being pursued. In Chapter Two, I conduct a critical review of the literature that provides the context for this research. I situate the northern housing crisis in the past and ongoing context of colonialism, paying particular attention to the use of housing governance and policy as a tool for cultural change in its capacity to shape home. Highlighting the lack of literature bringing home, housing and Indigenous self-determination together, I outline the gap to which this study contributes by connecting these trajectories. Ultimately, through a navigation of the scholarly dialogues around Indigenous self-determination, self-government, and the prioritising of Indigenous ontologies that unites them, I make the argument that solutions to the housing crisis are rooted in the broader conditions of possibility for self-governance and self-determination in the Sahtu. Later findings chapters provide the reasons and evidence to support this claim.

Following this, Chapter Three presents the research methodology and methods that this study utilises. I consider my positionality in this northern research as a non-Indigenous, settler scholar, and what it means to conduct this study ethically – in light of both its northern and Indigenous context, and its temporal setting during the Covid-19 pandemic. Subsequently, I discuss the anti-colonial, studying up methodology that guides the two methods phases through

[65] KGHS. Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ.

which I gathered data, the first of policy scoping, archival research and creative writing, and the second of semi-structured, in-depth, remote interviews with key informants involved in the delivery of housing in the NWT.

In Chapter Four, I use creative writing to map the decision-making process through which housing is delivered in Fort Good Hope and other NWT First Nations and thus respond to the first of my research questions. Using data from current and historical policy documents, grey literature, and media commentaries, supplemented with select stories from interviews that provided important insight, I piece together the system of housing governance that the KGHS operates within – exploring the provision of funding, the assessment of housing needs, the allocation of funding, the design of programming, the acquisition of land, and the construction and maintenance of housing options. Analysing this mapping story alongside relevant literature I answer research question two by identifying the barriers within this system surrounding control, sectoral governance, and accessibility, that hinder the community-led housing efforts of the KGHS and the future of self-governed housing.

Chapter Five takes heed of these barriers and studies the series of interviews I conducted to consider the future of housing and its self-determination in the NWT and respond to research questions three and four. I engage with interview participants' stories to explore the systemic changes that are required to support the pursuit of home in Fort Good Hope, and subsequently begin to challenge the extent to which the self-government of housing really enables home and self-determination. This challenge leaves space to contemplate an alternative politics of self-determined housing, in which home can be used as not only a cultural concept but also as a framework for governance.

Finally, Chapter Six brings together the threads that are developed in this thesis to summarise the research story and its findings, in so doing positioning home and the Indigenous epistemologies that give rise to its conceptualisation in Fort Good Hope at the centre of any sustainable housing future in the community. While outlining the scholarly, methodological, and practical contributions of this research, I also reflect on the depth and value that using housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement allowed me to bring to an inquiry of Indigenous self-determination's trajectory in the NWT.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction: A Northern Housing Crisis

The housing landscape in northern Canada is increasingly recognised as being in a state of crisis[1] - a crisis shaped by increasing rates of visible and hidden homelessness,[2] and pervasive housing insecurity marked by overcrowding, stress, and psychological distress in smaller settlements.[3] Collectively, this landscape of chronic housing need presents a significant threat to the health of northern and Indigenous populations in Canada that has only been exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic. Where the housing crisis undermines the health of northerners with a high prevalence of respiratory disease and the compounding of other health determinants such as food security and sleep, it made northern Canada more vulnerable to the impact of the Covid-19 virus. Moreover, overcrowded and inadequate housing made common strategies to slow the spread of the virus such as physical distancing and self-isolation, nearly impossible.[4]

In Fort Good Hope, the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society is responding to the community's housing crisis with a community-led, culturally supportive, and contextualised housing strategy that seeks to address the gaps left by a long history of inadequate settler government housing policy. This thesis seeks to support the work of the KGHS, by positioning Indigenous self-determination as part of the solution to the northern housing crisis, and highlighting how the self-determination of housing in the NWT can be supported. Thus, in this literature review I will outline how the efforts of the KGHS are situated in wider scholarly dialogues around housing as a social determinant of health, Indigenous epistemology, home, and Indigenous self-determination. The chapter starts by framing the past and ongoing conditions of colonialism through which housing emerges as a tool for cultural change and which contextualise the northern housing crisis. It proceeds by exploring the conceptualisation of housing as home, and

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[1] Community Housing Transformation Centre. (2020). "Housing crisis has long plagued Canada's Indigenous communities". [online]. Available at: https://centre.support/housing-crisis-has-long-plagued-canadas-indigenous-communities/ (Accessed: 29/03/2021).

[2] Schmidt, R., Hrenchuk, C., Bopp, J., & Poole, N. (2015). Trajectories of women's homelessness in Canada's 3 northern territories. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*, 74(1), 29778.; City of Yellowknife. (2017). *Everyone is home: Yellowknife's 10-year Plan to End Homelessness.* Yellowknife: City of Yellowknife.; Driscoll, K. (2017). Iqaluit shelter struggling to meet demand as working homeless seek beds. APTN. Available at: http://aptnnews.ca/2017/01/31/iqaluit-shelter-struggling-to-meet-demand-as-working-homeless-seek-beds/. (Accessed 02/04/2021).

[3] Pepin, C., Muckle, G., Moisan, C., Forget-Dubois, N., & Riva, M. (2018). Household overcrowding and psychological distress among Nunavik Inuit adolescents: a longitudinal study. *International journal of circumpolar health*. 77(1), 1541395.

[4] Christensen, J. (2020). "Housing is health: Coronavirus highlights the dangers of the housing crisis in Canada's North". The Conversation. [online]. Available at: Housing is health: Coronavirus highlights the dangers of the housing crisis in Canada's North (theconversation.com) (Accessed 02/04/2021).

its connection to health and wellbeing, before locating this discussion within specific northern and Indigenous contexts. The latter stages of the chapter devote attention to understanding Indigenous self-determination and self-government and bringing the scholarship that surrounds them into dialogue with housing. Ultimately, this review of literature demonstrates the significance of the work being conducted by the KGHS in Fort Good Hope, as it weaves together the threads of home and Indigenous self-determination. By understanding the scholarly conversations that orient these separate threads and putting them into dialogue with each other using the case of the KGHS, I argue that effective responses to the NWT's housing crisis lie within the possibilities for self-determination in the territory.

2.2. Colonial Legacies

If the northern housing crisis is the result of policy and governance that is deeply inadequate, as many involved in the field of northern housing assert,[5] it is essential to seek out the historical roots of this failing. I therefore situate this research in both the past and ongoing context of colonialism[6] and the settler colonial government interventions that have shaped much of the social inequality encountered by northern and Indigenous populations in Canada today.[7]

The impacts of colonialism in northern Canada, that began with European contact in the 17th century, unfolded with the transformation of economic activity and land use, the introduction of infectious diseases, and the transition to settlement for previously nomadic Indigenous peoples.[8] These transitions, and with them the shaping of social welfare and housing in northern Canada, were greatly accelerated in the 1950s during the Canadian government's post-Second World War 'northern vision' that sought to bring western development and ways of living to northern and Indigenous peoples.[9] Following the disruptive decline of the fur trade, the colonial government sought to settle First Nations, Inuit and Métis in centralised rural communities to provide services including education, medical care, and

[5] Christensen, J. (2016). Indigenous housing and health in the Canadian North: Revisiting cultural safety. *Health & Place.* 40; Pp. 83-90.; Christensen, J. (2017). No Home in a Homeland: Indigenous Peoples and Homelessness in the Canadian North. UBC Press: Vancouver, Toronto.; Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. (2019). "Northern Policy Hackathon: Recommendations On Housing". The Gordon Foundation. [online]. Available: https://gordonfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TGF_Booklet_Hackathon_Recommendations_2019.pdf (Accessed: 05/05/2020).

[6] Alfred, T. (2009). Colonialism and State Dependency. *Journal of Aboriginal Health.* 5(2); Pp. 42-60.

[7] Adelson, N. (2005). The embodiment of inequity: Health disparities in Aboriginal Canada. Canadian Journal of Public Health. 96(2); Pp. S45-S61.

[8] Blondin, G. (1997). Yamoria, the Lawmaker: Stories of the Dene. Edmonton: NeWest Press.

[9] Wenzel, G. (2008). Clyde Inuit Settlement and Community: From before Boas to Centralization. *Arctic Anthropology.* 45(1); Pp. 1-21.; Debicka, E. & Friedman, A. (2009). From Policies to Building: Public Housing in Canada's Eastern Arctic 1950s to 1980s. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research.* 18(2); Pp. 25-39.; Tester, F. (2009). Iglutaasaavut (Our New Homes): Neither "New" nor "Ours" Housing Challenges of the Nunavut Territorial Government. *Journal of Canadian Studies.* 43(2); Pp. 137-158.

social housing,[10] and integrate Indigenous peoples into Canadian society and the wage economy.[11]

Housing played a central role in this colonial agenda to change the ways of Indigenous life and promote cultural assimilation. Thomas and Thompson[12] write in 1972 of the inadequacy of housing units that were designed in southern Canada with non-Indigenous cultural patterns and values, and with no input from northern and Indigenous residents, then built with imported materials in northern Canada. Houses had no areas for the cutting and storing of meat, or for working on skidoos and boat motors, with spatial designs instead prioritising the provision of multiple bedrooms in line with the Euro-Canadian belief that people of different sex and age require separate sleeping areas. Houses were also physically inadequate, unable to withstand the northern climate with poor quality of construction and insufficient methods of heating. Meanwhile, the rental schemes that accompanied the provision of these housing units discouraged participation in such informal economic practices as hunting and sharing food, instead promoting wage labour and Indigenous dependency on market goods. So, government provided housing failed to meet the real needs of northern residents: employing culturally inadequate designs; using unsuitable construction materials; and reflecting the misplaced linear spatial orientations and beliefs of Euro-Canadian planners and people respectively.[13] Robert Robson reinforces the problematic nature of this development, arguing that "as the northern community reconstituted itself in the post-war era, it did so in response to the perceived needs of community as opposed to the actual or real needs of the local population… [with] little or no opportunity for northern residents to participate in the planning process".[14]

With northern housing being used as a tool for cultural control in these ways, imposed without agency or input from community members, colonial housing policies repeatedly

[10] Christensen, J. (2012). "They want a different life": Rural northern settlement dynamics and pathways to homelessness in Yellowknife and Inuvik, Northwest Territories. *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe Canadien*. 56(4); Pp. 419--438.; Condon, R.G. (1990). Adolescence and changing family relations in the central Canadian Arctic. *Arctic Medical Research.* 49; Pp. 81-92.; Tester F. & Kulchyski, P. (1994). Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit relocation in the eastern Arctic, 1939-63. Vancouver: University of British Colombia Press.; Damas, D. (2002). Arctic migrants/Arctic villagers: The transformation of Inuit settlement in the Central Arctic. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

[11] Bone, R. (2003). The geography of the Canadian North. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

[12] Thomas, D.K. & Thompson, C.T. (1972). Eskimo housing as planned culture change. Ministry of Supply and Services, Ottawa, ON.

[13] Buchanan, E.J. (1979). Arctic Housing, Problems, and Prospects. (Unpublished Master's thesis). Department of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia.; Carter, T. (1993). Evolution of northern housing policy. Winnipeg: Institute of Urban Studies. Available: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/144470418.pdf (Accessed: 30/03/2021).; Collings, P. (2005). Housing Policy, Aging, and Life Course Construction in a Canadian Inuit Community. *Arctic Anthropology.* 42(2); Pp. 50-65.; Dawson, P.C. (1995). "Unsympathetic Users": An Ethnoarchaeological Examination of Inuit Responses to the Changing Nature of the Built Environment. *Arctic*. 48(1); Pp. 71-80.; Robson, R. (1995). Housing in the Northwest Territories: the Post-War Vision. *Urban History Review.* 24(1); Pp. 3-20.

[14] Robson. Housing in the Northwest Territories. Pp.3.

produced dwelling spaces that undermined rather than supported the cultural, mental, emotional, and physical wellbeing of Indigenous residents. This is unsurprising given that the supposedly well-intentioned goal to improve the lives of northern residents disguised deeply problematic policies of assimilation. Forced relocation, the *Indian Act*, and residential schooling were just some among many harmful colonial interventions to separate Indigenous peoples from their culture, language, traditions, economic practices, and land.[15] The trauma caused by such policies and the subsequent sociocultural transitions forced upon Indigenous peoples in Canada, has been powerfully documented by many Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars,[16] who contribute to a critical body of scholarship that expresses the impact of colonial welfare interventions and displacement on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous populations.[17]

Rooted in this legacy, inadequate housing policy today continues to exacerbate the broader impacts of colonialism on the health of Indigenous peoples – their dispossession and disconnection from their cultural practices, the land, and wellbeing. In northern Canada, increasing rates of homelessness and pervasive housing insecurity are founded in the broader geographies of housing and home in the region.[18] Through ethnographic fieldwork in Yellowknife and Inuvik, Julia Christensen has problematised the over-representation of Indigenous peoples in northern Canada's homeless population while also drawing essential attention to the complex lived pathways to and experiences of northern homelessness and housing insecurity, driven by core housing need in smaller, rural settlements.[19] Furthermore, Christensen's framing of Indigenous experiences through the concept of 'spiritual homelessness', which extends past the individual to capture the scale of collective rootlessness

[15] Alfred. Colonialism and State Dependency.; Auger, M., Howell, T. & Gomes, T. (2016). Moving toward holistic wellness, empowerment and self-determination for Indigenous peoples in Canada: Can traditional Indigenous health care practices increase ownership over health and health care decisions? *Canadian Journal of Public Health.* 107(4-5); Pp. e393-e398.; Corntassel, J. & Bryce, C. (2012). Practicing Sustainable Self-Determination: Indigenous Approaches to Cultural Restoration and Revitalization. *The Brown Journal of World Affairs.* 18(2); Pp. 151-162.

[16] See for example: Christensen. No Home in a Homeland.; Coulthard, G. (2014). Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, MN.; Talaga, T. (2017). Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City. House of Anansi: Toronto.; Thistle, J. (2019). From the Ashes: My Story of Being Métis, Homeless, and Finding My Way. Simon & Schuster: New York.; Luby, B. (2020). Dammed: The Politics of Loss and Survival in Anishinaabe Territory. Canada: University of Manitoba Press.

[17] See for example: Adelson. The embodiment of inequity.; Health Council of Canada. (2005). The Health Status of Canada's First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples: A Background Paper to accompany 'Health Care Renewal in Canada: Accelerating Change'. Toronto, ON: Health Council of Canada. Available at: https://healthcouncilcanada.ca/files/2.03-BkgrdHealthyCdnsENG.pdf (Accessed: 29/03/2021).; Gracey, M. & King, M. (2009). Indigenous health part 1: determinants and disease patterns. *Lancet.* 374(9683); Pp. 65-75.; King, M., Smith, A. & Gracey, M. (2009). Indigenous health part 2: the underlying causes of the health gap. *Lancet.* 374; Pp. 76-85.

[18] Christensen. No Home in a Homeland.

[19] Christensen. "They want a different life".

that is a consequence of socio-cultural change for Indigenous peoples in settler societies,[20] has formed critical foundation for the field of Indigenous housing and health. It appears as an important lens through which to capture loss of place,[21] recognise the epistemic erasures of colonialism,[22] and as such make essential moves towards the decolonisation of homelessness discourse.[23]

Meanwhile, more quantitative studies by such scholars as Riva,[24] Lauster and Tester,[25] and Perreault et al.,[26] shed important light on the health impacts of northern housing insecurity and overcrowding, including stress, psychological distress and mould-related respiratory disease, with connections also being drawn between poor housing conditions and tuberculosis amongst northern Indigenous populations.[27] Other scholars discuss the challenges of promoting cultural wellbeing within northern housing models that fail to reflect and support the way of life in northern communities[28] and some highlight the technical challenges with construction and energy provision for houses in the North.[29]

Policy decisions, design choices and regulations that exclude Indigenous voices perpetuate the problematic imposing of housing, and continue to construct the Indigenous home as a space of colonial aggression and assimilation that pushes Western ideals of home and family living rather than Indigenous values.[30] For example, public housing policy in the NWT stipulates that

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[20] Christensen, J. (2013). 'Our home, our way of life': Spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada. *Social & Cultural Geography.* 14(7); Pp. 804-828.
[21] Barnes, R. & Josefowitz, N. (2019). "Indian Residential Schools in Canada: Persistent Impacts on Aboriginal Students' Psychological Development and Functioning." *Canadian Psychology Psychologie Canadienne.* 60(2); Pp. 65-76.
[22] Padilla, Nicholas L. (2019). "Decolonizing Indigenous Education: An Indigenous Pluriversity within a University in Cauca, Colombia." *Social & Cultural Geography.* Pp. 1-22.
[23] Lawson-Te Aho, K., Fariu-Ariki, P., Ombler, J., Aspinall, C., Howden-Chapman, P., and Pierse, N. (2019). A Principles Framework for Taking Action on Māori/Indigenous Homelessness in Aotearoa/New Zealand. *SSM - Population Health*. 8; Pp. 1-10.
[24] Riva, M. (2016). Housing interventions in the Arctic: Baseline results of a study assessing the impacts of moving to a new house for Inuit health and well-being. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health.* 75, 116.
[25] Lauster, N. & Tester, F. (2010). Culture as a problem in linking material inequality to health: on residential crowding in the Arctic. *Health and Place.* 16(3); Pp. 523-530.
[26] Perreault, K., Riva, M., Dufresne, P. & Fletcher, C. (2019). Overcrowding and sense of home in the Canadian Arctic. *Housing Studies.* Pp. 1-23.
[27] Clark, M., Riben, P. & Nowgesic, E. (2002). The association of housing density, isolation and tuberculosis in Canadian First Nations communities. *International Journal of Epidemiology.* 31; Pp. 940-945.; Larcombe, L., Nickerson, P., Singer, M., Robson, R., Dantouze, J., McKay, L. & Orr, P. (2011). Housing conditions in 2 Canadian First Nations communities. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health.* 70(2); Pp. 141-153.
[28] Semple, W. (2009). The Design and Evaluation of Sustainable Housing for the Canadian Far North. *Journal of Chemical Information ad Modeling.* 33(4); Pp. 207-216.; Alaazi, D., Masuda, J., Evans, J. & Distasio, J. (2015). Therapeutic landscapes of home: Exploring Indigenous peoples' experiences of a Housing First intervention in Winnipeg. *Social Science and Medicine.* 147; Pp. 30-37.
[29] Semple. Design and Evaluation.
[30] Monk, L. (2013). Decolonizing Home: A re-conceptualization of First Nations' housing in Canada. (Thesis). University of Victoria, British Colombia.; McCartney, S. (2016). Re-thinking housing: From physical manifestation of colonial planning policy to community-focused networks. *Urban Planning.* 4(1); Pp. 20-31.; McCartney, S., Herskovits, J. & Hintelmann, L. (2018). Failure by Design: The On-Reserve First Nations Housing Crisis and Its Roots In Canadian Evaluation Frameworks. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies.* 38(2); Pp. 101-124.

adult guests may stay with family or friends in public housing units for no longer than two weeks, which hinders the ability of lease-holding residents to fulfil their cultural obligation and care for family or community members in need.[31] Furthermore, Indigenous values of intergenerational dwelling and sharing are not supported and are in fact problematised by universalising overcrowding measures that rigidly define overcrowding with a person per room metric.[32] This critique can be extended broadly around all the evaluation frameworks used to assess the state of northern and Indigenous housing, diagnose problems, and subsequently shape responses to the housing crisis – frameworks whose standards and metrics posit a universally standardised model of Canadian housing and justify intervention to align northern and Indigenous housing and home environments with this Canadian standard. McCartney, Herskovits and Hintelmann[33] argue that Canadian housing policy must depart from government agendas of cultural assimilation and change, be they hidden or not, and instead seek solely to improve the lived experience of First Nations peoples.

2.3. Housing, home, and health

This trajectory of colonial housing policy that stretches through recent history to the present and shapes the northern housing landscape that is in crisis today, presents housing as a space of conflict, as well as a material space and a cultural space. In so doing, it really illuminates the connection between housing and health. An abundance of research on social determinants of health around the world draws important attention to the operation of social factors that undermine health, and the processes that underlie the unequal distribution of these determinants.[34] Globally, housing is one of the most well-researched social determinants of health,[35] with a significant body of literature dedicated to mapping out the complex pathways

[31] Christensen. Indigenous housing and health.
[32] Lauster & Tester. Culture as a problem.
[33] McCartney, Herskovits & Hintelmann. Failure by Design.
[34] Graham, H. (2004). Social determinants and their unequal distribution: clarifying policy understandings. Milbank Q. 82; Pp. 101–24.; WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health, & World Health Organization. (2008). *Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health: Commission on Social Determinants of Health final report*. World Health Organization.; Islam, M.M. (2019). Social Determinants of Health and Related Inequalities: Confusion and Implications. *Front Public Health*. 7(11).
[35] Taylor, L. (2018). Housing And Health: An Overview Of The Literature. Health Affairs Health Policy Brief. [online]. Available at: https://www.healthaffairs.org/do/10.1377/hpb20180313.396577/full/ (Accessed: 06/12/2019).

between health and housing along the lines of residential stability,[36] affordability of housing,[37] and housing conditions.[38]

Scholarship that attends to the impacts of colonialism and sociocultural upheaval in northern Canada positions housing within a deeply interconnected web of proximal or intermediate social determinants of Indigenous health. Pervasive overcrowding, food insecurity, insecure incomes and employment opportunities, insufficient sanitary infrastructure, and lack of access to education, all create conditions that directly undermine the health of Indigenous peoples.[39] The impact of these factors is exacerbated by the larger web or context in which they are located, formed by structural or distal determinants of Indigenous health (Figure 2). These characteristics indirectly affect health by contextualising and giving rise to the direct or proximal determinants of health.

In northern Canada the dominant structural determinant or context for the conditions that cause poor health outcomes is colonialism.[40] Auger, Howell and Gomes link the undermining of Indigenous health to the systemic oppression and racism manifested in past and ongoing social policies. Colonial policies of assimilation such as residential schools and the subsequent loss of language and culture, produce intergenerational trauma and cultural wounds which connect to high rates of substance abuse, frequent interactions with the criminal justice system, and increased rates of youth suicide.[41] This context thus exacerbates the undermining of Indigenous health by proximal determinants such as housing insecurity and inadequacy.[42]

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[36] Maness, D.L. & Khan, M. (2014). Care of the Homeless: An Overview. *American Family Physician.* 89(8); Pp. 634-640.; Tsai, A.C. (2015). Home Foreclosure, Health and Mental Health: A Systematic Review of Individual, Aggregate, and Contextual Associations. *PLoS One.* 10(4).

[37] Hernandez, D. & Suglia, S. (2016). Housing as a Social Determinant of Health. [online]. Available at: https://healthequity.globalpolicysolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Housing2.pdf (Accessed 06/12/2019).; Taylor. Housing And Health.

[38] Chambers, E.C., Fuster, D., Suglia, S.F. & Rosenbaum, E. (2015). Depressive Symptomology and Hostile Affect among Latinos Using Housing Rental Assistance: the AHOME Study. *Journal of urban health: bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine.* 92(4); Pp. 611-621.; Gan, W.Q., Sanderson, W.T., Browning, S.R. & Mannino, D.M. (2017). Different types of housing and respiratory health outcomes. *Prev Med Rep.* 7; Pp. 124-129.

[39] Greenwood, M. L., & de Leeuw, S. N. (2012). Social determinants of health and the future well-being of Aboriginal children in Canada. *Paediatrics & child health*. 17(7); Pp. 381–384.; Lines, LA., Yellowknives Dene First Nation Wellness Division. & Jardine, C.G. (2019). Connection to the land as a youth-identified social determinant of Indigenous Peoples' health. *BMC Public Health.* 19(176).

[40] Czyzewski, K. (2011). Colonialism as a Broader Social Determinant of Health. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal.* 2(1).; Auger, Howell & Gomes. Moving toward holistic wellness. Pp.393.

[41] Chansonneuve, D. (2007). Addictive behaviours among Aboriginal people in Canada. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation; Kirmayer LJ, Brass GM, Holton T, Paul K, Simpson C, Tait C. (2007). Suicide among Aboriginal people in Canada. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation.; Department of Justice Canada. (2011). A one-day snapshot of Aboriginal youth in custody across Canada: Phase 2. Ottawa: Department of Justice.

[42] Chandler M.J. & Dunlop W.L. (2015). Cultural wounds demand cultural medicines. In: Greenwood M, de Leeuw S, Lindsay NM, Reading C, editors. Determinants of indigenous Peoples' health in Canada: beyond the social. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc. Pp. 78–90.

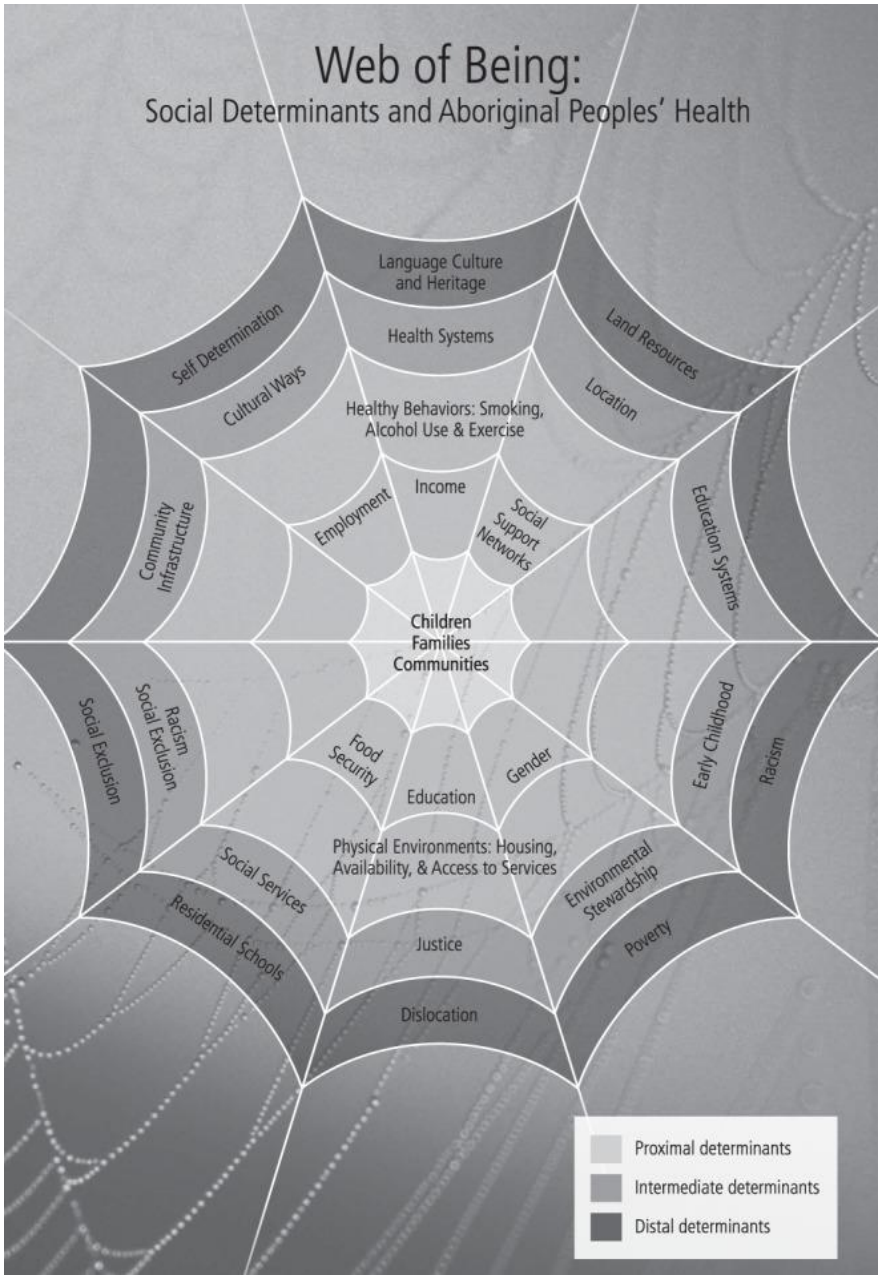

Figure 2: Web showing social determinants of Indigenous health.[43]

By contrast, self-determination becomes a countervailing distal determinant of health that is critical for promoting and supporting Indigenous health. The well-developed field of literature around Indigenous health positions self-determination as essential for improving Indigenous health outcomes by altering the structural conditions of Indigenous lives and

[43] Greenwood & de Leeuw. Social determinants of health.

allowing a more holistic approach to the governance of wellbeing – one that responds to interconnected Indigenous conceptualisations of health.[44]

In the context of northern housing, self-determination is a significant determinant of Indigenous health, because of the conflicting epistemologies of home. Much as the assimilationist policies of settler colonialism undermined the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples, the relationship between state-provided housing that fails to provide a sense of home and Indigenous health today is still located in a colonial context. While the specific relationship between Indigenous home, health, and self-determination will be discussed in sections 2.4 and 2.5, here we can understand what is meant by an epistemology of home.

Scholars from a wide range of disciplines are increasingly concerned with recognising housing as more than a material shelter, through the concept of *home*.[45] Geographers have made a particularly significant contribution to this work with the development of a critical geography of home, initiated by Blunt and Dowling in response to growing ambiguity surrounding analyses of home.[46] Engaging with such concepts as scale, place, and injustice, geographers have moved to advance fluid and multiple understandings of home that can be at once a space of sanctuary and of exclusion, thus situating the home within wider socio-economic and political structures.[47] Moving beyond the conceptualisation of housing as shelter, 'home' as a lens has enabled the connection of housing to feelings and emotions, relationships, and socio-cultural expectations.[48] In this way, home can be conceptualised as a structure of feeling[49] – connecting individual experiences and perceptions with shared cultural attitudes and values. Dyck and Dossa[50] for example demonstrate the inadequacy of bounded and structured conceptualisations of home for two groups of migrant women in Vancouver, British Colombia,

[44] Richmond, C.A.M.; Ross, N.A.; & Bernier, J. (2007). Exploring Indigenous Concepts of Health: The Dimensions of Métis and Inuit Health. *Aboriginal Policy Research Consortium International (APRCi).* Pp. 3-16.; Auger, Howell & Gomes. Moving toward holistic wellness.; Johnson, D., Parsons, M. & Fisher, K. (2021). Engaging Indigenous perspectives on health, wellbeing and climate change. A new research agenda for holistic climate action in Aotearoa and beyond. *Local Environment*. 26(4); Pp.477-503.

[45] Blunt, A. & Dowling, R. (2006). Home. Taylor & Francis: Abingdon.; Ellsworth-Krebs, K., Reid, L. & Hunter, C.J. (2015). Home-ing in on domestic energy research: "House," "home," and the importance of ontology. *Energy Research & Social Science.* 6; Pp. 100-108.

[46] See for the historical trajectory of these analyses: Brickell, K. (2012). 'Mapping' and 'doing' critical geographies of home. *Progress in Human Geography.* 36(2); Pp. 225-244.

[47] Reinders, L. & van der Land, M. (2008). Mental Geographies of Home and Place: Introduction to the Special Issue. *Housing, Theory and Society*. 25(1); Pp.1–13.; Brickell. 'Mapping' and 'doing'.

[48] Mallet, S. (2004). Understanding home: a critical review of the literature. *Sociological Review.* 52(1); Pp. 62-89.

[49] Williams, R. (1954). "Film and the Dramatic Tradition," in Williams and Michael Orrom, Preface to Film. London.

[50] Dyck, I. & Dossa, P. (2007). Place, health and home: Gender and migration in the constitution of healthy space. *Health & Place.* 13; Pp. 691-701.

who produce 'healthy space' in various material, social and symbolic spaces of 'home' that span both their home of origin and adopted country. For these women, the constitution of healthy space and home extends far beyond physical housing bound and fixed in place, capturing instead materialities and relationships stretched over space. Meanwhile, Ellsworth-Krebs, Reid and Hunter[51] demonstrate the far-reaching implications of this epistemological shift, discussing how 'home' can advance domestic energy research by expanding the dominant techno-economic approach to capture important personal aspects of home such as security, identity and comfort. In section 2.4, we will see how this conceptualisation of housing as home takes on a central role in Indigenous epistemologies of housing and wellbeing and is thus a critical recognition in any response to the northern housing crisis.

Despite this important scholarly shift from thinking about housing to thinking about home, the reflection of such shifts in public policy is significantly lacking. This disconnection also characterises much of the scholarship around social determinants of health, which consistently struggles with how to centre public policy in dialogue despite the understanding that policy is fundamental to any effort to tackle health inequalities.[52] That is to say, it is essential for scholars to attend more rigorously to public policy, for it is simultaneously the source of health inequalities and the starting point for efforts to overcome them. Meanwhile, the system through which this policy is delivered also demands critical attention. We know that housing and its delivery reflects a dominant epistemology and system of power[53] – a dominance in Canada that has resulted in great systemic inequities that adversely impact the lives of Indigenous peoples. As such, it is deep systemic change, Webster argues, that is necessary to properly and sustainably address the health inequities between Canada's Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations.[54] These arguments are most relevant to the study of northern housing and health, and for this study, form the crux of its justification to focus on the policy and system through which housing is delivered in the Northwest Territories.

This focus on housing policy also works to respond to the call by Brickell[55] for geographers to better address the 'doing' of home. This call is rooted in Brun's[56] review of Blunt and

[51] Ellsworth-Krebs, Reid & Hunter. Home-ing in on domestic energy.
[52] Crammond B.R. & Carey, G. (2017). Policy change for the social determinants of health: the strange irrelevance of social epidemiology. *Evidence Policy*. 13; Pp. 1–9.
[53] McCartney, Herskovits & Hintelmann. Failure by Design.
[54] Webster, P. (2020). Autonomy needed to improve Indigenous Canadian health. *The Lancet.* 395(10218); Pp. 101-102.
[55] Brickell. 'Mapping' and 'doing'.
[56] Brun, C. (2008). Blunt and Dowling, *Home,* 2006: Review 4. *Social and Cultural Geography.* 9(5); Pp. 564-566. Pp.565.

Dowling's[57] '*Home',* and the challenge that "we should perhaps ask what our responsibilities as researchers in doing critical geographies of home are?" Responding to the critique articulated by Kitchin and Hubbard,[58] of geographers that survey and map exclusionary landscapes but make insufficient effort to change them, Brickell extends a multifaceted invitation for critical geographers of home to explore, illuminate and self-reflect on home with future research. Importantly for this study, Brickell draws a mutually constitutive connection between 'mapping' and the 'doing' of interventions that are suitably contextualised. Through my mapping of the Northwest Territories' housing delivery system and policy, I hope to make the barriers to the self-determination of housing visible, followed by suggestions of how to alter the landscape, rather than just survey the inequality of it.

2.4. Indigenous Home and Wellbeing

The multiplicity of home necessarily centres epistemology when considering Indigenous conceptions of home and how they are to inform the future landscape of northern housing. The Indigenous conceptualisations of wellbeing and Indigenous epistemologies more broadly have rarely been reflected in the colonial interventions and oppressive policies that have shaped the social landscape in which northern Indigenous peoples are situated in Canada today – policies that quite conversely, find their roots in epistemic racism.[59] The conditions of Indigenous lives are grounded in diverse and interconnected dimensions of Indigenous wellbeing that extend beyond western conceptualisations of health.[60] Such an understanding of wellbeing is grounded in Indigenous worldviews that subscribe to interconnectedness, with the environment, human, and non-human beings all operating in a state of relatedness.[61] Thus, any attempt to focus research on the systemic causes of health inequities amongst Indigenous populations, must recognise that policy can only be sustainable in the changes it brings when it is contextually informed through an improved understanding of Indigenous wellbeing, connectedness, and its determinants.[62]

To engage with an improved and interconnected conceptualisation of Indigenous wellbeing in this study, I engage with Indigenous conceptualisations of home. Central to my work with

[57] Blunt & Dowling. Home.
[58] Kitchin, R.M. & Hubbard, P.J. (1999). Research, action and 'critical' geographies. *Area.* 31(3); Pp. 195-198.
[59] Auger, Howell & Gomes. Moving toward holistic wellness
[60] Fleming, C. & Manning, M. (2019). Routledge Handbook of Indigenous Wellbeing. Routledge: Oxon, New York.
[61] Joseph, B. (2016). "Indigenous Worldviews vs Western Worldviews". [online]. Available: https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-worldviews-vs-western-worldviews (Accessed: 10/04/2021).
[62] Fleming & Manning. Routledge Handbook of Indigenous Wellbeing.

this concept are the writings of Métis-Cree scholar, Jesse Thistle,[63] who rejects the Western ideas of home and homelessness that problematically ground housing policy in northern Canada. As demonstrated in the earlier discussion of state-sanctioned housing policy, the use of settler colonial understandings and pursuit of such ideals as the nuclear family in housing policy becomes a tool for cultural change and control. By utilising a feminist geographical lens, we can see crucially how colonialism operates at not only the macro-scales of territory and resource management, but also the micro-scales and intimate spaces of the body and, importantly for this study, the home.[64] Therefore, Indigenous conceptualisations of home are essential to the decolonisation of northern and Indigenous housing, and its delivery. Indeed, Penfold et al.[65] position Indigenous understandings of home - specifically the relational understanding of homemaking that extends beyond the house to capture embodied connections and disconnections with Country[66] held by the Jerrinja people in New South Wales, Australia – as crucial to the progression of housing studies beyond a linear Western cultural politics of housing and home.

Alaazi et al.[67] demonstrate the significance of home for Indigenous wellbeing, including physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health, by establishing housing as a therapeutic landscape for Indigenous Housing First participants in Winnipeg and home as a place of healing and identity construction. For the participants in their study, the Housing First apartments met practical needs, but lacked the varied and individually unique features that provide a sense of home, including: feeling connected to the land; community and family; being able to receive social network members; and being able to smudge and conduct sweat ceremonies. The significance of framing housing as a therapeutic landscape here lies in the impact therapeutic landscapes have on shaping health, and the culturally specific relationships between health and place that are integral to First Nations peoples.[68] In the same vein, Larcombe et al.[69] elevate the need for culturally appropriate homes to provide protection for

[63] Thistle, J. (2017). The National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Toronto: York University Press.
[64] de Leeuw, S. (2016). Tender grounds: Intimate visceral violence and British Columbia's colonial geographies. *Political Geography.* 56; Pp. 14-23.
[65] Penfold, H., Waitt, G., McGuirk, P. & Wellington, A. (2020). Indigenous relational understandings of the house-as-home: embodied co-becoming with Jerrinja country. *Housing Studies.* 35(9); Pp. 1-16.
[66] Country is a word used by Aboriginal peoples in what is today known as Australia to encompass "the diverse relationships (tangible and non-tangible) and beings (human and non-human) that connect to configure a homeland within relationships of reciprocal care and obligations". From Penfold et al, (2020), Pp. 1519.
[67] Alaazi, Masuda, Evans, & Distasio. Therapeutic landscapes of home.
[68] Wilson, K. (2003). Therapeutic landscapes and First Nations peoples: an exploration of culture, health and place. *Health and Place.* 9(2); Pp. 83-93.
[69] Larcombe, Nickerson, Singer, Robson, Dantouze, McKay & Orr. Housing conditions.

Indigenous peoples living in Canada from infectious diseases. All these findings then point to the need for housing policy that transcends the physical provision of shelter and instead seeks to build an Indigenous sense of home as called for by Jesse Thistle.

In his definition of Indigenous homelessness, Thistle[70] proposes an Indigenous conceptualisation of 'home' understood as "circles of interconnectedness that together form the heart of healthy Indigenous social and spiritual emplacement", and positions this at the forefront of orienting more sustainable, contextualised responses to the northern housing crisis. The pursuit of such a conceptualisation of home stands to help northern housing policy in its role as a tool for cultural change, move away from the colonial ideologies forced upon northern communities. Furthermore, in studying northern housing policy and its governance, I respond to de Leeuw's[71] call for geographers to account for the intimate spaces through which colonialism continues to operate and disrupt Indigenous homescapes, ultimately by attending to the system through which the intimacy of the home is constructed, controlled and colonised.

This commitment to rethinking housing around the concept of 'home' has important implications for policy and governance. When considering northern and Indigenous populations in Canada, it is especially important to focus on the policy and delivery system that shapes the profile of housing and home and its subsequent impact on health. Sustainable responses to the complex geographies of increasing chronic housing need, housing insecurity, and homelessness that undermine the health of northern Indigenous peoples, are urgently required. However, in order to bring about the systemic change that makes for a sustainable response,[72] we must challenge the dominant western power system reflected in northern housing.[73] Northern and Indigenous housing must reflect northern and Indigenous epistemologies.

The critical difference between a house and a home that drives Thistle in his work was itself recognised by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation in the 1980s as it realised how a focus on simply building houses in the region had left a critical absence of 'homes.'[74] If we are really to take on 'home,' the end goal of policy must extend beyond physical structures to capture the contextualised and culturally-embedded meanings attached to homemaking that

[70] Thistle. National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness. Pp.15.
[71] de Leeuw. Tender grounds.
[72] Webster. Autonomy needed to improve.
[73] McCartney, Herskovits & Hintelmann. Failure by Design.
[74] NWTHC. (1987). Building houses, communities and our future: a new approach to housing in the Northwest Territories. Available: https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/archive/provincial_housing/ca2_nt_hc_87b73.pdf

best promote a community's wellbeing. This is a position that Penfold et al.,[75] align with as they argue for housing policy, design, and production that recognises and embraces Indigenous relational epistemologies around home in the provision of culturally appropriate housing for Indigenous peoples in Australia. Once policy responds to and incorporates the foundational connectedness captured by Indigenous conceptualisations of housing as home, it will be able to support the contextualised supportive housing programs that sustain health and wellbeing, and foster culturally-embedded meanings attached to homemaking called for by communities, including Fort Good Hope.[76]

However, the incorporation of Indigenous conceptualisations of home into northern housing delivery must be supported by the northern housing governance system within which policy is designed and deployed – and little is known of this system, its processes, nor how prepared it is to support home-centric housing policy. Christensen et al.,[77] explain that northern housing is governed through a complex network of administration and funding in the hands of the federal and territorial governments, although a decrease in funds from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation threatens the stability of this network.[78] Meanwhile, the Northern Policy Hackathon Participants[79] identified the lack of adequate consultation with northerners by the federal and territorial governments as a root cause of the failure of housing policy, and as such outline a set of recommendations that embody the notion of 'solutions by the North for the North'. Recommendations to give communities the choice over how their housing needs are met; to build knowledge and confidence in financial literacy and home maintenance; and to provide direct and flexible funding to communities, are all grounded in the tenets of and aspirations for Indigenous self-determination. Yet very little research has addressed the specific relationships that underlie the governance of northern housing, nor the decision-making process through which it is ultimately delivered. This subsequent gap in knowledge and understanding presents a significant challenge to the practical efforts of those communities,

[75] Penfold, Waitt, McGuirk & Wellington. Indigenous relational understandings.
[76] Christensen. 'Our home, our way of life'.; Christensen. Indigenous housing and health.; Havelka, S. (2014). "Living Inuktitut": From village to camp, modifying the landscape the Inuit way. *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review.* 26(1); Pp. 52-52.; Lauster, N. & Tester, F. (2014). Homelessness and health in the crowded Canadian Arctic: Inuit experiences. In Hwang, S.W., Guirguis-Younger, M. & McNeil, R. (Eds.), Homelessness and health in Canada (87-109). Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.; Riva, M., Larsen, C.V. L. & Bjerregaard, P. (2014). Household crowding and psychosocial health among Inuit in Greenland. *International Journal of Public Health.* 59(5); Pp. 739-748.; Alaazi, Masuda, Evans, & Distasio. Therapeutic landscapes of home.; Riva. Housing interventions in Arctic.; Brockman, A. (2017). "Fort Good Hope seeks local answers to housing crisis, hosts 3-day housing forum". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-good-hope-housing-1.4430803. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).
[77] Christensen. No Home in a Homeland
[78] Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples. (2017). We can do better: Housing in Inuit Nunangat. Ottawa: 42nd Parliament of Canada.
[79] Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. Northern Policy Hackathon.

residents and organisations pursuing 'home' in the Northwest Territories – demonstrated by the questions expressed and barriers encountered by the KGHS that are detailed in Chapter One.

Considering then how Indigenous conceptualisations of home are to be supported by housing governance, reveals the inherent connection between home and self-determination wherein both conditions promote Indigenous choices and ways of thinking. While the work of the KGHS demonstrates the barriers to community-led housing in the current system, in so doing it simultaneously highlights the need for Indigenous self-determination of housing. As discussed in Chapter One, Fort Good Hope's housing strategy is as much as a plan for improving housing through the pursuit of home, as it is for moving towards self-determination and decolonisation. Indeed, the conceptualisations and visions of home conveyed in both the Dene literature and the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society's Strategic Plan, draw heavily on notions of self-sufficiency, re-assertion of nationhood, control, and Indigenous government. In many ways, we might see 'home' as synonymous with the drive for self-determination, for it is the pursuit of home in the KGHS' housing strategy that stands not only to drive more sustainable northern housing development, but also to "form a basis for self-governance, through which [they] increasingly assert [their] nationhood and take control of housing funding, programs and policies".[80] It seems here that home, and achieving it, can and should be seen as a tool for self-determination, for its capacity to encourage and enable northern communities such as Fort Good Hope to shape their own wellbeing.

2.5. Self-Determination in the NWT

Thus, if northern housing is to improve with community decision-making that centers Indigenous conceptualisations of home, then Indigenous self-determination is essential to providing the conditions in which home and community voices can really direct housing and its impact on health. Self-determination as it is codified in Article 3 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) is defined as the right for Indigenous peoples to "freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."[81] For Anishinaabe jurist and scholar John Borrows, recognising this right to Indigenous self-determination means increasing the capacity of

[80] K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society. (2020). Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ: K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society Strategic Plan and Action Plan 2020-2025. https://cklbradio.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/KGHS-Strategic-Plan-2020-FNL-WR.pdf. Pp.9.
[81] United Nations. (2007). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. [online]. Available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf (Accessed: 10/02/2021). Pp. 8.

Indigenous peoples to exercise greater control and agency and thus "own and be responsible for themselves and their relationships in more productive ways".[82] Meanwhile, self-government as it is codified in Article 4 of the UNDRIP, can be understood as the "right to autonomy… in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions"[83] and a part of exercising the broader right to self-determination.

In Canada the state drives an understanding of self-determination that is conflated with self-government, but they are not synonymous concepts. While Indigenous self-determination is a broad and inherent right of Indigenous peoples to have control over their choices that stems from Indigenous sovereignty and transcends institutional boundaries, self-government is an institutionalised concept that indicates internal autonomy of an Indigenous nation or community to administrate their services and societal relationships[84] [85]. The scholarly dialogue around self-determination in Canada is steered largely by Indigenous scholars who critique the Canadian state's limited politics of self-determination as self-government, and re-envision it around Indigenous ontologies of self-determination that centre Indigenous agency and land relations.[86] In particular, scholars problematise the constraints of settler-colonial state legal frameworks and imaginaries on the way self-determination is discussed, and the imagination of pathways to it, arguing that the possibilities of self-determination in Canada are currently dictated by state-defined parameters, structures and arrangements – namely self-government.

Other Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars add to this critique, that in order to engage with and legalise their sovereignty through these state-shaped pathways to self-determination, Indigenous nations are forced to depart from Indigenous ontologies and traditional forms of governance and assume instead state-like bureaucracies, legal frameworks and governance

[82] Borrows, J. (2016). Freedom and Indigenous Constitutionalism. University of Toronto Press. Pp. 164.
[83] United Nations. (2007). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. [online]. Available at: https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf (Accessed: 10/02/2021). Pp. 8.
[84] Imai, S. (2008). Indigenous Self-Determination and the State. *Comparative Research in Law & Political Economy.* 4(5); Pp. 1-40.; Shrinkhal R. (2021). "Indigenous sovereignty" and right to self-determination in international law: a critical appraisal. *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples*. 2021;17(1):71-82.
[85] I would like to acknowledge here in my effort to explain the difference between self-determination and self-government, the difficulty in doing so. There are a great variety of ways in which these concepts are understood, and I am undoubtedly not representing all of them. I am merely drawing on the understanding I have developed through readings and the course of this research.
[86] Alfred, T. & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being Indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. *Government and Opposition.* 40(4); Pp. 597-614.; Simpson, L. (2011). Dancing on our turtle's back: Stories of Nishnaabeg re-creation, resurgence and a new emergence. Winnipeg, MB: Arbeiter Ring Publishing.; Coulthard. Red Skin, White Masks.; Daigle, M. (2016). Awawanenitakik: The spatial politics of recognition and relational geographies of Indigenous self-determination. *Canadian Association of Geographers.* 60(2); Pp. 259-269.

processes.[87] Glen Sean Coulthard's[88] contributions in this area are particularly significant, developing the concept of grounded normativity to refer to the ethical orientation of Indigenous peoples towards land, and thus positioning it as the foundation of the Dene Nation's struggles against dispossession, and for self-determination. Such connection is not accounted for in the politics of recognition which characterises the Canadian state's engagement with reconciliation processes – actions stemming from which fail to disrupt the deep-rooted sources of Indigenous dispossession and injustice. Overall, the rejection of state-negotiated self-determination that operates within the colonial politics of recognition, articulated by Coulthard and others, serves as a powerful challenge to the current trajectory of self-determination efforts in Canada.[89]

Yet for many of these scholars, the agency and resilience of Indigenous nations participating in the available pathways to self-determination cannot be eradicated. Further still, a specific focus on the everyday practices of resurgence is required, to get at the lived Indigenous self-determination in Canada that operates outside of formal state assemblages.[90] Offering one example, Cree scholar Michelle Daigle[91] captures the everyday relational geographies of Indigenous resurgence in Achikamaw, by examining the law of awawanenitakik and the process of ceremonial regeneration through which Omushkegowuk Cree ontologies of self-determination are expressed. While this account functions as a critique of the colonial spatiality constraints reproduced by the politics of recognition that frames Canada's engagement with Indigenous self-determination, Daigle also makes space for progression and hope. By prioritising Indigenous kinship relationships, including kinship with the land, and the everyday transmission of their ontologies in this dialogue, Daigle encourages an alternative politics for Indigenous self-determination in Canada.

[87] Nadasdy, P. (2003). Hunters and bureaucrats: power, knowledge, and aboriginal-state relations in the southwest Yukon. UBC Press: Vancouver.; Nadasdy, P. (2017). Sovereignty's Entailments: First Nation State Formation in the Yukon. University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division.; Alfred, T. (2005). *Wasase: Indigenous pathways of action and freedom*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.; Natcher, D.C. & Davis, S. (2007). Rethinking Devolution: Challenges for Aboriginal Resource Management in the Yukon Territory. *Society & Natural Resources*. 20(3); Pp. 271–279.
[88] Coulthard. Red Skin, White Masks.
[89] Hallenbeck, J., Krebs, M., Hunt, S., Goonewardena, K., Kipfer, S.A., Pasternak, S. & Coulthard, G.S. (2016) Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition. *The AAG Review of Books*. 4(2); Pp. 111-120.; Shaw, D. Z. & Coburn, S. (2017). "The Colonial Politics of Recognition in Trudeau's Relationship with Indigenous Nations". [online]. Available at: https://www.e-ir.info/2017/09/07/the-colonial-politics-of-recognition-in-trudeaus-relationship-with-indigenous-nations/ (Accessed: 26/04/21).
[90] Alfred. *Wasase: Indigenous pathways*.; Alfred, T. & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being Indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. *Government and Opposition.* 40(4); Pp. 597-614.; Simpson. Dancing on our turtle's back.; Daigle. Awawanenitakik.
[91] Daigle. Awawanenitakik.

Meanwhile the current notion of Indigenous self-government in Canada, is traced by Dan Russell[92] to the 1982 repatriation of the Canadian Constitution, and the subsequent first ministers' conferences of the 1980s from which Indigenous peoples in Canada emerged united around their right to self-government.[93] Documenting the development of ideas around its expression, Russell locates Indigenous self-government in Canada as not only a legal but a cultural right, viewed by Indigenous peoples as a holistic mechanism for resolving practical problems facing communities – including inadequate health care services, housing and education, child welfare issues, the disposition of family property in the case of death or marital breakdowns, and high levels of incarceration - while also supporting the settlement of 'big-ticket' constitutional issues - including the recognition of a land base and treaty enforcement.

> Aboriginal peoples generally believe that self-governing communities can use resources in an efficient and culturally sensitive manner when tackling endemic problems. Clearly, the approach of solving a community's problems from the outside looking in has met with little success. This has been the history of the Canadian approach….[94]

In the Northwest Territories, the process of advancing Indigenous self-determination for First Nations and Métis is most often conflated with self-government agreements. In the Mackenzie Valley region, under the 1994 Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, negotiations for community-based self-government are ongoing between the federal and territorial governments and Sahtu communities, including Fort Good Hope.[95] This is with the exception of the community of Déline, which worked since 1995 to negotiate their self-government agreement, and is now self-governed by the Déline Got'ine Government that came into operation in September 2016.[96] Although there still today remains no constitutionally entrenched Indigenous right to self-government in Canada, the most recently documented perspective of the Canadian government is that Indigenous self-government puts "decision-making power into the hands of Indigenous governments who make their own choices about how to deliver programs and services to their communities".[97] Regardless of this federal

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[92] Russell, D. (2000). A People's Dream: Aboriginal Self-Government in Canada. UBC Press.
[93] See section 35 of the Constitution Act, affirming Treaty rights, as the reason Russell traces these to the 1982 constitution.
[94] Russell. A People's Dream. Pp.8.
[95] GNWT. (n.d). "Concluding and Implementing Land Claim and Self-Government Agreements: Sahtu Dene and Métis". [online]. Available: https://www.eia.gov.nt.ca/en/priorities/concluding-and-implementing-land-claim-and-self-government-agreements/sahtu-dene-and-3 (Accessed: 01/06/2020).
[96] Deline Got'ine Government. (2020). "Deline Self-Government History". [online]. Available: https://www.deline.ca/en/about-us/deline-self-government-history/ (Accessed: 01/06/2020).
[97] Government of Canada. (2019). "Self-Government". [online]. Available: https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100032275/1529354547314#chp3 (Accessed: 01/06/2020). Pp. n/a.

government policy position, there remain significant barriers to self-government for Indigenous peoples in Canada, for example, within the law[98]; within state negotiations[99]; and within the internal governing and leadership dynamics of First Nation communities.[100]

In *Finding Daasha,* Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox sheds important light on the inadequacy of institutionalised self-government negotiation processes in the NWT, especially the reluctance of settler governments to relinquish authority and allow for Indigenous control. Such a critique is immediately apparent in Fort Good Hope, where sectoral self-government negotiations address the governance of such areas as housing, education, wildlife, health, and mining separately. Enacting such sectors in this way thwarts the will of the community, who given the power, would not separate the negotiation of housing's self-government from connected areas such as education and health. The colonial relationship between Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state is merely modernised through self-government and land claim agreements, Irlbacher-Fox argues. Scholars attend well to this tension between the theoretical concept of self-government and the bringing of it into meaningful practice. For example, Dan Russel[101] captures the unknown around the viability of practicing Indigenous self-government, asking in his first chapter: "Does Self-Government have content?" However, while he goes on to explore the challenges of implementing a constitutionally recognised form of self-government, and acknowledge that self-government does not hold all the answers for Indigenous communities, Russell[102] nonetheless demonstrates the importance of its essence, concluding that "it will be the first significant step toward reacquiring the integrity and dignity that once epitomized Aboriginal societies" and "it will be upon these strengths that Aboriginal people can confront the remaining challenges". In this same vein, Merrell[103] dedicates the success of Miawpukek First Nation and Nunatsiavut's Indigenous self-governments in improving outcomes for residents, to their contextualised, home-grown, and accountable policy inputs. In de-centering the formal structures provided by the Government of Canada's official self-government

[98] Stacey, R. (2018). The Dilemma of Indigenous Self-Government in Canada: Indigenous Rights and Canadian Federalism. *Federal Law Review.* 46(4); Pp. 669-688.
[99] Irlbacher-Fox, S. (2009). Finding Daasha: Self-Government, Social Suffering, and Aboriginal Policy in Canada. UBC Press: Vancouver, Toronto.
[100] Wolf Collar, L. (2020). First Nations Self-Government: 17 Roadblocks to Self-Determination, and One Chief's Thoughts on Solutions. Edmonton, Alberta: Brush Education.
[101] Russell. A People's Dream. Pp. 11.
[102] Russell. A People's Dream. Pp. 216.
[103] Merrell, A.R. (2020). Evolving Governance: A Comparative Case Study Explaining Positive Self-Government Outcomes For Nunatsiavut Government and the Miawpukek First Nation. (Master's Thesis). Memorial University of Newfoundland. https://research.library.mun.ca/14567/1/thesis.pdf.

agreements, Merrell offers a diversified view of the pathways to Indigenous self-government in Canada.

Having developed some understanding of how the concepts of Indigenous self-determination and self-government are broadly positioned in scholarly dialogues, it is timely to situate them in this research. We have established that self-determination and self-government are not synonymous concepts. Indeed, the conversations within this field of study are characterised by much debate around how constructive self-government really is for Indigenous hopes and visions of self-determination. While some support self-government as a tool for Indigenous peoples to advance their authority over issues affecting their communities,[104] many others argue that it merely reproduces and perpetuates the colonial oppression self-determination seeks to depart from.[105] Essentially, there is a tension that arises around these concepts when self-government is seen as a colonial iteration, organised and choreographed through formal agreements with the Crown and Canadian government. This is a tension that is important to confront in this study with its roots in Fort Good Hope, where the community drive for self-government is one I am positioned to stand in solidarity with rather than merely critique.

To this end, the previous discussions of work by Daigle[106] and Merrell[107] serve a critical reminder that there is space for progress beyond these institutional structures to consider alternative anti-colonial conceptualisations of self-determination and self-government. Indeed, in his work John Borrows asserts:

> The term 'self-government' does not require a legal or technical definition because I do not refer to self-government as an abstract, futuristic institution. I identify self-government with particular events in which our people have exercised specific instances of control in their internal and external societal relationships.[108]

Once we de-centralise the formal assemblages through which self-government can be framed as colonial - while still recognising that communities are forced to operate within them - and instead centralise Indigenous epistemology and agency, space is made for self-government to

[104] Russell. A People's Dream.; Imai. Indigenous Self-Determination.
[105] Coulthard, G, S. (2007). Subjects of Empire: Indigenous peoples and the 'politics of recognition' in Canada. *Contemporary Political Theory.* 6; Pp. 437-460.; Coulthard. Red Skin, White Masks.; Dickason, O. (2009). Canada's First Nations: A History of founding Peoples from Earliest Times. Oxford University Press: Don Mills, ON.; Irlbacher-Fox. Finding Daasha.; Walker, R. & Barcham, M. (2010). Indigenous-inclusive citizenship: The city and social housing in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. *Environment and Planning A.* 42(2); Pp. 314-331.
[106] Daigle. Awawanenitakik.
[107] Merrell. Evolving Governance.
[108] Borrows, J. (1992). 'A Genealogy of Law: Inherent Sovereignty and First Nations Self-government'. 30 Osgoode Hall Law Journal 291, 294.

be a productive opportunity for Indigenous resurgence and nation-building. That is not to argue against the calls for deep structural change and epistemological revolution in the pursuit of true Indigenous self-determination in Canada,[109] but rather to elevate a more temporally realistic and achievable trajectory of self-determination enacted and actioned through everyday geographies of resurgence.[110] These are geographies that can be significantly shaped by the development of meaningful self-government which aligns with Indigenous conceptualisations of such aspects as governance, policy strategies, holistic wellbeing, and home.

With this in mind, it is worth addressing the lack of attention in Coulthard's[111] commentary on self-determination in Canada, that unfolds largely around land ownership, towards the micro-politics of the home, individual wellbeing, and family. For Sarah Hunt as part of the review by Hallenbeck et al.,[112] Coulthard's important teachings directing the defense of land and territory from recognition politics and state violence of the settler governments, must be extended beyond this macro-scale to be "interrelated with those used to defend Indigenous peoples' homes, kinship networks, and individual wellbeing". In this sense, one can consider Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's[113] words with the same values of Indigenous resurgence, although on a more literal level than was perhaps intended, when they call for "rebuilding our own [Indigenous] house".

In Fort Good Hope, rebuilding Indigenous home through their community-led housing strategy has become a significant site of everyday resurgence for the community. It is then critical that a balance be struck between the view of self-government as a state-conceptualised extension of colonial governance, and a focus on the everyday operationalising of Indigenous self-determination that happens within its trajectory, currently enacted in Fort Good Hope on one level through the restoration of home. With that, I argue that self-government can be an anti-colonial process if the structures that surround it support Indigenous community epistemology, agency and autonomy. With the term structures I refer to the scaffolding of the governance system that directs governing processes on a particular path, such as policy and programming, requirements, regulations, and standards, and the departments or entities

[109] Alfred & Corntassel. Being Indigenous.; Coulthard. Subjects of Empire.; Coulthard. Red Skin, White Masks.
[110] Daigle. Awawanenitakik.
[111] Coulthard. Red Skin, White Masks.
[112] Hallenbeck, Krebs, Hunt, Goonewardena, Kipfer, Pasternak & Coulthard. Red Skin, White Masks. Pp. 113.
[113] Simpson. Dancing on our turtle's back. Pp. 32.

responsible for processing applications and making decisions. Thus, it is the structures that surround community-led housing in Fort Good Hope to which this research dedicates its focus.

2.6. Aligning Self-Determination and Housing

Despite the robust body of literature that seeks to navigate the processes of Indigenous self-determination and self-government in Canada, there is very little work that puts these concepts and their trajectories in dialogue with housing. That is to say in particular that thus far, scholars have neglected to take a comprehensive view of self-government in the NWT and its potential implications for northern housing. This is not to neglect the 'grey' literature sources produced by community and territorial government housing stakeholders, as well as the United Nations, that draw critical connections between housing and self-determination.[114] However, the academic commentary on this connection in a Canadian context appears to have been generated only by Ryan Walker,[115] who argues that the trajectories of promoting Indigenous self-determination and improving social housing delivery in Canada must be combined. Although his study is focused on a context of urban Indigenous housing and self-determination, Walker offers a valuable historical and theoretical grounding that sheds light on the role of the Canadian state in this nexus, ultimately positioning adequate state financial provisions and support as essential for self-determining urban Indigenous communities to properly address housing hardship. Such an assertion asks us to remember that self-government is not a pre-requisite for the self-determination of housing – that legal organisation of self-government is in fact not required when direct funding to Indigenous nations provides them with the resources to self-determine their housing. Reminders like this of the non-linear path to self-determination contextualise calls from Indigenous leaders and housing providers for responses to the northern housing crisis to centre community control and self-determining capacities.[116] Yet, there is a

[114] UN-HABITAT. (2005). Indigenous peoples' right to adequate housing: A global overview. United Nations Housing Rights Programme. Nairobi.; Pulla, S. (2012). Framing Sustainable Options for Housing in Canada's North. Canada: The Conference Board of Canada. [online]. Available at: https://www.conferenceboard.ca/temp/8df0d702-75ed-4eab-9ec0-ad90ba7358bb/13-134_CFN-SustainableHousing_RPT.pdf (Accessed: 15/02/2020).; Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. (2019). Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy.; Northern Housing Forum. (2019). Northern Housing Policy Recommendations. [online]. Available at: https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/polar-polaire/documents/pdf/northern-housing-forum/NHF%20-%20Policy%20recommendations%20-%20EN%20-%20FINAL.pdf (Accessed: 07/02/2020).

[115] Walker, R. (2008). Aboriginal Self-Determination and Social Housing in Urban Canada: A Story of Convergence and Divergence. *Urban Studies.* 45(1); Pp. 185-205.

[116] See: Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. Northern Policy Hackathon.; Desmarais, A. (2021). "These Indigenous leaders had solutions for the N.W.T.'s housing crisis. Being denied federal funding stung". CBC. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/housing-crisis-nwt-p1-1.5981486 (Accessed: 4/05/2021).; Twa, A. (2021). "Communities across the N.W.T. are taking the housing crisis into their own hands". CBC. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/community-solutions-nwt-housing-crisis-series-1.6008122 (Accessed: 4/05/2021).

lack of scholarly dialogue bringing Indigenous self-determination and housing in Canada together, which is thus is a substantial shortfall.

While there may be a significant lack of work that connects Indigenous self-determination to housing, the literature does connect self-determination to improved Indigenous health, wellbeing and quality of life.[117] Indeed, with reference back to the earlier discussion in section 2.2 self-determination is a significant distal determinant of Indigenous health.[118] When Indigenous peoples have control over their education systems, lands, social and health services, and economies, intermediate determinants of Indigenous health support rather than undermine wellbeing.[119] In fact, Greenwood and de Leeuw write that "if transformed, distal determinants may yield the greatest health impacts".[120]

Writing to the context of Aotearoa – or New Zealand – O'Sullivan[121] unpacks how the health outcomes for Maori caused by inadequate public policy, can improve when space is made for Indigenous self-determination rather than partnership. For Walker and Barcham[122] this recognition that self-government has the potential to improve the delivery of welfare services for Indigenous peoples, including housing, is tainted by the actual and common failure of self-governing arrangements to afford Indigenous communities any real autonomy over priority-setting and service design. This view is echoed by Katz, Enns and Kinew[123] in their call for a holistic First Nations health strategy in Canada that first and foremost must be built on the values and tenets of meaningful self-determination and self-government so as to ensure Indigenous autonomy over resources and organisation. Furthermore, Moodie et al.,[124] emphasise the importance of self-determination for improving health and wellbeing amongst Indigenous communities in Australia and around the world. In a move that echoes Walker's[125] argument, the authors outline the effectiveness of self-determined Indigenous responses to the

[117] Auger, Howell & Gomes. Moving toward holistic wellness.; Katz, A., Enns, J. & Kinew, K.A. (2017). Canada needs a holistic First Nations health strategy. *CMAJ.* 189(31); Pp. E1006-E1007.; Webster. Autonomy needed to improve.
[118] Maar, M. (2006). From self-determination to community health empowerment: Evolving Aboriginal health services on Manitoulin Island, Ontario. Hamilton, ON: ETD Collection for McMaster University.
[119] Reading, C.L. & Wien, F. (2009). Health Inequalities and Social Determinants of Aboriginal Peoples' Health. Prince George, BC: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.
[120] Greenwood & de Leeuw. Social determinants of health. Pp.382.
[121] O'Sullivan, D. (2019). "How to improve health outcomes for Indigenous peoples by making space for self-determination". The Conversation. [online]. Available: https://theconversation.com/how-to-improve-health-outcomes-for-indigenous-peoples-by-making-space-for-self-determination-120070 (Accessed: 01/06/2020).
[122] Walker & Barcham. Indigenous-inclusive citizenship.
[123] Katz, Enns & Kinew. Holistic First Nations health strategy.
[124] Moodie, N., Ward, J., Dudgeon, P., Adams, K., Altman, J., Casey, D., Cripps, K., Davis, M., Derry, K., Eades, S., Faulkner, S., Hunt, J., Klein, E., McDonnell, S., Ring, I., Sutherland, S. & Yap, M. (2020). Roadmap to recovery: Reporting on a research taskforce supporting Indigenous responses to Covid-19 in Australia. *Australian Social Policy Association.* 56; Pp. 4-16.
[125] Walker. Aboriginal Self-Determination.

Covid-19 pandemic in Australia, and thus the critical need for sustainable federal funding to facilitate the continuation of Indigenous-led policy responses to the health needs of their communities, including housing.

Of course, in consideration of the connections drawn earlier in this chapter between housing, home, health and wellbeing, particularly amongst Indigenous populations, it is possible to extend the positive implications of self-determination for improving health outcomes, to housing. Indeed, this connection forms the foundation of Fort Good Hope's community-led housing strategy as the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society brings together the community's aspirations for both self-government and home. This alignment of housing and self-determination has a rich history in Fort Good Hope, wherein the self-governed delivery of the Homeownership Assistance Program in the 1980s proved deeply successful for providing homes, stimulating community development, and increasing pride amongst residents.[126] The community-led nature of these favored historical and present approaches to housing delivery in Fort Good Hope has become somewhat central in recent discourse around Indigenous housing in Canada, as it has in many spheres of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous health and development.[127] Shelagh McCartney's contributions around the inadequacy of First Nations housing needs assessments, systems, and policy[128] are particularly valuable in understanding how this 'community-led' notion increasingly informs the processes of more successful housing delivery in First Nations.

While Indigenous self-determination and housing align effectively along pathways of health and wellbeing, I posit that they are most fundamentally connected by the need to center Indigenous autonomy in the sculpting of Indigenous lives. Following the discussion in section 2.4 earlier in the chapter, it is clear that Indigenous conceptualisations of wellbeing subscribing to interconnectedness and a holistic worldview have long been silenced by colonial interventions in the social landscape of northern Canada. In the process of promoting these

[126] Rees, W.E. & Hulchanski, J.D. (1990). Housing as Northern Community Development: A Case study of the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) in Fort Good Hope, Northwest Territories. ftp://ftp.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/chic-ccdh/Research_Reports-Rapports_de_recherche/Older2/Ca1MH110-90H55.pdf

[127] See for example: Kipp, A., Cunsolo, A., Gillis, D., Sawatzky, A. & Harper, S.L. (2019). The need for community-led, integrated and innovative monitoring programmes when responding to the health impacts of climate change. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*. 78(2); Pp. 1-17.; Larcombe, L., McLeod, A., Samuel, S., Samuel, J., Payne, M., Van Haute, S., Singer, M., Ringaert, L., Meyers, A.F.A., Kinew, K., Keynan, Y., MacDonald, K., Antsanen, J. & Orr, P. (2019). A Dene First Nation's community readiness assessment to take action against HIV/AIDS: a pilot project. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health*. 78(1); Pp. 1-9.; McCausland, R. & Dowse, L. (2020). The need for a community-led, holistic service response to Aboriginal young people with cognitive disability in remote areas: a case study. *Children Australia.* 45; Pp. 326-334.

[128] McCartney. Re-thinking housing.; McCartney, Herskovits & Hintelmann. Failure by Design.; McCartney, S., Herskovits, J. & Hintelmann, L. (2021). Developing occupant-based understandings of crowding: a study of residential self-assessment in Eabametoong First Nation. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment.* 36(2); Pp. 645-662.

conceptualisations though, attention must also be extended to Indigenous ontologies of governance. Cornell[129] situates Indigenous self-government and efforts to step outside of imposed and inadequate colonial governance structures, within the traditions of Indigenous constitutionalism, the deep-rooted and ancient governing principles, values, and processes of government that are being re-claimed by Indigenous First Nations as the tools for contemporary organisations of self-government, and which afford them the capacity to make autonomous decisions around how to govern. By extension, while Indigenous epistemologies around housing must be centered if responses to the northern housing crisis are to be successful, Indigenous ontologies around governance must also be prioritised when formulating these responses.

Many scholars recognise the belief in holism shared by Indigenous peoples, and the need for that holistic worldview to be used to transform the problematic systems that threaten Indigenous peoples' lives, health and wellbeing.[130] Indeed, the holism so fundamental to Indigenous epistemology is being increasingly included in discourses around environmental issues and their governance.[131] Yet, western ways of governing are characterised by sectoral segmentation in the delivery of services such as housing, health, education and economic development.[132] This emphasis on compartmentalisation and separation fails to meet the needs of Indigenous peoples whose philosophical base is constructed around interconnectedness and the belief that relationships are shared among all our relations.[133]

2.7. Conclusion

This chapter has brought together and examined literature around the trajectories of housing, home, health and self-determination in northern Canada, that provide the scholarly context for this research. Tracing the colonial pathway of inadequate northern housing policy used as a tool for cultural control from the 1950s to the present day, and its entanglement – or lack thereof

[129] Cornell, S. (2015). "Wolves Have A Constitution:" Continuities in Indigenous Self-Government. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal.* 6(1); Pp. 1-20.
[130] Pieterse, J. (1999). Critical Holism and the Tao of Development. In R. Munck & D. O'Hearn, Critical development theory: contributions to a new paradigm (Pp. 63-88). London and New York: Zed Books.; Auger, Howell & Gomes. Moving toward holistic wellness.; Katz, Enns & Kinew. Holistic First Nations health strategy.; Webster. Autonomy needed to improve.
[131] McGregor, D. (2014). Traditional Knowledge and Water Governance: The Ethic of Responsibility. *AlterNative.* 10(5); Pp. 493-507.; Godden, L. and Cowell, S. (2016). Conservation Planning and Indigenous Governance in Australia's Indigenous Protected Areas. *Restoration Ecology.* 24(5); Pp. 692-697.; Macpherson, E. & Salazar, P. (2020). Towards a Holistic Environmental Flow Regime in Chile: Providing for Ecosystem Health and Indigenous Rights. *Transnational Environmental Law.* 9(3); Pp. 481-519.
[132] Loomis, T. (2000). Indigenous Populations and Sustainable Development: Building on Indigenous Approaches to Holistic Self-Determined Development. *World Development.* 28(5); Pp. 893-910
[133] McGregor, D. (2014). Traditional Knowledge and Water Governance: The Ethic of Responsibility. *AlterNative.* 10(5); Pp. 493-507.; Thistle. National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness.

– with Indigenous conceptualisations of home, establishes the problematic relationship between the state and Indigenous people with respect to housing. Connecting housing and home to health and wellbeing, and thus inadequate housing policy to poor health outcomes, then demonstrates the importance of supporting northern communities and First Nations such as Fort Good Hope to deliver their own contextualised, culturally supportive, and home-centric housing programs. For Fort Good Hope and the K'ásho Got’ıne Housing Society, supporting these efforts means supporting the connection between home and Indigenous self-determination. Seeing home as a site to resist settler-colonial control and recognise the holism that characterises housing and wellbeing in Indigenous epistemologies, aligns with aspirations for self-determination that seek Indigenous autonomy and the expression of Indigenous ways of thinking, being, and doing. However, this critical connection between home, wellbeing, and self-determination is underexplored in the literature on housing and health.

The work being conducted by the KGHS in Fort Good Hope strives for self-determination to modify the structural conditions within which home, housing and health is shaped in the community. With the conceptual understanding developed in this chapter this thesis will go on to examine the barriers and challenges posed to the self-determination of housing and home by a housing policy and governance system that is largely a colonial artifact. Meanwhile, in light of the scholarship that challenges state-defined and institutionalised versions of self-determination and self-government, I will consider critically the possibilities for true Indigenous self-determination and autonomy of housing in the NWT.

Chapter 3

Methods

3.1. Introduction: An Invitation to Assist the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society

This research is the result of a collaboration between a group of Memorial University researchers led by Dr. Julia Christensen and the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society in Fort Good Hope. This collaboration was established in 2018, when PlanIt North[1] put James Caesar and Arthur Tobac of the KGHS in communication with Dr. Christensen, as they sought out scholarly assistance with the development and implementation of Fort Good Hope's community-led housing program. Although since that time James Caesar has moved to a new employer in the community, our collaboration continues with Arthur and Wanda Grandjambe, who has taken on many of James' responsibilities. Regular communication throughout this time—largely through telephone and video calls and one team member's visit to the community prior to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic—has been instrumental in ensuring the research team stay updated not only with the community's wellbeing and housing needs, and the working efforts of the KGHS, but also critically with what the KGHS needs from us. In addition to exploring and providing responses to their specific questions and areas of need, it is the broader element of our role and value in this partnership as 'people that can write and document the progress'—as outlined by Arthur during a call with the KGHS in October 2019—that I take seriously. In alignment with others that have sharply considered their places as settler scholars in northern and Indigenous research,[2] my reflections around this work and ongoing reflexivity as a non-Indigenous researcher lead to this centering of the way the KGHS conceptualises my position. Thus, it is important that this partnership with the KGHS be the first piece any reader understands about the way in which this research has evolved.

This chapter will unpack the methodological framework for this study that is grounded in critical northern geography and anti-colonial approaches to research. Within this, I examine my position as a settler scholar working in a context of northern and Indigenous research, in which many non-Indigenous scholars have historically had and continue to have a harmful and

[1] PlanIt North is a Yellowknife-based organisation that works with northern communities and their partners, including the KGHS, to meet their planning, research, and communications needs.
[2] Desbiens, C. (2010). Step lightly, then move forward: exploring feminist directions for Northern research. *The Canadian Geographer*. 54(4); Pp. 410-416.

extractive impact. Following this, I expand on the design of this study, built around the use of housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement to explore the systems and relationships of governance through which the delivery of self-governed housing programs operates. I then explore and describe how the data used in this thesis was gathered and analysed, before discussing how my findings will be communicated through a specific engagement with storytelling methods.

In addition, running throughout the chapter will be a commentary that aims to speak to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the trajectories of my methods and research. From the restrictions on travel and fieldwork, and the necessary considerations for conducting methods remotely, to grappling with the threats to health and wellbeing—be that individual, or collective as it is determined by such landscapes as housing—exacerbated during this time,[3] I will show how the Covid-19 pandemic offers an opportunity to critically reflect on how community-engaged research should look in a post-pandemic future.

3.2. An Anti-Colonial Methodology: Doing Critical Northern Geography

This research is situated in an important and evolving sub-field of geographical research in northern Canada, termed 'critical northern geography.'[4] Within this sub-field all aspects of the academic inquiry process, from the questions we ask as researchers to the methods we employ to answer them, are being continually and critically reflected on as part of the development of an anti-colonial and non-extractive northern research praxis.[5] As discussed in previous chapters, the subject of this research—housing policy and the housing crisis in northern Canada—is firmly grounded in colonial pasts and presents.

The colonial representations of northern and Indigenous geographies in the research and discourse of southern-based settler society have been well-documented and problematised by the critical perspectives offered in creative and academic pieces by both Indigenous and non-

[3] Christensen, J. & Pugsley, A. (2020). "Thinking Outside the Crisis: Housing as Healthcare in the North". The Independent. [online]. Available: https://theindependent.ca/2020/05/29/thinking-outside-the-crisis-housing-as-healthcare-in-the-north%ef%bb%bf/ (Accessed: 30/05/2020).; Christensen, J. (2020). "Housing is health: Coronavirus highlights the dangers of the housing crisis in Canada's North". The Conversation. [online]. Available: https://theconversation.com/housing-is-health-coronavirus-highlights-the-dangers-of-the-housing-crisis-in-canadas-north-135594 (Accessed: 30/05/2020).

[4] Goldhar, C., Frenette, A., Pugsley, A., Browne, D., Hackett, K., Madsen, V., McNaughton, G. & Christensen, J. (2022). Critical Northern Geography: a Theoretical Framework, Research Praxis and Call to Action in our (Post)Pandemic Worlds. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies.* 21(3); Pp. 270-283.

[5] I use the term praxis to mean the practical application of theory.

Indigenous figures.[6] While confronting the paternalistic colonialities and violence found in the fabric of northern research conducted by settler scholars, this work draws crucial attention to the need to challenge extractive and often harmful dynamics of fieldwork[7]; to engage with and respect Indigenous knowledge systems and governance[8]; to reflect and account for the politics and power involved in research relationships[9]; and to interrogate the ongoing influence of colonialism on northern Indigenous peoples in research agendas and communications.[10] In Goldhar et al.,[11] my colleagues and I position such contributions as an integral part of the critical northern geography trajectory, before outlining our thoughts on its praxis. We move beyond any defined notion of 'best practice' in northern research, seeking instead to highlight various spaces for attention, reflection and progress including but not limited to: listening to and learning from Indigenous and northern scholarship; responding actively to communities' self-defined research needs; being transparent and honest when storying research; questioning the inclusiveness of these stories; asking permission; and experiencing and acknowledging discomfort. It is within such dialogues, questioning and directions that I locate this study and my considerations for how to conduct it in a meaningfully ethical and critical way.

3.2.1. Studying Up

For this research then I engage with an anti-colonial methodology to resist the dispossessing and colonial dynamics of research that is conducted by settler scholars and grounded in settler colonial institutions. In doing so I stand in solidarity with Indigenous scholars who centre Indigenous worldviews, ontologies and epistemologies through Indigenous research methodologies.[12] I as a white settler of European descent (English), an international student

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[6] See for example: Wenzel, G. (1987). "'I Was Once Independent': The Southern Seal Protest and Inuit". *Anthropologica.* 29(2); Pp. 195-210.; Wenzel, G, (1991). Animal Rights, Human Rights: Ecology, Economy, and Ideology in the Canadian Arctic. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.; Sandiford, M. & Nungak, Z. (2006). Qallunaat! Why White People Are Funny. Canada: National Film Board of Canada. https://www.nfb.ca/film/qallunaat_why_white_people_are_funny/ ; Cameron, E. (2012). Securing Indigenous politics: A critique of the vulnerability and adaptation approach to the human dimensions of climate change in the Canadian Arctic. *Global Environmental Change.* 22(1); Pp. 103-114.; Cameron, E. (2015). Far off Metal River: Inuit Lands, Settler Stories, and the Making of the Contemporary Arctic. Vancouver: UBC Press.; Arnaquq-Baril, A. (2016). Angry Inuk. Canada: National Film Board of Canada and EyeSteelFilm.

[7] Abbot, D. (2006). Disrupting the 'whiteness' of Fieldwork in Geography. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography.* 27(3); Pp. 326-341.

[8] Audla, T. & Smith, D. (2014). A Principled Approach to Research and Development in Inuit Nunangat Starts with the People. *Arctic.* 67(1); Pp. 120-121.

[9] Leeuw, S.D., Cameron, E.S., Greenwood, M.L. (2012). Participatory and Community-Based Research, Indigenous Geographies, and the Spaces of Friendship: A Critical Engagement. *Canadian Geographer.* 56(2); Pp. 180-194.

[10] Cameron. Securing Indigenous politics.

[11] Goldhar, Frenette, Pugsley, Browne, Hackett, Madsen, McNaughton & Christensen. Critical Northern Geography.

[12] Kovach, M.E. (2009). Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts. Toronto (ON): University of Toronto Press.; Morgensen S.L. (2012). Destabilizing the Settler Academy: The Decolonial Effects of Indigenous Methodologies. *American Quarterly.* 64(4); Pp. 805-808.; Tuck, E. & McKenzie M. (2014). Place in research: Theory, methods, and methodology. New York: Routledge.

residing on the ancestral homelands of the Beothuk and the Mi'kmaq today known as the island of Newfoundland, cannot ethically claim an Indigenous research methodology. My understanding of Indigenous knowledge is limited to what I have learnt only in recent years, and certainly does not reflect a lifetime of immersion in Indigenous teachings and stories. What I must do as a settler scholar though, is commit to an anti-colonial methodology. To this end, I look to the interjections of Elizabeth Carlson,[13] who provides critical dialogue and suggestions around how settler researchers can develop and apply an anti-colonial research methodology in spite of the Eurocentrism that characterises academia. I ensure my research values and actions align with my commitment to anti-colonial research by following Carlson's directions to be deliberate in reading Indigenous authored work, learn and honour the relational accountabilities that should shape my interactions with Indigenous partners and participants, and support Indigenous peoples out of love and justice.

Indeed, the methodological approach of studying up that guides the research methods utilised in this study, is informed by the effort to do anti-colonial work and hopes to contribute to the progression of critical northern geography as an aligning sub-field of scholarship. "Studying up" is an approach originated by Laura Nader[14] that guides research attention to the upper end of the social power structure instead of just the lower, and questions those positions and processes through which responsibility and power is exercised. Identified by Alex Zahara[15] to be an important decolonising research methodology, in this project studying up directs the focus of this research onto the system of power responsible for managing housing in Fort Good Hope, rather than telling a deficit-based story of the community suffering as subjects of this power. To be specific, I use housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement,[16] focusing the research on northern housing policy and the system through which it is delivered in Fort Good Hope rather than the community's northern and Indigenous residents experiencing the housing insecurity and homelessness that results from the inadequacies of these mechanisms. In so doing I respond to the multi-disciplinary contributions through which the concept and methodology of studying up has circulated, and the important challenges from their authors to better attend to administrative

[13] Carlson, E. (2017). Anti-colonial methodologies and practices for settler colonial studies. *Settler Colonial Studies*. 7(4); Pp. 496-517.
[14] Nader, L. (1972). Up the Anthropologist: Perspectives Gained From Studying Up.
[15] Zahara, A. (2016). Ethnographic Refusal: a how-to guide. [online]. Available: https://discardstudies.com/2016/08/08/ethnographic-refusal-a-how-to-guide/. (Accessed: 09/11/2019).
[16] Todd, Z. (2014). Fish pluralities: Human-animal relations and sites of engagement in Paulatuuq, Arctic Canada. *Études/Inuit/Studies*. 38(1-2); Pp. 217–238.

structures, chains of social hierarchies, and policy pathways, rather than the experiences of disadvantaged populations.[17]

I also align my methodology with frameworks for anti-colonialism that centre Indigenous resurgence,[18] as I focus on housing policy that has long been an instrument of settler colonialism in northern Canada. Further, with self-government and self-determination housing policy is now becoming a key site of Indigenous resurgence and politics. For Cree scholar Michael Hart "Indigenous resurgence pushes outwards from [the centre of anti-colonialism], re-claiming space that had been occupied by settler colonialism",[19] thus I attend to and support the specific aspirations of the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Dene in Fort Good Hope for changing the boundaries of the policy through which their housing is delivered. The impact of this anti-colonial framework on the research design and methods, particularly the use of housing as an active site of engagement, will be unpacked more thoroughly in the next section. Ultimately though, in utilising this study-up methodology, I hoped to conduct my practice in an anti-colonial way, amplifying community goals and facilitating Fort Good Hope's drive towards self-government, rather than reproduce the legacy of settlers' harmful and extractive research practices.

These foundations produce a policy-oriented study—an approach that stands to contribute significantly to the growth trajectory of critical northern geography by departing from the trend of northern research being conducted at the community scale. The focus on the policy and administrative system through which housing comes to be, joins on methodological terms with recent studies such as that by Monosky and Keeling,[20] which lends attention to closure plans for mines in northern Canada to understand how the mining industry is considering Indigenous Knowledge in their mine closure and remediation planning. Such inquiries into policy and governance that 'study up' to the mechanisms that produce inequality in northern Canada, stand as important extensions to those studies that identify and discuss the lived experience of those

[17] Mayer, V. (2008). Studying up and f**cking up: Ethnographic interviewing in production studies. *Cinema Journal*. 47(2); Pp.141-148.; Bowman, D. (2009). 'Studying up, down, sideways and through: situated research and policy networks'. In The Future of Sociology: Proceedings of the Annual Conference of the Australian Sociological Association. Pp. 1-11.; Braverman, I. (2014). 'Who's Afraid of Methodology? Advocating a Methodological Turn in Legal Geography'. In The Expanding Spaces of Law: A Timely Legal Geography, Irus Braverman, Nicholas Blomley, David Delaney & Alexandre (Sandy) Kedar (eds.) Stanford University Press. Pp. 120-141.

[18] Simpson, L. (2004). Anticolonial Strategies for the Recovery and Maintenance of Indigenous Knowledge. *American Indian Quarterly*. 28(3/4); Pp. 378-384.; Hart, M. (2009). 'Anti-Colonial Indigenous Social Work: Reflections on an Aboriginal Approach'. In Wicihitowin: Aboriginal social work in Canada, Raven Sinclair, Michael Hart, and Gord Bruyere (eds.) Winnipeg, MB: Fernwood Publishing. Pp. 25–41.

[19] From personal communication between Hart and Carlson, in Carlson. Anti-colonial methodologies. Pp. 500.

[20] Monosky, M. & Keeling, A. (2021). Planning for social and community-engaged closure: A comparison of mine closure plans from Canada's territorial and provincial North. *Journal of Environmental Management.* 277(111324); Pp. 1-10.

inequalities. Thus, policy-oriented studies are important contributions to the development of a critical northern geography.

Furthermore, such studies should be positioned at the centre of conversations and concerns around how community-engaged research should look in post-pandemic futures. For this study, the Covid-19 pandemic presented as a significant barrier to in-person method plans that required me to be physically present in Fort Good Hope and the Northwest Territories, and thus provided the impetus for sculpting a plan to conduct my research remotely. This is a process that has and continues to be an ongoing experience of learning and reflexivity, not only with regards to the practical considerations involved with remote research – which will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3.3 – but critically with regards to the space it has created for reflection on what my community-engaged research should look like right now. While the Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated many challenges faced by northern and Indigenous communities,[21] I as a researcher must contend carefully with how to best collaborate with research partners and participants who are often responding to these challenges. Finding the balance between a need to update, discuss and consult with research partners at the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society, and a want not to demand their valuable time, has been a practical and ethical challenge I continue to grapple with. Thus far, confronting these challenges has meant approaching communication with greater flexibility, and maintaining a continual awareness on the condition of events that may affect the availability of research partners and participants in Fort Good Hope and elsewhere in the NWT, from Covid-19 outbreaks to the flooding risk of the Mackenzie River's spring ice break up. In this sense, the policy-focus of my study has proved to be a significant advantage, requiring less demanding engagement with Fort Good Hope and research partners than research focusing on community members might necessitate.

3.2.2. Positionality and Responsibilities

At this point, having positioned studying-up at the centre of my anti-colonial methodology, it is important to recognise my responsibilities to take seriously the colonial context of this study and the landscape of northern research, and be explicit about the way in which I am situated as a non-Indigenous and non-Canadian settler scholar. Near the start of my research journey, I read an incredibly thought-provoking piece authored by Morgan Moffitt, Courtney

[21] Shadian, J. (2020). "Jessica Shadian: COVID-19 has given most Canadians a taste of what Northerners face on a daily basis". National Post. [online]. Available at: https://nationalpost.com/opinion/jessica-shadian-covid-19-has-given-most-canadians-a-taste-of-what-northerners-face-on-a-daily-basis (Accessed 25/05/2021).

Chetwynd and Zoe Todd[22] that questioned what it means to be accountable as researchers working in the North. Amongst numerous points of valuable thinking that were raised, it was Zoe Todd's admission that has continually driven my reflection, questioning, and learning: around the notion that "the only way for truly ethical work to take place in the North is for Northern research to be in Northern hands". Agreeing with this position at the outset of a master's based on northern research was clearly conflictual; where does that leave me as a southern-based, settler researcher?

While ongoing grappling with this question has produced no clear answer, the real value of this process lies in the consistent feeling of discomfort I am left with. Around the same time that I was faced with the challenge to my role in northern research, I was introduced to the idea that a feeling of discomfort is necessary, indeed essential, in northern research—that when you maintain some degree of unease, you ask the questions that direct your research towards a truly ethical and meaningful engagement.[23] Contributions, largely in the field of critical social work and education, have explored the potential progress in and commitment to social justice if we students, researchers, and academics, become mindful of our discomfort and use it to embrace emotive and spiritual knowing,[24] and as such affective learning.[25] Perhaps with more specific inflections for thinking about critical northern research, Baker, Quayle and Ali[26] seek to expose the structures of oppression created by the "colonial context with a history of denial around white privilege and racism" within which we live and research. For these authors, reflexivity should not be used as an activity to ease one's feelings of discomfort, but as a space through which to navigate the nexus between our positionalities and the power dynamics that exist around the privilege of whiteness. To that end, I acknowledge with honesty the discomfort I feel around my positionality in this northern research study and the deep privilege inherent in my identity, and seek to use it as an opportunity for learning. Thus far, this commitment to confronting my discomfort has driven me to be more informed, more deliberate, and more careful about my interactions and words. My positionality in this research-scape was part of

[22] Moffitt, M., Chetwynd, C. & Todd, Z. (2015). Interrupting the northern research industry: Why northern research should be in northern hands. *Northern Public Affairs.* 4(1). http://www.northernpublicaffairs.ca/index/interrupting-the-northern-research-industry-why-northern-research-should-be-in-northern-hands/. Pp.n/a

[23] Goldhar, Frenette, Pugsley, Browne, Hackett, Madsen, McNaughton & Christensen. Critical Northern Geography.

[24] Wong, Y.L.R. (2004). Knowing through discomfort: A mindfulness-based critical social work pedagogy. *Critical Social Work.* 5(1). https://ojs.uwindsor.ca/index.php/csw/article/download/5636/4606?inline=1

[25] Bheekie, A. & Van Huyssteen, M. (2015). Be Mindful of Your Discomfort: An Approach to Contextualised Learning. *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement.* 3(1); Pp. 1-13.

[26] Baker, A.M., Quayle, A. & Ali, L. (2018). "Reflexivities of Discomfort: Unsettling Subjectivities in and through Research" in Eds. Oke, N., Sonn, C.C. & Baker, A.M. Places of Privilege: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Identities, Change and Resistance. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Sense. https://brill.com/view/book/edcoll/9789004381407/BP000022.xml?rskey=boOrME&result=9. Pp. 195

the motivation to study-up and conduct the project in a less extractive or community-intensive way. Furthermore, the specific reflections on the question of my place in this work have had a direct impact on the design of this research, which as I will discuss in the following section, was driven entirely by listening to research partners at the KGHS and their directions for where I was needed.

With all this in mind, my positionality in relation to this work and the important context of how research has been conducted in northern Canada historically, is something that I have been reflexive about in an ongoing way throughout this study. Taking on the principles that Elizabeth Carlson[27] proposes to guide an anti-colonial methodology, I acknowledge and problematise the realities of settler colonialism encountered in this research, and as such it is important for me to be aware of and sensitive to the historical and contemporary issues of colonialism, Indigenous marginalisation, intergenerational trauma, and the unique cultural, social, and economic characteristics of Fort Good Hope and the Northwest Territories. To this end, I recognise my duty to be aware of the ways in which university researchers participate in and perpetuate those issues, and act according to my own self-reflexive and learning practice as a student and researcher. I orient my research around the values of reciprocity, egalitarianism and holism, while seeking to maintain the self-determination and autonomy of research partners and participants. Further, drawing on the concept of relational accountability,[28] I am keenly aware of my responsibility to establish and maintain respectful and ethical relationships between myself and research partners at the KGHS in Fort Good Hope, and in any space I establish with research participants. I will ultimately approach my methods with an attitude of learning, flexibility, and reflexivity, taking stock of feminist directions for northern research as I aim to 'step lightly'.[29]

3.3. Research Design: Housing as an Active Site of Engagement

As I engage with community organisations and the housing needs of Fort Good Hope's Dene community, the design of this research is informed by anti-colonial objectives and standards of ethical research practice that seek to mitigate the risks and harms of doing research with and about Indigenous peoples. Thus, the story of how this research has taken shape that I will tell in this section indicates my alignment with the guidelines set out in the Tri-Council

[27] Carlson. Anti-colonial methodologies.
[28] Wilson, S. (2008). Research as ceremony: Indigenous research methods. Blackpoint (NS): Fernwood Publishing.
[29] Desbiens. Step lightly.

Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans[30] and the Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North,[31] as well as the terms of my Memorial University ethics approval and scientific research permit from the Aurora Research Institute, which is the formal research licensing body for the Northwest Territories.[32] Perhaps most importantly though, it is important to be clear that the design of this research was dominantly shaped by the questions, comments, knowledge gaps, positions and wishes expressed by research partners at the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society.

3.3.1. Developing Research Questions with the KGHS

The research questions and objectives that steer this study were developed in direct response to the questions and concerns raised by the KGHS. Over the course of the last two years my colleagues and I have engaged in ongoing communications with directors of the KGHS, listening to their stories, understanding their research needs, and consulting with them to ensure my research meets both their practical and ethical needs. Following initial conversations between James, Arthur and Julia, I joined the research team with the broad objective to explore how housing policy and programs being developed by the KGHS could reflect and pursue Indigenous understandings of home. However, as I listened to James and Arthur over the first few months of my program and gained understanding of their work, this objective started to shift. During conference calls in October 2019 and March 2020, they both expressed concerns around the barriers to the Society's operations posed by the NWT governance system and process through which housing comes to be delivered in Fort Good Hope. Encounters with lengthy delays on applications for land, demanding administrative processes when applying for scarcely available funding, and uncertainty around the jurisdiction of different housing related processes, painted a complex network of governing actors and decision making in which control over housing in the NWT remains largely out of the hands of communities.

These concerns sparked a realisation that any research efforts to understand how Fort Good Hope's community-led housing strategy was to deliver Indigenous conceptualisations of home, needed to be accompanied by an understanding of how this objective is to be practically realised. How does home-centric policy and self-governed housing actually work if James and

[30] MRCC (Medical Research Council (Canada)), NSERCC (Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada), & SSHRCC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada). (2014). Tri-council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. Canadian Institutes of Health Research.
[31] ACUNS (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies). (2003). Ethical Principles for the Conduct of Research in the North. [online]. Available at: Ethics_1 (acuns.ca) (Accessed: 10/06/21).
[32] Memorial University ICEHR Approval number: 20210823-AR (Appendix I). Northwest Territories Scientific Research License number: 16806 (Appendix II).

Arthur are experiencing these obstacles to their efforts, Julia and I both wondered out loud during one meeting. Considering the barriers they had outlined, there emerged a clear need to explore how these self-governing, community-led efforts can be supported rather than hindered by the system of housing delivery in the NWT. Based on this feedback and our subsequent thought process, I developed a research plan that focuses on investigating this governance system and the process of housing delivery in the NWT, and seeks to visualise and make known the barriers to the self-governed delivery of housing in Fort Good Hope.

I aim to bring housing and self-determination into conversation by addressing the research questions I outlined in Chapter One. In a conference call in June 2020, James, Arthur and Wanda expressed support for these research questions and objectives, which was central in my proceeding applications for Research Ethics Board approval and research licensing from the Aurora Research Institute[33]. In the time since, I have and will continue to engage in communications with the KGHS that allow for the modification of research directions and my conduct in an ongoing way. It is important to acknowledge here that although I am committed to building and maintaining a reciprocal, responsible relationship with the KGHS and the community of Fort Good Hope, developing this kind of relationship takes time—indeed more time than what a Master's program permits. As such, this working relationship will continue between the KGHS and my supervisor beyond the ending of my program, through forums of conversation, support and research such as the At Home in the North Program directed by Dr. Christensen.

3.3.2. Housing in Fort Good Hope as an Active Site of Engagement

Considering the conceptual needs of the research to engage with both housing and self-government, and my ethical responsibilities as a settler scholar conducting northern research, I took inspiration for the way in which to study up from Zoe Todd's[34] work, deciding to explore housing in Fort Good Hope as an 'active site of engagement'. While Todd takes on the notion from Ann Fienup-Riordan[35] to understand how human-fish relations in Paulatuuq reflect broader conflicts and negotiations among State, industry, human and animal actors, and thus comment on what is needed to mobilise reconciliation aims in Canada, I use housing in Fort

[33] Obtaining ethics clearance and research licensing from Memorial University's ICEHR and the NWT's Aurora Research Institute also required approval for the research from the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Band Council which was provided through a written letter of support from Chief Danny Masuzumi (Appendix III).

[34] Todd. Fish pluralities.

[35] Fienup-Riordan, A. (2000). "An Anthropologist Reassess Her Methods", in Ann Fienup-Riordan with William Tyson, Paul John, Marie Meade and John Active, Hunting Tradition in a Changing World: Yup'ik Lives in Alaska Today, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press: 29-57. Pp57.

Good Hope as an active site of engagement to explore the broader processes and relationships amongst the federal, territorial and Indigenous governments, through which housing is governed and delivered in the NWT. Doing so will enable me to conceptualise in a similar way to Todd the conflicts and challenges reflected by housing in Fort Good Hope, and thus comment on what is needed to advance self-government and self-determination aims in the Northwest Territories.

Reflecting on their work with Yup'ik communities in Alaska, Fienup-Riordan's "active points of engagement" refer researchers to the spaces in which cross-cultural meaning emerges for the Indigenous subjects of research attention. Such spaces as the schools, courts, or shopping malls of non-Indigenous society with which Indigenous peoples interact, provide the opportunity to see and work across the difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge. For Todd, the space provided by human-fish relations in Paulatuuq reveal fish pluralities, or multiple ways of knowing fish, from which emerges the ways of thinking and doing that must feed into the dialogue, conceptualisation, and mobilisation of a reconciliation framework that extends beyond Western epistemologies. This is to say that the way people engage with this space—a site of engagement—provides a view to their epistemologies, values, and ways of life which must be carried over to broad politics of for example reconciliation, or indeed Indigenous self-determination. In Fort Good Hope, research partners at the KGHS stress that housing is central to the community's social fabric – with housing used as a starting point in many of the circular narratives employed by James and Arthur, and in Dene narrative traditions more broadly, to orient our research team to the challenges faced by the community around health, education, employment, and even Covid-19. In this way, housing in Fort Good Hope emerges as a significant pillar in the community's worldview of wellbeing, and an active site of engagement that sensitises me to the connectedness so fundamental to Dene and Indigenous ontologies, the holistic nature of which departs from the separateness and distinctions that characterise both my own non-Indigenous knowledge and linear housing bureaucracies. Equipped with a means to understand the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Dene way of conceptualising housing and socio-cultural conditions in the community, perhaps by using housing as an active site of engagement it is possible to move beyond the sectoral and linear approach to self-government and its negotiation currently employed by the Canadian state in the NWT.

With this in mind, the praxis enabled by the active site of engagement concept and guided by Dene research priorities and worldviews aligns ethically and conceptually with this study's

anti-colonial methodology outlined in the previous section. Pursuing my studying up methodology in this way enables an exploration of the spaces between Dene worldviews in Fort Good Hope and the current process of housing delivery as an active site of engagement. This provides a valuable opportunity to work across the ontological difference between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge that is necessary for navigating the complexity of self-determination dynamics and arrangements in the NWT. Thus, using housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement allows me to combine and build on the work of scholars that have identified housing policy and governance in northern Canada as deeply inadequate,[36] and the housing providers such as the KGHS who seeks to position community-led housing programming and Indigenous self-government as a solution to the housing crisis.

3.3.3. Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic

In order to collect the data needed to answer my research questions in this study I utilise qualitative methods, including policy scoping and systems mapping, as well as semi-structured in-depth interviews, all of which were conducted remotely due to the travel restrictions imposed by the global Covid-19 pandemic. Following the outbreak of the pandemic in Canada in March 2020, the methods plan I had set out for this study was repeatedly re-routed as I joined the swathes of people across the world learning as I go how best to conduct my work during this time. Remote methods require different practical considerations than in-person methods but conducting remote methods for northern research during a pandemic imposes uncertainty and demands new layers of ethical considerations. Van den Hoonaard and Hamilton[37] provide a reminder that ethics go beyond the ethics boards and failing to take stock of this can result in an inadequate interaction with ethics as a mere box-ticking enterprise that is forgotten once the application is accepted. Thus, I seek in this study to be reflexive around the ethics involved with my research and approach my own ethical practice as an ongoing process that reacts to the people, conditions, spaces and reflections I encounter.

[36] Debicka, E. & Friedman, A. (2009). From Policies to Building: Public Housing in Canada's Eastern Arctic 1950s to 1980s. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research.* 18(2); Pp. 25-39.; Tester, F. (2009). Iglutaasaavut (Our New Homes): Neither "New" nor "Ours" Housing Challenges of the Nunavut Territorial Government. *Journal of Canadian Studies.* 43(2); Pp. 137-158.; Christensen, J. (2012). "They want a different life": Rural northern settlement dynamics and pathways to homelessness in Yellowknife and Inuvik, Northwest Territories. *The Canadian Geographer/Le Géographe Canadien*. 56(4); Pp. 419--438.; Christensen, J. (2013). 'Our home, our way of life': Spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada. *Social & Cultural Geography.* 14(7); Pp. 804-828.; Christensen, J. (2016). Indigenous housing and health in the Canadian North: Revisiting cultural safety. *Health & Place.* 40; Pp. 83-90.

[37] Van den Hoonaard, W.C. & Hamilton, A. (2016). The Ethics Rupture: Exploring Alternatives to Formal Research Ethics Review. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

The suspension of any plan to be physically present in the NWT for focus groups with community members and in-person interviews with governing personnel in Fort Good Hope and Yellowknife, meant it was no longer ethically responsible or perhaps even possible to conduct any methods with community residents, given the inability to establish the meaningful relationships that are particularly imperative to any research with Indigenous peoples. While government and housing delivery personnel may have been better equipped at the time to engage in remote interviews, reaching them and ultimately gaining their consent to participate via email or phone would still be challenging. Furthermore, these interactions could still suffer from my lack of understanding for their temporal and spatial situations—understanding that would be greatly enhanced by 'on the ground' experience. Furthermore, conducting interviews through an online platform such as Zoom or WebEx is not a simple avenue for connecting; their very use requiring a laptop or computer and a strong and stable internet connection—telecommunication infrastructure that cannot be assumed to be available for everyone, particularly in northern Canada. Connecting by such means may then function as a barrier to participation. On the other hand, it is my hope that my remote conducting of methods has helped to avoid some of the research fatigue and negative impacts northern communities can experience when hosting researchers.

3.4. Data Collection: Remote Methods

With all this in mind, I set out to realise my research objectives with two methods phases of data collection.

3.4.1. Policy Scoping and System Mapping

For the first methods phase of this study, while undertaking the processes of ethics approval and licensing for interviewing, I conducted policy scoping and system mapping to address the first and second of my research questions. Through this first methods phase of my research, I was simultaneously seeking to understand what pieces make up the system in order to answer research question one, and interrogate those pieces to evaluate their support or hinderance for the self-determination of housing in order to answer research question two.

As such I traced the trajectory of housing in the Northwest Territories both historically and in the present, mapping the network of decisions and governance that have and continue to produce the housing landscape in Fort Good Hope. Considering research question one—*what is the current process of decision-making required to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope?*—I

started by exploring and trying to understand who might be involved in this process, and what the various pieces to this system might be. Following this, I focused on the funding element of the process, putting together a story of federal funding for housing since 1993, when the Canadian government announced its withdrawal from providing funding for social housing. Next, I focused on the territorial government in an effort to understand how funding is used for meeting community housing needs in the NWT, before seeking out clarification around how land is acquired for construction in Fort Good Hope. To gather this information, I engaged in some archival research with online access to the NWT Archives, the Library and Archives Canada, and the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation Archives, also known as the Housing Knowledge Centre. Through a review and analysis of policy documents and grey literature available, including historical housing reports and community planning documents, I traced the historical relationship between Fort Good hope and the territorial and federal governments that emerges through the delivery of housing. Alongside this, I traced the present state of these relationships through an exploration of recent policy documents, academic literature, media stories and government announcements. Through interaction with these online materials and extensive note taking I produced a data set that reflected the scalar and temporal aspects of the decision-making process through which northern housing is governed.

Meanwhile, equipped with valuable questions and comments from James and Arthur at the KGHS, and drawing on existing analytical commentary, I reflected and responded in a journal to research question two: *what are the key policy and governance barriers that prevent the self-determination of housing in Fort Good Hope?* Much of the material used to understand how housing is delivered in Fort Good Hope, also shed light on the barriers to self-determined housing within that decision-making process. Media and academic commentaries flagged some of the problems perceived by communities with the process of housing delivery in the NWT, while conversations with James and Arthur pointed me towards specific stages or mechanisms within that process that hinder community-led housing.

However, making sense of this data set and using it to map out the process presented a greater challenge than I had anticipated. Understanding the NWT's system of housing delivery and the barriers to self-governance within it using only materials available online, while I awaited ethics clearance to conduct interviews, proved to be a messy process. Making sense of this large data set I gathered was even further prohibited by my lack of foundational knowledge around the broader history, politics, and governance of the NWT that I found to be assumed in much of the material with which I interacted. Subsequently, I decided to engage with creative

writing as a method of inquiry, to untangle the pieces of housing delivery I had drawn out and incrementally develop an understanding of how they fit together. Equipped with the more flexible approach to inquiry this form of writing gives rise to, I engaged with some more generalised readings that shed light on politics in the NWT, and utilised communications with my supervisor and colleagues who have lived in or spent time in the NWT to fill in some of the gaps in my contextual understanding of the NWT's housing governance. I also realised the potential value of documenting my experience using these methods in this research, that would work to provide a commentary on the accessibility of this system for Indigenous governments and organisations trying to follow and access the necessary government services. Thus, I chose to write with creativity, flexibility, and accessibility, an autoethnographic account of my navigating the system of NWT housing governance. This approach engaged me in the subjective experience of 'navigating' a complex, fragmented, interjurisdictional housing system that may mirror the difficulties faced by others encountering this system. In turn, this approach helped me to excavate the underlying historical and colonial relations that produce the pernicious effects of this system and barriers for northern residents and Indigenous housing officials. Ultimately, needing a space to process, understand, and question the data I was collecting around the network of housing governance and delivery, creative writing gave me the room to explore and allow my thinking to travel in directions I did not expect or indeed know it could go.

3.4.2. Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews

For the second phase of my research, I employed in-depth, semi-structured interviews, conducted via telephone or the online platform WebEx, in order to understand the experience of delivering housing within the northern governance system and address research question three: *how might housing policy and current structures of governance be adapted to better support 'home' as it is articulated in Fort Good Hope?* Preceding these interviews, I obtained ethics clearance from MUN's ICEHR (Appendix I) and a scientific research permit from the Aurora Research Institute (Appendix II) following a process of ethical review and licensing. The interviews, as displayed in Table 1, engaged with select personnel involved in the delivery of northern housing either at present or in the past, at both the community, territorial and federal level.

Table 1: Interviews conducted with reason for interviewee's recruitment

Interview	Date and Location	Interviewee Position & Employer	Reason for Recruitment
Arthur Tobac, James Caesar and Wanda Grandjambe	May 18th 2021, online	Directors, KGHS	-Experiences as a community organisation trying to manage Fort Good Hope's housing.
Angela Grandjambe	May 27th 2021, telephone	Housing Manager, Rádeyı̨lı̨kóé Housing Association	-Experience in housing delivery and knowledge of Fort Good Hope housing needs.
Jason Snaggs	July 7th 2021, online	Yellowknives Dene First Nation (YKDFN) CEO and community-based housing advocate	-Previously shared perspectives on NWT housing delivery in AHIN webinar. -Speaks to established example of community-led housing by YKDFN that draws many parallels with the hopes of housing personnel in Fort Good Hope.
Sandra Turner	June 28th 2021, online	Former employee of the GNWT and former specialist in northern housing with the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation	-Experience in housing delivery at both the territorial and federal government levels. -Public perspectives on the NWT housing crisis.
James Fulford[38]	July 22nd 2021, online	Associate Deputy Minister of the NWTHC	-Perspective as the new (at the time of interview) director of the NWTHC housing renewal.
Anonymous[39]	July 9th 2021, online	GNWT	-Experience in housing delivery and position-based knowledge.
Anonymous	June 16th 2021, online	NWTHC	-Experience in housing delivery and position-based knowledge.
Anonymous	July 8th 2021, online	NWTHC	-Experience in housing delivery and position-based knowledge.

[38] James Fulford wished it to be stated that any views expressed in his interview are personal views and not necessarily reflective of his employer.

[39] For interviewees that requested to remain anonymous I have not provided their exact position of employment or a more specific reason for recruitment for doing so may compromise their anonymity.

Purposive sampling was applied in the selection of interview participants,[40] allowing me to reach out to potential participants based on their particular involvement in a dimension of the NWT's housing delivery process, and thus ensuring that each of the actors important in this system were represented. The subjective nature of this sampling method does of course raise the risk that certain voices were excluded from my sample.[41] However, I negated some of this risk by sharing the selection aspect of the method with my research partners, discussing with the KGHS who to reach out to in Fort Good Hope, utilising contact networks maintained by my supervisor in Yellowknife for territorial and federal level participants, and giving participants the opportunity to direct me to further contacts who they felt would be interested in contributing to this study. Recruiting potential participants remotely presented some challenges, most notably with regard to forming a connection when 'cold emailing' to make initial contact. Indeed, all email communications demanded clarity and careful balance, requiring enough information for the recipient to make an informed decision to participate, without taking up too much of their time. Additionally, it became clear that writing emails not using a script but specific to each recipient was important for initial connections and starting to build some trust, including reference to their existing relationship with my supervisor or research partners and relevance of their knowledge or experiences to the study.

In my approach to these interviews I aligned with storytelling methods, which make space within research to hear and engage purposefully with stories and value storytelling as the principal way the lived world is understood and communicated.[42] To this end, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were employed in this study for the space they create of informal and flexible social interaction that is guided broadly by prepared themes.[43] Creating open interview spaces provided the opportunity for participants to story the nuanced ways they experience and make sense of the housing system. I made use of a flexible interview guide[44] that sought to address the thematic areas around: 1) how community needs are addressed; 2) the challenges

[40] Tongco, M. D. C. (2008). Purposive sampling as a tool for informant selection. *Ethnobotany Research and Applications*, 5(2007), 147-158.
[41] Lavrakas, P. J. (2008). "Purposive Sample" in *Encyclopedia of survey research methods* (Vols. 1-0). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
[42] Lewis (2011). Storytelling as Research/Research as Storytelling. *Qualitative Inquiry.* 17(6); Pp. 505-510.; Leeuw, S.D., Parkes, M.W., Morgan, V.S., Christensen, J., Lindsay, N., Mitchell-Foster, K. & Jozkow, J.R. (2017). Going unscripted: A call to critically engage storytelling methods and methodologies in geography and the medical-health sciences. *The Canadian Geographer*. 61(2); Pp. 152-164.
[43] Valentine, G. (2005). 'Tell me about… using interviews as a research methodology'. In Flowerdew, R. & Martin, D. (Eds). "Methods in Human Geography: A Guide for Students Doing a Research Project. 2nd Edition. Edinburgh Gate: Addison Wesley Longman.; DiCicco-Bloom, B. & Crabtree, B.F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical education.* 40(4); Pp. 314-321.
[44] See Appendix, article V.

and conflicts encountered in the housing delivery process; 3) the trajectory of community-led housing in the NWT; and 4) what the self-government of housing means. To this end, I had some pre-determined questioning on the participant's role in and experience of delivering housing in Fort Good Hope, or the Northwest Territories more broadly for territorial and federal actors; their thoughts on how supportive the system is for the self-governance of housing; and how they think governance structures could better promote 'home' and as such the self-determination of housing. Beyond these overarching questions, and any specialised queries I had for particular interviewees, I tried to adopt a conversational approach in most interviews, focusing on active listening, asking relevant follow up questions such as to hear more about an experience, or drawing on the knowledge I had acquired during my first methods phase to demonstrate understanding of a context or challenge. In this way, I addressed participants on both a professional and personal level, inviting them to share their thoughts and experiences through personal reflections and stories, rather than engaging with them through closed-ended surveys or questioning.

In my work to create such spaces of social interaction in which stories and meaning could be shared, I encountered the importance of establishing trust and developing rapport with interviewees. While this is far from a revelation in interview practice, upon reflection I had perhaps underestimated the role of trust in the 'study up' interviews I was conducting. Built on power dynamics that differ from those that would characterise an interview with a community member, I realised early in my interactions with potential participants that the hesitation I was feeling, particularly from those working for the territorial government, was connected to their unwillingness to speak critically and publicly about their employer. For one GNWT employee, their initial willingness to speak with me was withdrawn when I shared the consent form, which had to be checked and approved for signing by the employee's director. Indeed, the formality of the consent form was challenging to weave into most interactions without compromising any rapport I had established through email communications. Navigating this hesitation required reflexive shifts in the framing of my inquiry as the series of interviews progressed. For example, I found value in giving interviewees working for the GNWT the opportunity to feel greater control over my perception or understanding of their role and work by asking if they felt there were misunderstandings around their work.

Furthermore, I found greater success in building rapport and having a more relaxed discussion with more personalised questioning, that focused on comments interviewees had made in media outlets, or experiences they had shared already in the interview, as opposed to

questions that were obviously pre-prepared and may be indicative of my preconceptions. With that in mind, I also realised the importance of my contextual understanding and thorough preparation. Throughout all interviews, conversations and inquiries were enhanced by the comprehensive understanding of housing delivery and wider politics in the NWT that I had developed in the first methods phase of this research. Importantly, ensuring I was well-informed on the context of our discussion improved rapport with interviewees who did not have to waste time explaining the landscape within which an experience or challenge arose.

Additionally, it is worth recognising here the implications of conducting these interviews remotely and online, as opposed to in person. Taking heed of scholarly suggestions[45] I worked to recover the loss of rapport and richness of intimacy established more effectively through an in-person interaction, by exchanging communications prior to the interview. However, as previously mentioned, these efforts were sometimes compromised by the formality of the consent form, which had to be introduced by email rather than explained in person and in one case caused the withdrawal of participation. In all interviews though a short discussion at the beginning was all that was needed to answer any questions and placate any concerns around this long and necessarily rigid document, demonstrating the importance of discussing it in person.

I was also sensitive to the limited capacity for using eye contact to establish trust and picking up on nonverbal cues such as facial expressions and body language that is a disadvantage of interacting through a screen or on the phone.[46] To this end I draw on recommendations[47] for being an active listener, attending with great care to the participant's voice, tone and facial expressions, and being purposefully expressive to convey my own emotion. During one interview that was conducted over the telephone I found it challenging only having the interviewee's tone of voice to react to rather than facial expressions, body language, or eye contact. In this case I had to work hard to listen actively for hesitations and intakes of breath that conveyed the interviewee's reaction to my line of questioning, at one point choosing to

[45] Deakin, H., and Wakefield, K. (2013). SKYPE interviewing: reflections of two PhD researchers. *Qualitative Research*. 14(5); Pp. 1-14.; Seitz, S. (2015). Pixilated partnerships, overcoming obstacles in qualitative interviews via Skype: a research note. *Qualitative Research*. Pp. 1-7.

[46] Novick, G. (2008). Is there a bias against telephone interviews in qualitative research? *Research in Nursing & Health.* 31(4); Pp. 391-8.; Bayles, M. (2012). Is Physical Proximity Essential to the Psychoanalytic Process? An Exploration Through the Lens of Skype? *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*. 22(5); Pp. 569-85.

[47] Seitz, S. (2015). Pixilated partnerships, overcoming obstacles in qualitative interviews via Skype: a research note. *Qualitative Research*. Pp. 1-7.

pivot away from questions surrounding the operations of the NWTHC that I could sense resistance to.

Alongside these practical considerations are a set of especially important ethical considerations. In order to prioritise the wellbeing of participants, I endeavoured to provide a very clear option for flexibility or decline in involvement in the research, given the unnecessary stress participation may impose in addition to what is already being experienced during a global pandemic.[48] Moreover, the access to telecommunication infrastructure such as a laptop or computer and a strong and stable internet connection required for remote interviews could not be assumed to be available for everyone, particularly in northern Canada where poor connectivity is a prevailing challenge.[49] To this end, I was deliberate in making various avenues for connecting available to potential participants, including teleconference software, on the phone, or via emailed written communication, enabling them to choose the medium that was most accessible to the individual.

Such reflections demonstrate how critical it was for me to practice reflexivity and modify my conduct as the researcher throughout the career of a single interview and the series of collective interviews – a need that that was only exacerbated by conducting these interviews during the Covid-19 pandemic.[50] My goal as an interviewer remained to establish a comfortable environment for my participants, and as such I approached each interview separately and flexibly, with the understanding that in different cases different approaches and mediums would produce the richest possible data.[51]

The data collected from the eight interviews I conducted was recorded when consented to and then transcribed and coded to uncover the individual or collective stories that shed light on the governing dynamics between the federal, territorial and community governance structures. Without participant consent to record, notes were made during the interview and coded in the same way. Descriptive coding of interviews was done manually—a technique recommended

[48] Jowett, A. (2020). "Carrying out qualitative research under lockdown – Practical and ethical considerations". LSE. [online]. Available at: https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2020/04/20/carrying-out-qualitative-research-under-lockdown-practical-and-ethical-considerations/ (Accessed: 31/05/2020).
[49] Fontaine, T. (2017). Digital Divides in Canada's Northern Indigenous Communities: Supports and Barriers to Digital Adoption. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Alberta.
[50] Lupton, D. (editor) (2020). Doing fieldwork in a pandemic (crowd-sourced document). Available at: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1clGjGABB2h2qbduTgfqribHmog9B6P0NvMgVuiHZCl8/edit?ts=5e88ae0a# (Accessed: 31/05/2020).
[51] Lo Iacono, V., Symonds, P., and Brown, D.H.K. (2016). Skype as a Tool for Qualitative Research Interviews. *Sociological Research Online*. 21(2); Pp. 1-24. https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/al/people/mann/interviews/paul_symonds_-_skype-research-method.pdf.

for analysing limited sets of interviews[52]—using the highlighter function of Microsoft Word to identify themes, similarities, conflicts, and any conversational directions I had not anticipated. Following this stage of analysis and the drawing out of thematic categories, I looked through each interview transcript for direct quotes, stories and observations that could ground the writing up of results. The stories, or map of experiences, that emerged in this process of interpreting and analysing interview data speak to and enhance the decision map developed through the first phase of my methods. Furthermore, as I analysed the findings from these interviews, I considered research question four: *how is housing policy itself an 'active site of engagement' for understanding the dynamics of self-determination in the Northwest Territories?* While my second findings chapter uses housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement to investigate the community's self-governing and self-determining hopes for the future, I dedicate space in the conclusion of this thesis to consider the methodological value of using housing as a site to engage with the broader trajectory of self-determination in the NWT.

3.5. Communicating Findings: Storytelling Methods

Following on from the gathering and interpretation of my findings, the communication of this research will be oriented around storytelling methods, which are powerful tools for telling a more holistic research story in ways that are more accessible for audiences that extend beyond the traditional boundaries of academia.[53] Such an approach to communicating this research is particularly fitting for the community of Fort Good Hope, where the radio is a central tool for circulating stories and information and making them accessible to everyone.

In developing the outputs of this research, I discussed the findings from my methods—through preliminary results summaries—with research partners at the KGHS to gain input and feedback. Community and policy outputs have been directed by discussions around what James and Arthur think would be most useful to them and the agenda of future community-led and self-governed housing. As such I have plans to collaborate with a graphic storyteller from the NWT to develop a visual representation of the housing governance system map and its barriers to self-governed housing, in a way that is easily accessible for a wide audience in the NWT. In the search for ways to visualise the story of housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of

[52] Saldana, J. (2013). An introduction to codes and coding: Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
[53] Christensen, J., Cox, C. & Szabo-Jones, L. (2018). Activating the heart: storytelling, knowledge sharing and relationship. Waterloo (ON): Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

engagement, I am looking to resources[54] that unpack some of the necessary considerations for visualising social science data, such as using visualisation to enhance understanding of the data's story and not to deceive the audience. I am using visualisation and also audio podcasts or radio segments for the opportunity they provide to present findings in an accessible, culturally contextualised and place sensitive way.[55] Meanwhile, I will also work closely with the KGHS to develop and document an understanding of what this research says about the changes that are required to support the pursuit of self-governed housing in Fort Good Hope. Responding to their direction, I will communicate these policy recommendations in a report or white paper that will review the shifts that are needed for the self-government of housing in the NWT to be supported.

I have also disseminated this research for feedback and discussion in an ongoing way through numerous presentations to both academic and non-academic audiences.[56] In addition to various academic conference presentations, in December 2021 I shared this research story and its findings with members of the At Home In the North partnership that includes community housing actors, non-governmental organisations, Indigenous governments, private sector stakeholders, municipal and provincial/territorial governments, and scholars, which proved to be a particularly valuable experience for highlighting the policy relevance of this work.

3.6. Conclusion: Reflections and lessons

There are many lessons to be learned from this study, largely by considering the numerous practical and ethical challenges the research encountered as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Shifting to remote methods challenged any rigid plans I may have had and instead required

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[54] Gatto, M.A.C. (2015). Making Research Useful: Current Challenges and Good Practices in Data Visualisation. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. [online]. Available: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/research/files/Making%2520Research%2520Useful%2520-%2520Current%2520Challenges%2520and%2520Good%2520Practices%2520in%2520Data%2520Visualisation.pdf (Accessed: 31/05/2020).

[55] Christensen, J. (2012). Telling stories: Exploring research storytelling as a meaningful approach to knowledge mobilization with Indigenous research collaborators and diverse audiences in community-based participatory research. *The Canadian Geographer*. 56(2); Pp. 231-242.; Leeuw, S.D., Parkes, M.W., Morgan, V.S., Christensen, J., Lindsay, N., Mitchell-Foster, K. & Jozkow, J.R. (2017). Going unscripted: A call to critically engage storytelling methods and methodologies in geography and the medical-health sciences. *The Canadian Geographer*. 61(2); Pp. 152-164.

[56] "Promoting Home and Self-Governance: Housing as an Active Site of Engagement in Fort Good Hope" (2021). 22nd Aldrich Interdisciplinary Conference. (Memorial University GSU).; "Promoting Home and Self-Governance: Housing as an Active Site of Engagement in Fort Good Hope" (2021). ACUNS Conference 2021. (Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies).; "Promoting Home and Self-Governance: Housing as an Active Site of Engagement in Fort Good Hope" (2021). ArcticNet Annual Scientific Meeting 2021 (ArcticNet).; "Promoting Home and Self-Governance: Housing as an Active Site of Engagement in Fort Good Hope" (2021). At Home In the North Webinar Series. (At Home In the North).

creativity. At the same time, the delayed receipt of ethics clearance from the Aurora Research Institute was a challenge that demanded flexibility in my approach to research activities and their timeline. For example, the unexpected length of time between the policy scoping and archival research I used to map the system of housing delivery in the NWT, and being unable to conduct interviews with people working in that system that would be able to shed light on any unknown or uncertain areas, forced me to find an alternative way to develop my understanding of the system, which ultimately led me to use creative writing as a form of inquiry.

The restrictions involved with conducting semi-structured interviews remotely rather than in-person certainly limited the richness of interactions; however, in my experience this loss was stemmed in part by a collectively increased capacity to connect and interact through screens as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, it is likely that without the happenstance social interactions that occur when one is physically immersed in the landscape of study, I missed perspectives or experiences that could have enhanced this study's results and findings. One interviewee in Fort Good Hope addressed this limitation specifically, commenting that it was a shame I was not in the community to at least hear if not record the perspectives on housing and self-government negotiations that are in abundance amongst residents currently. At the same time though, I was able to reach and connect with people involved in NWT housing delivery through WebEx over some months that I suspect I would not have been able to had I been conducting the interviews in person in Fort Good Hope or Yellowknife.

Meanwhile, the process of trying to organise and conduct in-depth interviews with governmental personnel required a navigation of busy schedules, and their relationship with the bureaucracy of the system they work in. In other words, it was challenging at times to access the necessary participants and ask the necessary questions alongside their desire not to speak against their employer. Furthermore, the timing of the interviews, conducted during the summer months of 2021 when the pandemic was still ongoing, also prompted additional considerations. Accessing participants ethically and sensitively meant navigating flooding events caused by the Mackenzie River ice melt that saw many in Fort Good Hope dealing with evacuations and disruption, and Covid-19 outbreaks in the NWT that rendered many people in governance positions overwhelmed with the care of communities. Attending subsequently to the time and information I asked of people in such situations became essential for ethical

conduct. With this lesson, I worked hard to communicate clearly and be as prepared and informed as possible, thus demanding less, leaving a lighter step on the people involved in this study, and reducing the research fatigue it caused.

Ultimately then, this chapter serves as a statement of my responsibility to conduct truly ethical and meaningful northern research that supports Indigenous self-determination. Based on these methods and reflections, in the following chapters I demonstrate the results of studying up to the system of NWT housing governance with reflexivity, flexibility, and ongoing learning.

Chapter 4

A Mapping Story: navigating the system and structures through which housing is delivered in Fort Good Hope, NWT

4.1. Introduction

This is a story of the system in which self-governed housing delivery in Fort Good Hope operates, and in which I have immersed myself for the last several months. Of course, my immersion has not happened along the lines I expected prior to March 2020. Rather than being physically present in the Northwest Territories to explore the system first-hand in the Dene First Nation community of Rádeyıl̨ı̨ Kǫ and the NWT capital Yellowknife, the Covid-19 pandemic limited my initial immersion to one informed by the written products of this system. A close reading of policy documents from the federal government, annual reports and budget plans from the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, action plans from the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society, and media commentaries, have all helped to construct my engagement with the governing system of northern housing delivery. Further understanding of this process was gained in the summer of 2021 through a series of remote interviews I was able to conduct with personnel involved in housing delivery in the NWT, once I had received the necessary ethics clearances.

As such, this chapter takes material already 'out there' in the form of this system's written products and puts them in dialogue with each other, with experiential accounts from my community research partners at the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society in Fort Good Hope, and with the contributions of interview participants involved in NWT housing governance. In so doing, the broader objective of this story is to outline the current process of decision-making required to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope, and examine the key policy and governance barriers within this process that prevent the self-determination of housing in the community. With that in mind, in this chapter I will guide my reader through the system of NWT housing governance that the KGHS is engaging with in order to deliver community-led housing: how it came to be, how it is structured, and how it inhibits effective program delivery and community-led housing.

First then, a note on how I have decided to present this story. I am no natural creative writer. Indeed, I am a product of the western education system, specifically that manifested in the UK

state school system, in which I have been trained to write 'academically.' At least what this means for me is that tasked with any writing, my first thoughts are around the rigid structure I must follow: an introduction, a middle, and an end. Connecting words, developing an argument, making a piece flow. While this training is not entirely negative, it does tend to stem too many of my creative juices when putting words on a page. One year I wrote some limericks for my sister's birthday, and it posed a much greater challenge than the numerous abstracts I have written for academic conference presentations. Nonetheless, my family's reaction to this small dabble into the world of unbounded and creative writing was much more enthusiastic, and thus rewarding, than that I received upon asking them to review my undergraduate dissertation; a task I understand sent my mother to sleep within five pages. Hence, the small pocket of confidence I have for attempting to take on this exciting albeit terrifying creative writing prospect.

Creative writing in this case holds value for both myself as a method of inquiry and for any audiences engaging with this work as a (more) accessible tool for communication. This value is being increasingly documented in qualitative research discourse, positioning the use of creative writing for exploration,[1] for developing critical knowledge,[2] and for increasing ease of readability.[3] This creative, journalistic account will serve as a process of inquiry for me as I grapple with putting together various pieces of this puzzle, raising questions and developing understanding of the NWT's housing governance system as I story it paragraph by paragraph. In so doing, I will communicate this puzzle to you.

With that in mind, I have some decisions to make. My motivation for pursuing this style of writing derives largely from the problem I take with traditional academic communication in the form of journal articles, which only increases as my appreciation for and inspiration from a specific set of stories has grown. In the last year, Jesse Thistle's story of living homeless and finding home, *From the Ashes*[4]*;* Julia Christensen's sharing of stories from those with lived experience of homelessness in Yellowknife and Inuvik in *No Home in a Homeland*[5]*;* Tanya

[1] Cook, J. (2013). Creative Writing as a Research Method. In, G. Griffin. (Eds). *Research Methods for English Studies*. 2nd Ed. Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh.
[2] Lyle Skains, R. (2018). Creative Practice as Research: Discourse on Methodology. *Media Practice and Education*. 19(1); Pp. 82-97.
[3] Piirto, J.M. (2008). Creative Writing. In, L.M. Given. (Ed). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. SAGE Publications, Inc.: Thousand Oaks.
[4] Thistle, J. (2019). From the Ashes: My Story of Being Métis, Homeless, and Finding My Way. Simon & Schuster: New York.
[5] Christensen, J. (2017). No Home in a Homeland: Indigenous Peoples and Homelessness in the Canadian North. UBC Press: Vancouver.

Talaga's story of the racism that underpins the loss of seven Indigenous students in Thunder Bay, Ontario, *Seven Fallen Feathers*[6]*;* and Tanya Tagaq's story of a young Inuk woman growing up in the Canadian Arctic in the 1970s, *Split Tooth*[7]*;* have been particularly powerful and significant contributions to my ongoing journey of learning. It is from these particular works, that all tell simultaneously difficult and crucially important stories in unique and engaging ways, that I take direction and encouragement for storying my research in this way. I have a special fascination for Tagaq's contribution, which uses a blend of fictional prose, poetry and illustrations to paint a vivid and powerful picture of Inuit culture and folklore, life in the tundra landscape, sexual abuse, and domestic violence.

Unlike Tagaq and the other authors mentioned above, I have no lived experience of, or physical immersion in the world about which I attempt to tell this story. Instead, I am trying to tell the story I can, of tracing this housing governance system. As such, I see the most ethical, honest and rigorous way of bringing voice to the documents of this system that I story here, is through my personal narrative of engagement with them. If establishing rigour in qualitative research requires transparency,[8] then I must be explicit about my subjectivities in data analysis presented in this chapter. That is to say, I provide an autoethnographic account of my individual thoughts and interpretation of this research process and its materials, and thus attempt to honour the embodiedness and location of the self[9] within this storying process. My own voice, that of a white, female, heterosexual, cisgender, settler scholar with a penchant for baked goods, canine friends, and Christmas songs in September, will be positioned where appropriate and acknowledged where necessary for this story to reveal all of its truths. To this end, I incorporate vignettes throughout the chapter to present my personal reflections on the key moments in this research story and the challenges that characterise northern housing.

4.2. Context: Housing Operations in the NWT

When I first started my master's program in Memorial University's Geography Department, I was working hard to familiarise myself with everything and anything new that I encountered, from the workings of graduate school, to the infamous Newfoundland accent. Leaving my supervisor's office at the conclusion of our first meeting together, in which we had discussed

[6] Talaga, T. (2017). Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, Death, and Hard Truths in a Northern City. House of Anansi: Toronto.
[7] Tagaq, T. (2018). Split Tooth. Penguin: Toronto.
[8] Moravcsik, A. (2019). Transparency in Qualitative Research. In, P. Atkinson, S. Delamont, A. Cernat, J.W. Sakshaug & R.A. Williams. (Eds). *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*. SAGE Publications, Inc.: London.
[9] Richardson, L. & St. Pierre, E.A. (2005). Writing: A Method of Inquiry. [online]. Available: https://www.daneshnamehicsa.ir/userfiles/file/Manabeh/Manabeh03/Writing%20%20A%20Method%20of%20Inquiry.pdf (Accessed: 10/12/2020).

the research project I would be joining, I rushed back to the lab to start addressing the pages of notes I had frantically scribbled down. My first point of action was to understand the question I had circled and underlined: "what is happening in Fort Good Hope?!" Julia had mentioned our research partners at the KGHS, their work to meet the community's housing needs, and the support they required from us—all in the context of the northern housing crisis. But what exactly were the community's housing needs? And what was this crisis? Could it just be a phrase subjectively used by Julia to add a sense of urgency to this work?

Some quick google searches of "Fort Good Hope" then "Fort Good Hope housing" immediately provided some answers, at least at the surface level. News headlines containing 'housing crisis', 'housing insecurity' and 'a chronic lack of housing' indicated to me this was a well-established problem. Opening one CBC article after another, I read story after story of different housing experiences in Fort Good Hope. Of folks waiting to access government housing that there isn't enough of,[10] of ill-fitting doors and windows that cause heat to escape[11] (heat that is much needed in -50°C temperatures), of community members staying with friends and family in overcrowded settings,[12] of too many inadequate housing units with no power or plumbing and in need of major repairs.[13] Roderick Kakfwi and Lori Ann Tobac shared their story of building a tent frame on a family member's property so as to have "a place where we can call home" at least for the summer months, while they waited for a government house to become available.[14] While these stories displayed clearly the resilience of the community in the face of such challenges, they nevertheless indicated the systemic nature of the problems that characterise Fort Good Hope's housing crisis, rooted in a governance and policy landscape that does not listen to or work for communities like Fort Good Hope.

Over the next few months of my graduate program, I learnt that the state of crisis Fort Good Hope's housing landscape seemed to be in, was indeed indicative of a much broader housing

[10] Brockman, A. (2017). "Fort Good Hope Couple Builds Their Own Home In Face Of Housing Shortage". [online]. Available at: https://alexbrockmanjournalism.wordpress.com/2018/03/10/fort-good-hope-couple-builds-their-own-home-in-face-of-housing-shortage/. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).
[11] Brockman, A. (2017). "Living with limited running water, 1 light bulb and a wood stove in Fort Good Hope, N.W.T.". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-good-hope-housing-1.4434760. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).
[12] Brockman, A. (2017). "Working and caring for family, but still homeless in Fort Good Hope, N.W.T.". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-good-hope-housing-1.4436648. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).
[13] Brockman, A. (2017). "Fort Good Hope seeks local answers to housing crisis, hosts 3-day housing forum". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-good-hope-housing-1.4430803. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).
[14] Brockman, A. (2018). "One Log At A Time". [online]. Available at: https://alexbrockmanjournalism.wordpress.com/2018/08/27/one-log-at-a-time/. (Accessed: 23/09/2019).

crisis across northern Canada.[15] That is, a deeply unequal crisis constituted by increasing evidence of chronic housing need, housing insecurity, and homelessness is critically undermining the health of northern and Indigenous populations across Canada. This northern housing crisis as it has been labelled is at once connected to the top-down, one-size-fits-all way housing is provided in the NWT, which is itself rooted in the disconnected way the federal and territorial settler governments have always approached governance in northern Canada, keeping control and decision-making power outside of Indigenous communities.

This approach is clearly illustrated in the scene of NWT housing governance and policy, where the majority of decisions that direct housing provision are made by the GNWT's Housing Corporation in Yellowknife or the federal government in Ottawa. Perhaps the most significant characteristic of housing provision in the NWT is that the private housing market which dominates the provision of housing in southern Canada, plays a far lesser or even absent role, particularly in remote communities such as Fort Good Hope.[16] The lack of income stability that derives from the seasonality of the NWT's wage-based economy, combined with the infrequency of in or out migration, and the high cost of building in remote communities, means there is little possibility for return on investments, so the private sector rarely invests in market rental housing.[17] These 'non-market communities' instead rely on the NWTHC to use federal and territorial government-matched funding to supply and maintain housing options in various forms to meet the needs of the population, including public housing units, homeownership units, market housing units for education and health care professionals, seniors independent living complexes, emergency overnight shelters, and transitional and supportive housing facilities. However, while the financing and direction of housing options can almost entirely be attributed to the territorial and federal governments, actual housing provision involves a great many more and diverse range of actors, including but not limited to regional Indigenous governments, band councils, community housing organisations, NGOs and individual residents themselves.

[15] See: Christensen, J., Davison, C. & Levac, L. (2012). "Chronic housing needs in the Canadian North: Inequality of opportunity in northern communities". The Homeless Hub. [online]. Available at: https://www.homelesshub.ca/resource/chronic-housing-needs-canadian-north-inequality-opportunity-northern-communities (Accessed: 30/10/2019).; Patrick, C. (2014). Aboriginal Homelessness in Canada: A Literature Review. Toronto: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press.; Tester, F. (2009). Iglutaasaavut (our new homes): Neither "new" nor "ours" housing challenges of the Nunavut Territorial Government. Journal of Canadian Studies-Revue d'Etudes Canadiennes. 43(2); Pp. 137–158.

[16] In the NWT there are 5 'market' communities – Yellowknife, Inuvik, Hay River, Norman Wells, and Fort Smith – which have private housing markets, and the remaining 28 communities are 'non-market'.

[17] Carter, T. (1987). Northern Housing: Needs, Policies and Programs. Winter Communities No. 3. Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg. Available at: Evolution of Northern housing policy (core.ac.uk)

The K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society enters into this housing scene then with two intentions: as a response to Fort Good Hope's housing crisis and the problematically top-down governance of housing in the NWT that perpetuates it, and to support Fort Good Hope's ongoing negotiation for self-government. The community-led organisation seeks to hear the voices of residents and take on the responsibility for their own housing profile; assessing needs, setting priorities, designing programming that delivers homes in the community, constructing infrastructure and maintaining it. As such, the KGHS situates its efforts to tackle Fort Good Hope's housing crisis, including such developments as a men's transitional home, a safe and second stage home for women and children, a revolving door loan fund, a materials program, and new homes,[18] amongst the community's aspirations for both home and self-determination.

Following the formation of the KGHS in 2016, it hosted a three-day housing forum to give Fort Good Hope residents a space to discuss housing insecurity and homelessness, how it affects families and friends, and what local solutions might look like.[19] The main takeaways were that homes are too expensive for individuals, and not enough people have the skills to keep them maintained. Six months later, the Yamoga Land Corporation, the organisation that manages funds from the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement and ultimately funds the KGHS, purchased a mobile sawmill to begin addressing the first of these problems.[20] Enabling the community to use their own resources from the land, the sawmill reduces the burden posed by the incredible price of materials and their shipping, that are required for repair and construction. While currently it can only be operated during a limited number of months, the community aim to increase the length of this period, in so doing making jobs available for residents tasked with maintaining these operations. Most recently, the efforts of the KGHS have been concentrated on the now fully operational Kádúyíle transitional home for men. With a live-in manager the residents of the home are given the support required, including on the land workshops, to transition towards self-sufficient and contributing members of the community connected to the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Dene way of life.

Despite the positive energy that emanates from James and Arthur for the completed efforts of the KGHS and their intentions for future work, also clear through our interactions is their

[18] K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society. (2020). Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ: K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society Strategic Plan and Action Plan 2020-2025. KGHS-Strategic-Plan-2020-FNL-WR.pdf (cklbradio.com)
[19] Brockman. "Fort Good Hope Couple".
[20] Brockman. "One Log At A Time".

frustration with the system that presents barriers to their work and limits their capacity to achieve these visions.

I am aware that they can only hear me through the phone, but that does not stop me from waving excitedly as I introduce myself to James Caesar and Arthur Tobac, our research partners at the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society in Fort Good Hope. I try to hear and note down everything they say through the at times crackly connection as the discussion unfolds. James and Arthur are both wonderful storytellers, engaging us in one story after another about their various experiences with the delivery of housing in Fort Good Hope. Each story seems to end with a question, to which Julia, Veronica and I can only express bewilderment. Why is community planning being done in Edmonton, by people who have not been to the community? Why is money for housing from the federal government not making its way into the community? Why are there hold ups with the Department of Lands? How do Fort Good Hope residents get more money for building their own houses, or more cabins out on the land? Who is actually in control of which housing related processes? How does the KGHS promote responsible homeownership when it is unclear who is responsible for which housing needs?

Vignette 1: Meeting James and Arthur

In 2017, a series of interviews conducted by the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society and PlanIt North with Fort Good Hope community members to hear about personal housing experiences and hopes for the future, enabled the KGHS to produce a community housing needs assessment.[21] In response to some of these needs, the KGHS developed plans to build a shelter for women and children, and was assigned lands for this purpose by the territorial government. In the centre of this plot lay a huge rocky outcrop, a clear physical barrier to construction evident to any eye that looked at the land. How can a construction project be assigned to land that is entirely unsuitable in this way? For James, this disconnect is a continuation of the broader colonial process to settle and plan the community with no regard for the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne peoples' relation to and knowledge of the land.

> Community planners built all these lines and the road and everything… they were being drawn out by planners from Edmonton of all places! None of them ever came to the community here. You know, see the actual physical topography of our community, you know thinking that all the land here is flat just like down in the prairies, but it's not, it's all hills and valleys and the riverbank on a 45 degree angle.

[21] K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society. (2017). The State of Housing in Rádeyı̨lı̨ Kǫ́: Fort Good Hope Housing Assessment to Inform Community Planning.

> So you know, they drew all these lines without really knowing where they are drawing their lines.[22]

The lines drawn by planners who have never stepped foot in Fort Good Hope and the lack of control the Nation has over its land and its use are illustrative of the systemic problems the KGHS faces in its efforts to self-govern housing delivery in a system not designed for First Nations like Fort Good Hope. While the KGHS has not let such barriers stymie their efforts, the disconnects in the NWT's housing planning process are abundant in James and Arthur's stories. So, as part of my efforts to support the plans of the KGHS and answer their questions documented in Vignette 1, I developed my own questions, the research questions that I attempt to answer in this piece:

1. What is the current process of decision-making required to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope?
2. What are the key policy and governance barriers that prevent self-determination of housing in Fort Good Hope?

4.3. How Did We Get Here?: A History of Housing in Fort Good Hope

Having shared some of the context for delivering housing in Fort Good Hope and the NWT, the next question it seems logical to address is: how did we get here? In Chapter One, I provided an overview of the history of the fur trade, resource extraction, and numbered treaties that marked the early stages of colonial government control in northern Canada. In Chapter Two, I positioned such history as key to understanding the settler colonial roots of northern housing policy and its use by the government as a tool for cultural change,[23] which continues to shape the relationship between housing and Indigenous health in northern Canada today.

In the years that followed the signing of Treaty 11 in 1922 by the Crown and the Dehcho, Tłı̨chǫ, Gwich'in and Sahtu peoples, development in the Mackenzie District and injustices against the Indigenous peoples increased, seeing their rights ignored and their trapping, hunting, and fishing practices threatened. The subsequent economic hardship gave the Canadian government the impetus to 'settle' Indigenous peoples in communities, which would facilitate the delivery of public health services and rations,[24] and move the government towards

[22] Caesar, J. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.
[23] Thomas, D.K. & Thompson, C.T. (1972). Eskimo Housing As Planned Culture Change. Information Canada: Ottawa.
[24] Christensen, J. (2013). 'Our home, our way of life': spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada. *Social & Cultural Geography*. 14(7); Pp. 804-828.

their goal of rendering Indigenous peoples governable.[25] Transition from land-based to settlement living for Indigenous peoples in Denendeh accelerated in the 1950s under the Canadian government's post-war 'northern vision'.[26] The delivery of housing in northern Canada by the federal government, first under the Eskimo Housing Loan Program in 1959, then the Eskimo Rental Housing Program in 1965, left very tangible traces in the form of housing units and communities that far more reflected the linear spatial orientation of Euro-Canadian government planners, than the real needs of northern residents.[27] This legacy was inherited and continued by the territorial government of the Northwest Territories, which assumed administrative responsibility for public housing in 1969 and consequently introduced the Northern Rental Purchase Program.

In the years following the establishment of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWTHC) in 1972, the government's objective to provide all residents of the Northwest Territories with a supply of reasonably priced housing[28] manifested in, amongst other programs, the Small Settlement Home Assistance Grant (SSHAG) later in 1977 to be renamed the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP). Such developments reflected the NWTHC's desire to create a private housing market in northern communities, and its continued ignorance towards the cultural context in which its policy attempted to deliver housing.[29] Collectively, poor construction materials,[30] culturally inadequate housing designs,[31] and rigid payment schedules,[32] all characterised the federal and territorial governments' attempts to administer housing in northern Canada during this time. That is to say, these factors all contributed to the deeply problematic conditions within which these attempts fell critically short of attending to the cultural and economic needs of northern residents.

Part and parcel of this trajectory, and of special interest to me here, is the period that unfolded in the 1980s. During a time when the management of social housing policy was being

[25] Neu, D. (1999). "Discovering" Indigenous Peoples: Accounting and the Machinery of Empire. *The Accounting Historians Journal. 26*(1); Pp. 53-82.
[26] Wenzel, G. (2008). Clyde Inuit Settlement and Community: From before Boas to Centralization. *Arctic Anthropology.* 45(1); Pp. 1-21.
[27] Robson, R. (1995). Housing in the Northwest Territories: the Post-War Vision. *Urban History Review.* 24(1); Pp. 3-20.
[28] GNWT. (1976). An Integrated Housing Policy for the Northwest Territories.
[29] Dawson, P.C. (1995). "Unsympathetic Users": An Ethnoarchaeological Examination of Inuit Responses to the Changing Nature of the Built Environment. *Arctic*. 48(1); Pp. 71-80.; Collings, P. (2005). Housing Policy, Aging, and Life Course Construction in a Canadian Inuit Community. *Arctic Anthropology.* 42(2); Pp. 50-65.
[30] Buchanan, E.J. (1979). Arctic Housing, Problems, and Prospects. (Unpublished Master's thesis). Department of Community and Regional Planning, University of British Columbia.
[31] Dawson. "Unsympathetic Users".
[32] Robson. Housing in the Northwest Territories.

devolved to the provinces,[33] the processes involved with governing and delivering housing in northern Canada started to be questioned. The territorial government Legislative Assembly's Special Committee on Housing formed in 1984 to conduct public hearings with tenants and housing associations from 35 communities in the Northwest Territories,[34] in effort to "learn about housing in the North".[35] In the resulting report the committee highlighted community mistrust of the Housing Corporation that is more concerned with collecting rent than listening to peoples' needs, and clear frustrations from community leaders and representatives with unnecessary bureaucracy, confusing procedures, and inappropriate regulations surrounding NWTHC programming. The committee thus raised the need for the NWTHC to attend far more carefully to *how* it operates in the delivery of housing, in addition to its prevailing focus on the programs being delivered.[36] The recommendations also prompted an internal review conducted by the NWTHC in 1986, which recommended that partnerships between the corporation and communities had to improve if community needs were to be met in a meaningful way.[37] Together these findings prioritised the need for any 'new approach' to delivering housing in northern Canada that would make real progress towards meeting community development needs: to shift the control of programs away from the territorial government and into the hands of communities.

Alongside these larger scale, structural movements unfolding at the territorial level, this period marks an important moment for the community of Fort Good Hope, taking their own steps to challenge the status quo of housing governance and delivery. Starting in 1982, Fort Good Hope assumed control of meeting their own housing needs by self-managing the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) and using a negotiated block funding agreement with the Housing Corporation to design and construct their own log homes. In addition to the provision of good quality and culturally supportive physical shelter, Fort Good Hope used the

[33] Suttor, G. (2014). Canadian Social Housing: Policy Evolution and Impacts on the Housing System and Urban Space. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Toronto.
[34] Dickerson, M.O. (1992). Whose North?: Political Change, Political Development, and Self-government in the Northwest Territories. UBC Press and the Arctic Institute of North America.
[35] NWTHC. (1987). Building houses, communities and our future: a new approach to housing in the Northwest Territories. Available: https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/archive/provincial_housing/ca2_nt_hc_87b73.pdf. Pp6.
[36] GNWT. (1985). Final Report of the Special Committee on Housing. Available: https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/archive/provincial_housing/ca2_nt_co40_85f36.pdf
[37] NWTHC. (1987). Building houses, communities and our future: a new approach to housing in the Northwest Territories. Available: https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/archive/provincial_housing/ca2_nt_hc_87b73.pdf

HAP to train residents in administration skills, to provide jobs and valuable experience in construction, and to boost feelings of pride, self-esteem, and independence amongst community members. These successes of the community-based housing delivery system were comprehensively documented in a government report aimed at cultivating the 'Fort Good Hope experience' for utilising in other northern communities.[38] The report found that Fort Good Hope's engagement with the program presents a "clear-cut example of how increased local control has led to superior program delivery and has enabled a housing program to address certain other chronic community problems and concern." Not only does the HAP example promote the community-led or self-governed model of housing delivery in the North, but also represents Fort Good Hope's rich history of self-managing housing needs.

The case of the HAP in Fort Good Hope conveys clearly that communities are best placed to meet their own needs, and the shifts in northern housing governance and policy that took place during the 1980s seemed to indicate that the government was at least starting to recognise this. For a moment when the largely successful HAP allowed communities the opportunity to exercise some control over housing development, and the Housing Corporation realised the need to deliver not only houses but *homes*[39]; one could be mistaken for thinking that the trajectory of housing delivery in the NWT would only improve from here. Yet this moment proved fleeting, as the HAP was replaced in the early 90s with a series of less expensive, less successful programs.[40] You are surely questioning as I had when I first came across the program, why would the most successful housing program to be delivered, and self-governed, in Fort Good Hope be withdrawn? The only cited explanation I could find to satisfy my initial questioning: it was too expensive to maintain.[41] However, a colleague's conversation with one community member in Fort Good Hope shed new light on this question, following their indication that the cost might not be the only reason for the HAP's end. Instead, it was suggested that in the program's final years the community had experienced problems with acquiring the land necessary to build these 'HAP houses' on, and frequent changes in the territorial ministers and administration responsible for overseeing the program resulted in

[38] Rees, W.E. & Hulchanski, J.D. (1990). Housing as Northern Community Development: A Case study of the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) in Fort Good Hope, Northwest Territories. untitled (windows.net). Pp.1.
[39] NWTHC. (1987). Building houses, communities and our future: a new approach to housing in the Northwest Territories. Available: https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/archive/provincial_housing/ca2_nt_hc_87b73.pdf
[40] Collings. Housing Policy.
[41] Collings. Housing Policy.

inconsistent agendas and declining support for it. Broadly then, it is the system of land governance that halted the progress of the community-led HAP.

I highlight this history not merely to make clear the policy path that has led to northern Canada's present housing landscape, but more holistically to present policy as both the persistent source of inequality and unsustainability, and simultaneously the solution. This historical trajectory underlines the lack of consistency and sustainability that has characterised the northern housing policy landscape since the first housing programs, wherein constant changes to programs and administration have heightened the vulnerability of northern peoples and exacerbated housing insecurity. NWT residents are still faced with the same need for homes that was identified by the NWTHC in 1987. We must question then, why, 30 years on from the publishing of Rees and Hulchanski's report on the HAP that flagged the importance of community-led housing, there is a northern housing crisis fuelled by inadequate government led housing policy that fails to meet community needs? And why are community-led attempts to self-govern the delivery of housing, such as that by the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society in Fort Good Hope, met with the type of barriers described by James and Arthur in the previous subsection?

4.4. An Illusion: Decision-Making by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation

Adequate

Affordable

Suitable

Core housing need measured

The words produce numbers

Numbers with no faces

That get moulded and shaped

And put in a report

To say we're doing ok

While the faces are hidden

For they show concern

And want of a home.

Vignette 2: The illusion of housing delivery

Every year the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation produces an 'annual report' explaining what they have been up to over the course of the previous year, so to understand the NWTHC's role in housing delivery I conducted a close reading of these reports covering the previous ten years of operations.[42] The NWTHC is an agency of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) responsible for housing programs and options for the residents of the NWT. I set out reading these reports in order to understand how the territorial government chooses to use the money prescribed for meeting community housing needs in the territory. It is only now I write this do I realise that in a way, this objective asks two different, both critical, questions of the NWTHC: 1) How does the NWTHC make the decisions to distribute funds in this way? And 2) How exactly does the funding for housing get spent? Or on what is this money spent?

4.4.1. How does the NWTHC make decisions?

Firstly then, how are decisions made by the NWTHC? One strand of information required to understand this decision-making process, is around the structure and functioning of the NWTHC, illustrated visually by Figure 3. The Corporation is a government agency led by a GNWT minister, a position currently filled by Paulie Chinna, and a President and CEO, which at the time of writing is Eleanor Young. Together they direct the three branches that make up the Corporation: the Executive branch, the Finance and Infrastructure Services branch, and the Programs and District Operations branch. It is in the first two branches that funding is received from the federal government and the GNWT, and the programming to which this funding is allocated is designed to address both governments' housing priorities. Meanwhile, the five district offices that fall within the third branch—in Beaufort Delta, Nahendeh, North Slave, Sahtu, South Slave—are responsible for the administration of district capital and program delivery, lands acquisition and development, and the delivery of homeownership programs.

[42] At the time of writing the most recent report was from 2019-2020. See the more recent NWTHC Annual Report from 2020-2021 (td_542-192.pdf (ntassembly.ca)) that was available at the time of editing.

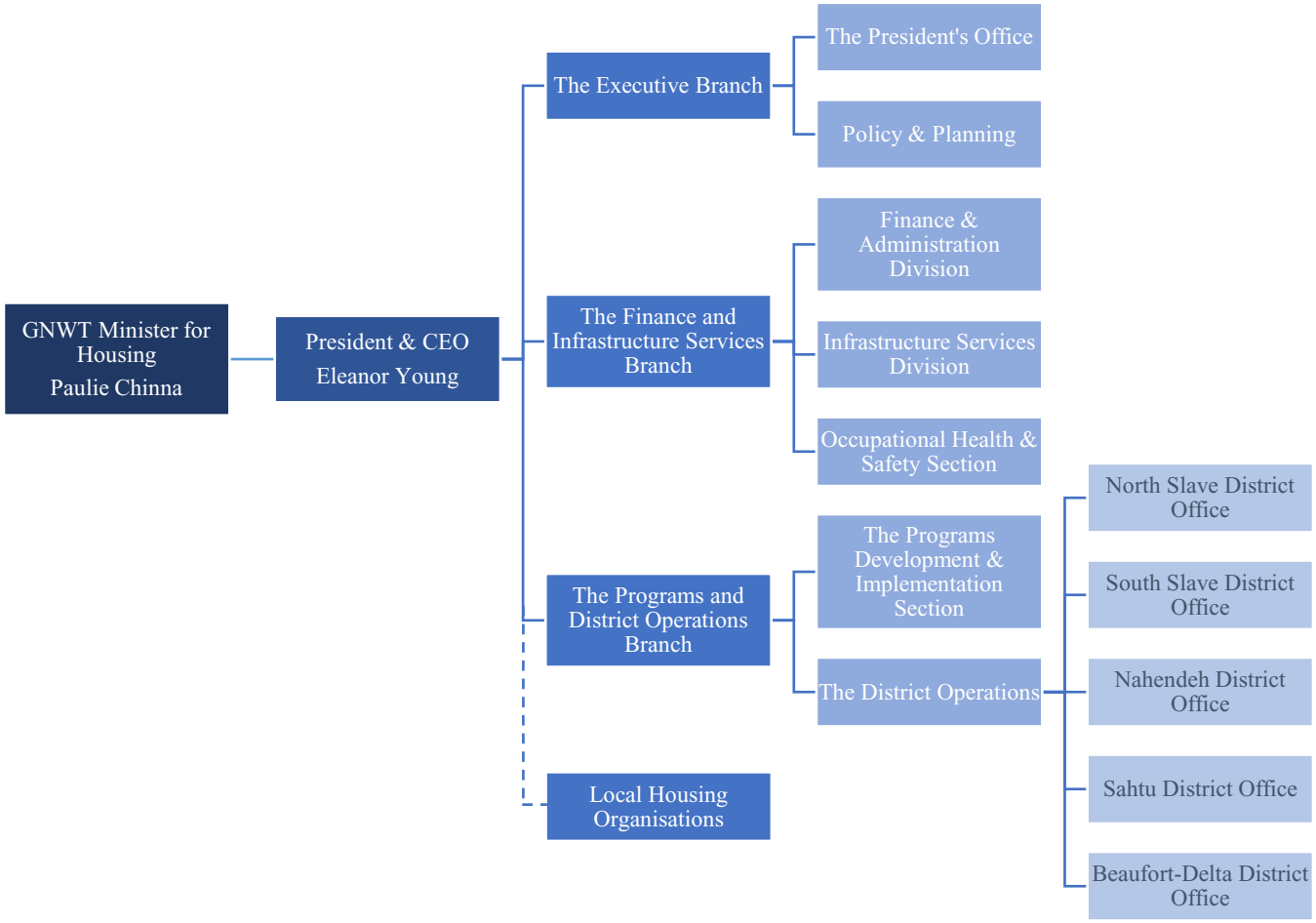

Figure 3: Organisational Chart to show the corporate structure of the NWTHC. The dashed line connecting Local Housing Organisations to the NWTHC indicates the relationship between them as one of partnership, as opposed to the LHOs being strictly contained within the Housing Corporation. Information taken from NWTHC (2020).[43]

[43] NWTHC. (2020). Annual Report 2019-2020. [online]. Available: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/sites/nwthc/files/resources/nwthc_annual_report_2019-2020_electronic_copy.pdf (Accessed 15/03/2021).

They also work with 23 Local Housing Organisations (LHOs) in communities across the NWT, who are responsible for the administration of public and affordable housing units, providing property management services including the allocation of units, the assessment and collection of rent and the provision of preventative and demand maintenance services.[44] Through my interview with Angela Grandjambe, housing manager with the Rádeyįlįkóé Housing Association [the NWTHC's Local Housing Organisation (LHO) in Fort Good Hope], I learnt that Fort Good Hope's LHO manages around 80 units, including public housing units, HELP units, and market housing units. Meanwhile, the Sahtu district office at Norman Wells tries to come to Fort Good Hope every month, at which point community members who are mostly in need of repairs can make appointments to meet with program advisors. The Norman Wells office then makes a decision, depending on its budget, as to whether or not it can assist with the repairs during one of two intake periods for programs in a year.

The other strand of information required to understand how decisions are made pertains less to the bureaucracy of the corporation, and more to the mechanisms through which it sets priorities. The annual reports suggest that the NWTHC draws mainly on results from resident surveys and forums to assess housing needs and inform its operations. In the last ten years the Housing Corporation has conducted two housing-specific surveys, first: the GNWT Shelter Policy Review conducted in 2012 which informed the NWTHC's strategic framework released in 2013 – *Building for the future: Northern solutions for Northern housing*[45] - and second the 2017 Housing Engagement Survey[46] which informed the Corporation's 2018 Strategic Renewal. It has also hosted two meetings with residents and community housing providers, the first in 2010 at the Northern Housing Forum, and again in 2019 at the Northern Housing Summit, to discuss housing needs and how to meet them. Meanwhile the NWT Community Needs Survey conducted by the NWT Bureau of Statistics provides somewhat regular and consistent data, though less housing specific, producing some information on housing need in 2009, 2015, and 2019. The strategic framework and renewal of 2013 and 2017 respectively appear to be the most significant influences on policy priorities, with multiple references to them in the annual reports of the years that follow. Although this seems to indicate that

[44] A more comprehensive explanation of this corporate structure, that I am not willing to bore you with here, is available in every NWTHC annual report.
[45] NWTHC. (2012). Building for the Future: Northern Solutions for Northern Housing. A Strategic Framework for Housing in the Northwest Territories. [online]. Available at: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/sites/nwthc/files/resources/building_for_the_future_final.pdf (Accessed: 01/09/2020).
[46] See the resulting survey report: NWTHC. (2017). Voices on Housing: A Summary of the Results of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation's Housing Engagement Survey. [online]. Available at: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/sites/nwthc/files/resources/final_voices_on_housing.pdf (Accessed: 03/09/2020).

priorities are set by engaging with and listening to communities, both interventions are informed solely by a singular review or survey, and notably not by the forums of discussion between all voices in 2010 and 2019. Furthermore, Fort Good Hope LHO Manager Angela Grandjambe sees specific housing needs emerging in Fort Good Hope for single people, people with disabilities, and young smaller families, that are not being captured by the NWTHC's mechanisms of consultation and need assessment. Avoidance of the housing needs survey and the inability to connect for online consultation for some Fort Good Hope residents, Angela explains in our interview, means the NWTHC is not capturing a true representation of what is needed in the community. Such critiques raise the question, could community housing needs and resident feedback be solicited more frequently and more meaningfully, to be fed through into policy change on a more consistent timeline?

Following such a question it is perhaps encouraging to note that the Housing Corporation is currently undertaking a renewal that acknowledges the need for more effective and collaborative housing delivery in the NWT and seeks to improve NWTHC operations.[47] Recently appointed Associate Deputy Minister of the NWTHC, James Fulford, is responsible for leading this renewal, which he suggests will see the Housing Corporation move away from the landlord role they currently occupy and more towards a social agency role. As such, a large part of the renewal is about reforming the way the NWTHC collaborates with partners, including the federal government, funding sources, and Indigenous governments trying to realise their aspirations for self-government and greater control over housing delivery in their communities. Recognising that housing provision, in the past, has been a tool of colonisation, and that communities are best positioned to meet their housing needs, James highlights in our interview opportunities for the NWTHC to step back from some aspects of delivery and instead facilitate Indigenous governments in doing this work. One such opportunity opens up around federal funding for housing, which the renewal already recognises does not need to be flowed through or allocated by the Housing Corporation but can be accessed directly by Indigenous governments. This can be facilitated by the NWTHC supporting communities through avenues such as the Community Housing Plan Project, which will be explored in the next subsection, to articulate needs and aspirations and formulate funding proposals.

[47] See NWTHC. (2021). A Strategy for Renewal of the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation. [online]. Available at: nwthc_renewalstrategy_nov12_2021_0.pdf (gov.nt.ca)

4.4.2. Spending Patterns: How does funding for housing get spent?

Now we have addressed the first of my two questions for this subsection and have a little more clarity on how decisions are being made in the NWTHC, it is timely to ask, on what is the money spent? Most broadly, the spending patterns of the NWTHC that have developed over the last ten years into what they are today can be grouped into three categories: the construction and maintenance of public or affordable housing, promoting homeownership, and homelessness support. A breakdown of the various NWTHC programs that fall within these categories can be found in Table 2.

4.4.2.1.Rental housing

The largest portfolio and financial commitment of the NWTHC is bound up with the Public Housing program, which provides housing for people with low incomes at a subsidised rent and ultimately absorbed 58% of corporation expenditures in the 2019-20 fiscal year. Each year these funds are spent constructing replacement units for the program and undertaking modernisation and improvement projects to repair existing units, including the maintenance of approximately 2,400 units. Since 2014, amidst concerns over the growing number of seniors across the NWT, the operations of this program have also included the construction and maintenance of new supported Senior Living Complexes. All five of these facilities, in Aklavik, Fort Liard, Fort McPherson, Whati, and Fort Good Hope, have been constructed and are now operational.[48]

In addition to this public housing portfolio, the NWTHC has more recently dedicated significant efforts and funding towards developing the territory's affordable housing stock. That is, rental housing units that are made available to lower-income families at less than market value.[49] The first mention of affordable housing as a standalone entity first appears in the 2014-15 Annual Report, flagging somewhat of an umbrella section that encompasses the previously individual market housing efforts, and Homeownership Entry Level Program (HELP) that had previously been categorised under the corporation's homeownership support.

[48] CBC News. (2021). "Community care home for seniors opens in Fort Good Hope". [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/seniors-centre-community-home-care-opens-in-fort-good-hope-1.5920672 (Accessed: 16/02/2021).
[49] Beaver, A. (2020). "What is the Difference Between Affordable Housing and Public Housing?". [online]. Available at: https://olympiamanagement.net/2017/08/difference-affordable-housing-public-housing/ (Accessed: 16/10/2020).

Table 2: NWTHC Programs in 2020. Information taken from NWTHC (2020).[50]

Spending Area	Program
Rental Housing	-Public Housing Program • 2,400 public housing units • Senior Living Complexes -Affordable/Rental Housing • Market Housing Program (190 units) • Homeownership Entry Level Program (HELP) (220 units) • Transitional Rent Supplement Program (TRSP)
Homeownership	-Housing Choices Programs • Solutions To Educate People (STEP) • Providing Assistance for Territorial Homeownership (PATH) • Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancements (CARE) o CARE Mobility o CARE Preventative Maintenance • Securing Assistance For Emergencies (SAFE) • Seniors Aging in Place • Fuel Tank Replacement Initiative • Community Housing Support Initiative
Homelessness	-Homelessness Assistance Fund (HAF) -Small Communities Homelessness Fund (SCHF) -Shelter Enhancement Fund (SEF) -Rapid Rehousing Pilot Program -Emergency Overnight Shelters -Housing First program in Yellowknife -Northern Pathways to Housing

[50] NWTHC. (2020). Annual Report 2019-2020. [online]. Available: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/sites/nwthc/files/resources/nwthc_annual_report_2019-2020_electronic_copy.pdf (Accessed 15/03/2021).

The Market Housing Program generally seeks to provide rental units to meet the housing needs of critical staff such as nurses and teachers in non-market communities, boasting a stock of 190 units in 2020. It is evident that this operation is perhaps not always sufficient to meet these needs, given the announcement in 2014-15's report of a new initiative to provide 100 new market units over the following three years to support labour markets in small communities.

A further mechanism in place to support those accessing market housing is the Transitional Rent Supplement Program (TRSP), launched in 2012-2013. This rent assistance funds up to $500 a month for residents spending in excess of 30% of their total household income on shelter costs.[51] Also adding to the affordable housing stock, HELP assists prospective first-time homebuyers by providing the opportunity to lease subsidised units from the NWTHC and experience homeownership commitments before having the opportunity to purchase the unit after 6 months of leasing, a program under which approximately 220 units were being operated and maintained in 2020.

4.4.2.2. Homeownership

This program which began as one of the NWTHC's Housing Choices homeownership programs, provides the perfect point of transition away from discussing public and affordable housing and towards the promotion of homeownership in the territory. While a quick glance at the expenditures pie chart included in each annual report shows that Homeownership programs only account for between 3 and 10% of corporation spending each year, it seems that this is not reflective of the significant attention paid to this area.[52] Developing somewhat since their introduction in 2007, the Housing Choices programs as of 2020 include Solutions To Educate People (STEP), Providing Assistance for Territorial Homeownership (PATH), Contributing Assistance for Repairs and Enhancements (CARE), CARE Mobility, CARE Preventative Maintenance, and Securing Assistance For Emergencies (SAFE). As the NWTHC's primary repair program CARE provides financial assistance to residents for addressing their repairs, while STEP seeks to provide the skills and knowledge required to own and run a home, PATH helps in the construction or purchase of a house, and SAFE offers financial and technical assistance for emergency repairs. Following an attempt to increase the accessibility of these supports in 2013-2014, applications to each of these programs, which are made through Local

[51] NWTHC. (2020). "Rent Assistance". [online]. Available at: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/en/services/rent-assistance (Accessed: 02/11/2020).

[52] Many interviewees expressed the opinion that the NWTHC's focus on homeownership is larger than what it should be, and detracts from much needed attention towards other housing needs in the territory.

Housing Organisations and District Offices, can be made throughout the year rather than being limited to annual intake periods.

4.4.2.3. Homelessness

Meanwhile, the support offered by the NWTHC for homelessness comes in the form of three funds that have been coordinated and administered by the GNWT since 2012, when they assumed responsibility for homelessness in the NWT. The Homelessness Assistance Fund (HAF) offers one-time emergency funding for those experiencing a 'housing-related crisis' and risk losing their home as a result, funding that can subsequently be used for 'solving the crisis' or for travelling elsewhere to find a home.[53] Conversely, the Small Communities Homelessness Fund (SCHF) offers financial support for community governments, NGOs and shelters that cater to individuals experiencing homelessness.[54] It is worth noting that this fund operates on the understanding that the most effective way to address homelessness in communities is to support locally developed and contextualised initiatives, that respond to the nuances and complexities of each community's needs. Additionally, as of its introduction in 2014-2015 the Shelter Enhancement Fund (SEF) provides further monetary support to shelters for their capital and equipment needs. The reach of these supports is indicated only in the 2016-2017 annual report, which details how the SCHF and SEF financed 14 and 7 successful projects respectively, while assistance was given to 66 individuals and families in immediate risk of losing stable housing through the HAF.[55] Finally, since the 2017-18 fiscal year, the NWTHC has also been providing financial support to a Housing First program in Yellowknife.

4.4.2.4. Covid-19 Impact

Although the previous three sections have provided an overview of the NWTHC's typical spending patterns, establishing an up-to-date understanding of its operations requires a look at the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In a speech on June 4th, 2020, NWTHC minister Paulie Chinna noted that "supporting vulnerable residents in need of housing or at risk of homelessness across the Northwest Territories is an essential part of the overall response to the COVID-19 Pandemic".[56] As the pandemic unfolded in the spring of 2020, funding was quickly

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[53] NWTHC. (2020). "Homelessness Assistance". [online]. Available at: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/en/services/homelessness-assistance (Accessed: 30/10/2020).
[54] NWTHC. (2020). "Shelter Funding". [online]. Available at: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/en/services/shelter-funding (Accessed: 30/10/2020).
[55] NWTHC. (2013). Annual Report 2016-2017. [online]. Available at: https://www.ntassembly.ca/sites/assembly/files/td_32-183.pdf (Accessed: 03/09/2020). Pp. 6.
[56] Chinna, P. (2020). "Paulie Chinna: Housing and Homelessness Response to COVID-19 | Government of Northwest Territories." [online]. (Accessed 15/03/2021).

mobilised by the territorial government and allocated by the NWTHC to various areas of housing need. The budget for the Homelessness Assistance Fund was increased from $125,000 to $300,000, and the Transitional Rent Supplement Program was extended and simplified for participants, allowing both initiatives to support residents facing economic challenges such as the sudden loss of income. Meanwhile, $5 million was made available to create or improve housing that enables and facilitates vulnerable NWT residents to self-isolate. In the same vein, the Corporation worked with community partners to establish self-isolation centres and stable housing options, at the Aspen Apartment complex and Spruce Bough in Yellowknife, a new emergency overnight shelter in Hay River, and Aurora College student housing in Inuvik.[57]

Considering the impact of the pandemic on the NWTHC in broader terms brings to light positive shifts that leave the corporation at somewhat of a crossroads. As part of its response to the pandemic, the NWTHC deliberately made its services more accessible for residents, setting up emergency hotlines, streamlining application processes, and actively ensuring applications are processed as quickly as possible. Furthermore, the momentum and willingness with which funding has been mobilised and pushed through during the pandemic allowed services such as the supported living facility at Spruce Bough to finally be established, after years of efforts to secure funds by the Yellowknife Women's Society.[58] Such positive shifts in the practices of the NWTHC are of course the result of a crisis response, but do now pose the question: if it is possible for services and funding to be more quickly accessible for residents and those involved in the delivery of housing in the NWT, why should this end with the pandemic?

Looking forward to a post-pandemic future in the NWT, the NWTHC has recognised the importance of its role, and thus the centrality of housing, to the economic stimulation and recovery of the territory. Meanwhile, both housing actors in the NWT and scholars alike are asking how we might see the same swift, bold and resourceful action that characterised the NWTHC's response to the pandemic carried forward.[59] In extending such a line of questioning

[57] Chinna, P. (2020). "Paulie Chinna: Continued Housing and Homelessness Response to COVID-19 | Government of Northwest Territories". [online]. (Accessed: 15/03/2021).

[58] Understood from panel discussion with Neesha Rao, Yellowknife Women's Society Interim Executive Director; Bryany Denning, Senior Advisor for the GNWT Department of Health and Social Services and former Executive Director for the Yellowknife Women's Society; and Christina Maes Nino, Executive Director for the Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association, in an At Home In the North webinar, February 2021. At Home In the North. (2021). AHIN Webinar Series: Panel Discussion on COVID-19 and Housing. Available at: https://athomeinthenorth.org/ahin-webinar-series-panel-discussion-on-covid-19-and-housing/.

[59] See Christensen, J. (2020). "COVID-19 has changed how we respond to northern homelessness". Policy Options. Available at: https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/june-2020/covid-19-has-changed-how-we-respond-to-northern-homelessness/. (Accessed: 30/05/2020).; Christensen, J. & Pugsley, A. (2020). "Thinking Outside the Crisis: Housing as

to the specificities of this chapter, I posit that such governance shifts and the engagement with alternative ways of operating that this crisis revealed are possible and critical to the support of self-governed housing delivery in communities such as Fort Good Hope.

4.4.3. Supporting Self-Government

Having said all of this, and hopefully in so doing answering the two questions I posed at the outset of this subsection, I now pose a third question; how does self-government fit into the workings of the NWTHC? Only in recent years, predominantly with the 2018 Strategic Renewal and the ongoing renewal, does it appear the NWTHC has started to consider how to facilitate community-led housing strategies. Through the Community Housing Plans and Community Housing Support Initiative announced in 2018, the Corporation claims to be helping Indigenous and local governments to realise their communities' housing aspirations.

Speaking with a number of Housing Corporation employees provided valuable opportunities to learn more about the Community Housing Plan Project. This partnership project has the Housing Corporation working with community leadership to co-develop housing plans, putting together an engagement strategy, developing a survey tool, hosting workshops, gathering quantitative and qualitative data, setting goals and leadership priorities, and ultimately creating a contextualised strategy to help communities address some of their immediate housing needs. In so doing, the project functions to support community-led strategies, for example finding funding that could be applied for, but also to improve NWTHC operations, with a feedback mechanism ensuring any suggestions heard from the community around program design or governance issues for example, are relayed to relevant GNWT departments. This process also critically involves hiring a community member as a community coordinator, who works with the NWTHC to work across the differences between Housing Corporation ways of thinking and their community's, whilst simultaneously receiving training to understand how housing delivery works in the NWT. The subsequent ability of this community member to understand their community's housing needs and undertake a planning process like this, increases the capacity of a community to engage with housing delivery. With intentions to develop plans for all 33 of the NWT's communities, the one completed plan for the community of Whatì seems to reflect a positive engagement with community members and

Healthcare in the North". The Independent. [online]. Available: https://theindependent.ca/2020/05/29/thinking-outside-the-crisis-housing-as-healthcare-in-the-north%ef%bb%bf/ (Accessed: 30/05/2020).

their perspectives on housing needs and solutions.[60] However, it remains to be seen to what extent this signals a meaningful step towards shifting control or a performative re-hashing of previous policies.

4.5. The Maze: Tracing Federal Funding

When my sister and I used to go on holiday to my grandparents' house in the northeast of England, we would spend every day heading out on different adventures around the beautiful Northumberland countryside. In one of the villages we would (and still do) frequent, there was a maze, shaped by high walls that were constructed from metal crates filled with grey rocks. While my grandparents were always unwilling to venture in, my sister and I could not have been more excited to run around inside, desperately trying to reach the centre of the maze where one finds a chamber with much higher walls than the rest of the maze, and the most fascinating green shiny stones in the walls. I still have one of these precious stones on my windowsill back home - a reminder of one such maze success that was artfully eased out of the wall by my sister, to take back and show my Gran and Pop what all the fuss was about. We understood of course that these green gems helped to provide some incentive to reach the centre of the maze, a reward if you like for our successful pathfinding. It seems this memory has popped into my head now to capture the feelings I have towards my experience navigating the funding story behind housing provision in the NWT—a purposefully and unnecessarily obfuscated route through information that seems as though it should be transparent, accessible and easily understood. But instead of the shiny green stones that merely provided ten minutes of motivation for my sister and I, the centre of this maze—a comprehensive understanding of the way in which money is provided for housing in Canada—is critical to reach for community housing providers like James and Arthur.

Vignette 3: Navigating the maze

Financial support for housing in the NWT is created largely by the federal government, through funding provisions to the territorial government, through cost-matching stipulations which ensure the GNWT mobilise equal amounts of funding, and through direct funding provisions to communities. Such financial support is currently directed by the Liberal government's National Housing Strategy which promises a renewed interest in and meaningful

[60] Whatì Community Government & NWTHC. (2019). Whatì Housing Plan. [online]. Available at: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/sites/nwthc/files/resources/whati_housing_plan_updated_march_2020.pdf (Accessed: 04/11/20).

approach to federal housing provision in Canada that will give more Canadians a place to call home.[61] Through the ten-year $70+ billion strategy announced in 2017 funding is given to and cost-matched by provincial and territorial governments including the GNWT through bilateral agreements with the federal government. Meanwhile the strategy also makes space for funding to flow directly to communities through initiatives such as the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, the Canada Community Housing Initiative, and the Community-Based Tenant Initiative. Indeed, the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society has accessed some significant funding directly from the federal government, perhaps most notably through the Indigenous Homes Innovation Initiative for their K'ásho Got'ı̨ne House Assessment Research Project.[62]

However, while the National Housing Strategy appears to signal a novel and structured commitment to federal housing interventions in Canada, the story of federal funding for social housing over the last thirty years has warned northern communities against too much confidence in this promise. As indicated in Vignette 3, my work to understand this story and trace the money for housing in the NWT felt much like the navigation of a maze; a story which ultimately characterises federal funding for housing as unclear, unstable, and inaccessible.

In 1993, the newly elected Chretien government announced the dismantling of federal social housing programs, with funding to cease completely by 2038. While this marked the start of a transition for Canadian social housing policy from a federal responsibility to a provincial or territorial one, on a broader scale this move was part and parcel of a plan to reduce the national deficit that would see spending on service delivery fall significantly in the years that followed.[63] The dwindling federal funding for the operation and maintenance of public housing was a major concern for the NWTHC that runs throughout the entire series of annual reports I reviewed for this research.

This announcement heralded an approach to housing provision by the federal government that can be characterised as, at the least, unstructured and produced outcomes that were, at the most, an "accidental happenstance".[64] In 2006, following a deal made with NDP leader Jack

[61] Government of Canada. (2018). Canada's National Housing Strategy. Available at: https://eppdscrmssa01.blob.core.windows.net/cmhcprodcontainer/sf/project/placetocallhome/pdfs/canada-national-housing-strategy.pdf.
[62] See K'asho Got'ı̨nę House Assessment Research Project | CMHC (cmhc-schl.gc.ca) for details about the project.
[63] Mah, J. & Hackworth, J. (2011). Local Politics and Inclusionary Housing in Three Large Canadian Cities. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research.* 20(1); Pp. 57-80.
[64] Pomeroy, S. & Falvo, N. (2013). Chapter 14: Pragmatism and political expediency: Housing policy under the Harper regime. In C. Stoney & B. Doern (Eds.), *How Ottawa spends, 2013-2014: The Harper government: Mid-term blues and long-term plans* (184-195). Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. Pp.14.

Layton in exchange for NDP support of the federal budget, Steven Harper's Conservative government announced the Northern Housing Trust, under which $300 million in one-time funding for social housing was allocated to Canada's three northern territories (inclusive of the NWT, the Yukon, and Nunavut). Once the NWT's $50 million share had been cost-matched by the territorial government in line with the bilateral agreements signed by provinces and territories, $100 million was used to create 450 housing units by 2011, both for public housing and homeownership programs. Three years later in 2009, the NWT received another one-time parcel of funding for social housing from the federal government, this time for $59 million, as part of Canada's Economic Action Plan (CEAP) through which Harper's government tried to manage the impacts of the global financial crisis. Once cost-matched by the GNWT, this funding was projected to result in the creation of 120 new public housing and homeownership units, repairs to existing units, and increasing energy efficiency within the territory's housing. The extent to which these projections materialised is unclear, with the NWTHC reporting simply that this funding offset declining funding from the CMHC under the Social Housing Agreement and a portion was used for various renovation projects.[65] 2011 marked not only the beginning of the third Harper mandate, but also a commitment by the federal government to provide long-term funding for affordable housing: specifically, $1.9 billion over eight years through the Investment in Affordable Housing (IAH). As with the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI) the IAH replaced, the territories and provinces were bound to cost-match the federal investment involved, and were then responsible for the design and delivery of housing programs.

Although this seems on the surface to be a positive input to NWT housing provision, the actual contribution of this funding is unclear and confusing for those receiving it. Pomeroy and Falvo expose a "subtle sleight of hand"[66] at work with the 2011 federal budget and the IAH, whereby the rehabilitation and repair program (RRAP) and the AHI were rolled into a single block funding envelope. Previously, as separate envelopes, provinces and territories were not required to cost match RRAP, only AHI. By combining them into one lump sum, and requiring cost matching at this level, the federal government effectively levered an additional $128.1 million in matching funding from the provinces and territories. Furthermore, the terms for the use of funding received by the GNWT through the bilateral agreements do not exactly prioritise

[65] NWTHC. (2013). Annual Report 2012-2013. [online]. Available at: https://www.ntassembly.ca/sites/assembly/files/13-11-07td_16-175.pdf (Accessed: 02/09/2020).
[66] Pomeroy, S. & Falvo, N. (2013). Chapter 14: Pragmatism and political expediency: Housing policy under the Harper regime. In C. Stoney & B. Doern (Eds.), *How Ottawa spends, 2013-2014: The Harper government: Mid-term blues and long-term plans* (184-195). Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. Pp. 12.

nuanced and contextualised community housing need. One GNWT employee I interviewed explains that the bilateral agreement involves schedules of the programming and policy that is required, and that subsequently the funding tends to largely support the policies and priority areas that have been identified by the federal government. In other words, whether it be funding contributed by the AHI in 2011 or the National Housing Strategy today, federal funding for housing is not provided freely and completely without terms for the GNWT to use as they decide. This influence of the federal government over decontextualised one-size-fits all NWT housing programs and policies is clear to this employee, who highlights the homeownership policy which still operates as though you are providing programming to communities who have regular access to employment, banks, and insurance, for example.

Highlighting these pieces of the whole picture demonstrates the lack of transparency involved with federal funding activity and its communication. Beyond this, such observations also support the sentiment proposed by Pomeroy and Falvo among others, that the federal expenditures on housing from 2006 to 2015 served simply to disguise the mismanagement of Canada's housing profile under the Harper government. Indeed, in 2010 the NWTHC expressed great concern for the inadequacy of sporadic spikes in funding that saw core housing need in the NWT increase regardless of significant federal investment.[67] In the absence of a purposeful policy framework directed by careful consideration of how best to respond to Canada's housing needs, the reactionary, opportunistic and careless approach to funding housing failed to make any meaningful and stable contribution to the trajectory of northern housing delivery.

Returning to the National Housing Strategy, despite the claim that it breaks from the haphazard style of commitments by previous governments, issues of transparency and honesty continue. Putting it more bluntly, David Hulchanski calls the housing strategy a "public relations gimmick".[68] For Margot Young this critique is two-fold[69]: firstly, little new spending is promised by the strategy. In fact, the commitment is closer to $16 billion rather than $55+ billion, the latter number instead reflecting existing loans, existing planned spending, and cost-

[67] NWTHC. (2010). Annual Report 2009-2010: Shaping Northern Housing Options. [online]. Available at: https://www.nwthc.gov.nt.ca/sites/nwthc/files/resources/nwthc_annual_report_2009-2010_0.pdf (Accessed: 30/08/2020).
[68] David Hulchanski in Bula, F. (2019). "Experts question funding levels, rollout of federal housing announcements". The Globe And Mail. [online]. Available at: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/british-columbia/article-experts-question-rollout-of-federal-housing-funds/ (Accessed: 15/08/2020). Pp. n/a.
[69] Young, M. (2019). "Policy Brief: National Housing Strategy". Broadbent Institute. [online]. Available at: https://www.broadbentinstitute.ca/margotyoung/policy_brief_national_housing_strategy (Accessed: 15/08/2020).; The National Housing Strategy was initially headlined as a $40 billion commitment, before being re-headlined as $55+ billion, and then again as $70+ billion. At the time Margot Young issued their critique the strategy was communicated as a $55+ billion commitment.

matching by the provinces and territories. Thus, the monetary commitment of this strategy is similar to that provided by previous governments, and in fact assists fewer people with the greatest housing needs such as low-income households and off-reserve Indigenous populations. The second arm of this critique unfolds around the significant provincial and territorial cost-sharing assumptions made by the strategy, amongst concern that it will struggle to actually leverage any meaningful increases in provincial and territorial funding.[70] The dishonesty around this strategy and the Trudeau government's approach to it was further exposed in 2019, when an announcement of $290 million over eight years for social and community housing in Nunavut turned out to be not new money but simply a re-statement of existing federal funding streams budgeted in the National Housing Strategy.[71]

Further, the disconnected yet controlling influence of the federal government on housing in the NWT is also problematic with regards to the direct accessing of funding by communities. For one NWTHC employee, it seems as though the federal government does not understand the capacity of communities in the NWT, shaped for example by connectivity challenges which mean they may be without internet service for a week. As a result, some of the National Housing Strategy's funding streams are so hard to access because they require so much administrative capacity. Another interviewee, a GNWT employee who problematises at length the lack of northern- or territorial-focused policy agrees, citing the example of the Co-Investment Fund, the proposals for which demand the capacities of an urban centre that are indeed beyond those of most applying communities in the NWT.

The flow and management of funding for housing is a piece of the housing governance system that must be understood and accessed by community housing providers like the KGHS if they are to successfully meet their community's home and housing needs. However, the duplicity that surrounds the provision of funding, the conditions of its use, and community applications for it, hinders this necessary understanding and access. This is to say that unlike the difficult and exciting path for my sister and I through the maze to our green stones in Vignette 3 which ultimately served to provide entertainment for us and some less chaotic time

[70] Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer. (2019). Federal Program Spending on Housing Affordability. [online]. Available at: https://www.pbo-dpb.gc.ca/web/default/files/Documents/Reports/2019/Housing_Affordability/Federal%20Spending%20on%20Housing%20Affordability%20EN.pdf (Accessed: 15/08/2020).

[71] See: Wright, T. (2019). "Trudeau allocates new funds for Iqaluit housing as crisis takes toll on homeless". Global News. Available at: https://globalnews.ca/news/5721771/justin-trudeau-iqaluit-housing/. (Accessed: 19/12/2021).; Frizzell, S. (2019). "Trudeau rehashes old federal funding in housing announcement for Nunavut". CBC News. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/trudeau-housing-nunavut-iqaluit-1.5234413. (Accessed: 19/12/2021).

for my grandparents, the inaccessible and complicated path to understanding federal funding for housing serves as a barrier to community-led and self-governed housing delivery.

4.6. 'Hold Ups': Acquiring Land in Fort Good Hope

At the very start of my inquiry for my first research question—exploring the process of decision-making required to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope—the first task on my 'plan of action' was to consider what the various pieces to this process might actually be. After developing some understanding of the larger governance pieces such as the provision of funding for housing, the allocation of funds for housing, and the administering of social programs to meet community housing needs, I was aware of a gap in my understanding of the more specific 'on the ground' pieces that lead to the actual construction of a house. I decided to pick the brains of my parents, who having spent the best part of my time in primary school constructing a large extension to our home, have practical experience of what it takes to build a house—or at least part of one. Their memorable experiences with the local planning committee as part of the need to gain planning permission for the build, proved to be of significant value to me and my inquiry here, for I had omitted any consideration of land, and its acquisition for the purposes of housing development, from my thoughts so far. This oversight of a critical piece of the puzzle had to be rectified, so down it went in my notes—"figure out the land situation"—with a bright pink post-it note flagging the attention I needed to pay it in my next stage of inquiry.

Vignette 4: The land situation

Section 4.3 of this chapter discussed the outlying success of NWT housing governance and policy since the 1950s: the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) of the 1980s that afforded some self-governing capacity to community members in Fort Good Hope and saw their successful self-building of log homes. Learning that the ceasing of this program was in part attributable to barriers that community members encountered trying to acquire land naturally piqued my interest. Seizing the inspiration to act on the bright pink post-it note of Vignette 4 and consider Fort Good Hope's 'land situation', I then recalled a question asked by James and Arthur during an earlier conference call, mentioned in Vignette 1: Why are there hold ups with the Department of Lands? At the time Julia and I had discussed what this might mean, unclear of how the Department of Lands—the GNWT department responsible for managing and administering all public land in the NWT—would be involved in James and Arthur's efforts to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope. After all, the community has a settled

land claim in the Sahtu Dene and Métis Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, so surely the land within the community is not public?

This was a question I directed to an employee at the Department of Lands—a contact of my supervisor's—hoping to gain some clarity as to the role of the department in Fort Good Hope. Their response to my email shocked me. I was correct in one assumption that the Indigenous Regional Government, the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated (SSI), is responsible for administering settlement lands, or lands allocated to them through the land claim agreement, while the Department of Lands administers all public land in the NWT. The shock though was grounded in my assumption that the land claim agreement would have allocated all the land within community boundaries to the community. Is that not after all the very point of comprehensive land claims agreements? "For Aboriginal peoples… comprehensive land claims agreements are mechanisms to affirm and protect their traditional landholdings and territories."[72]

Evidently, this assumption was wrong, although a prior reading of works that issue critiques of the land claims process for the very reason that they do not actually work to give land back or promote Indigenous jurisdiction[73] may have prevented such an assumption. In fact, the majority of the land within Fort Good Hope's community boundaries is indeed Crown land, specifically Commissioner's Land. Applications to lease this land are made through a set of online forms that must be completed by those seeking to build and submitted along with a $250 deposit, which are then processed by the Department of Lands—a process that my email contact at the department says takes a long time. And therein lies the context and therefore clarity for the 'hold ups with the Department of Lands' that delay James and Arthur's efforts to deliver housing in the community. If the process of acquiring land to build on in Fort Good Hope involves the territorial government, that in and of itself presents a significant barrier to self-governed housing delivery.

Understanding of this context also provides potential explanation for the Homeownership Assistance Program's discontinuation in the early 1990s. Unwilling or unable to engage with the physically distant and bureaucratic process through which land is acquired, community

[72] Alcantara, C. (2013). Negotiating the Deal: Comprehensive Land Claims Agreements in Canada. Toronto [Ont.]: University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division. (Negotiating the Deal : Comprehensive Land Claims Agreements in Canada / - Memorial University of New Foundland (exlibrisgroup.com)). Pp.4.

[73] Nadasdy, P. (2002). "Property" and Aboriginal Land Claims in the Canadian Subarctic: Some Theoretical Considerations. *American Anthropologist.* 104(1); Pp.247-261.; Yellowhead Institute. (2019). Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper. [online]. Available at: red-paper-report-final.pdf (yellowheadinstitute.org) (Accessed 6/01/2021).

members are unable to construct their own houses, thus rendering the HAP model of housing delivery unfeasible. I am unclear on the details surrounding the timeline of the enforcement of this land acquisition process: perhaps it increased after the signing of the 1993 Land Claim Agreement? Regardless, enforcement derailed the successful self-governing path of the HAP and undermined the holistic model of housing governance it employed, thus presenting a substantial barrier to any present or future self-governed housing delivery that seeks to take on a similar approach.

The importance of these findings extends further, to what this barrier represents within the broader theme of control. Take a look at the three maps in Figure 4, taken from the GNWT's ATLAS GIS viewer. I implore you to pay particular attention to the second and third of these maps which show more clearly the compartmentalisation of land within Fort Good Hope's community boundaries and the corresponding land authority. Despite the odd yellow square indicating private or settlement land, many of these plots are purple and thus administered by the territorial government, revealing a significant mechanism through which control over the community is maintained. This finding raises questions: how has this landscape come to be, wherein the majority of land within a community with a settled land claim is still administered by the GNWT? And further still, what reason could the territorial government have for maintaining authority over such small[74] parcels of land within Fort Good Hope's community boundaries?

I raised such questions during the series of interviews I conducted remotely with personnel involved in housing delivery in the Northwest Territories throughout summer 2021, and unsurprisingly the knowledge and experiences of people proved far more informative than any material I could access online. One interviewee with experience working for the Department of Lands was especially helpful in this regard, providing a great deal of insight around the 'land situation' in Fort Good Hope. In case you had been questioning my earlier findings displayed in Figure 4, imagining some form of mistake had led to the dominance of purple representing Commissioner's land, this interviewee confirmed that land in Fort Good Hope is still largely administered by the GNWT Department of Lands which took over responsibility for it from the federal government after devolution in 2014.

[74] The majority of the plots of land vary in size between 20m x 20m and 40m x 40m.

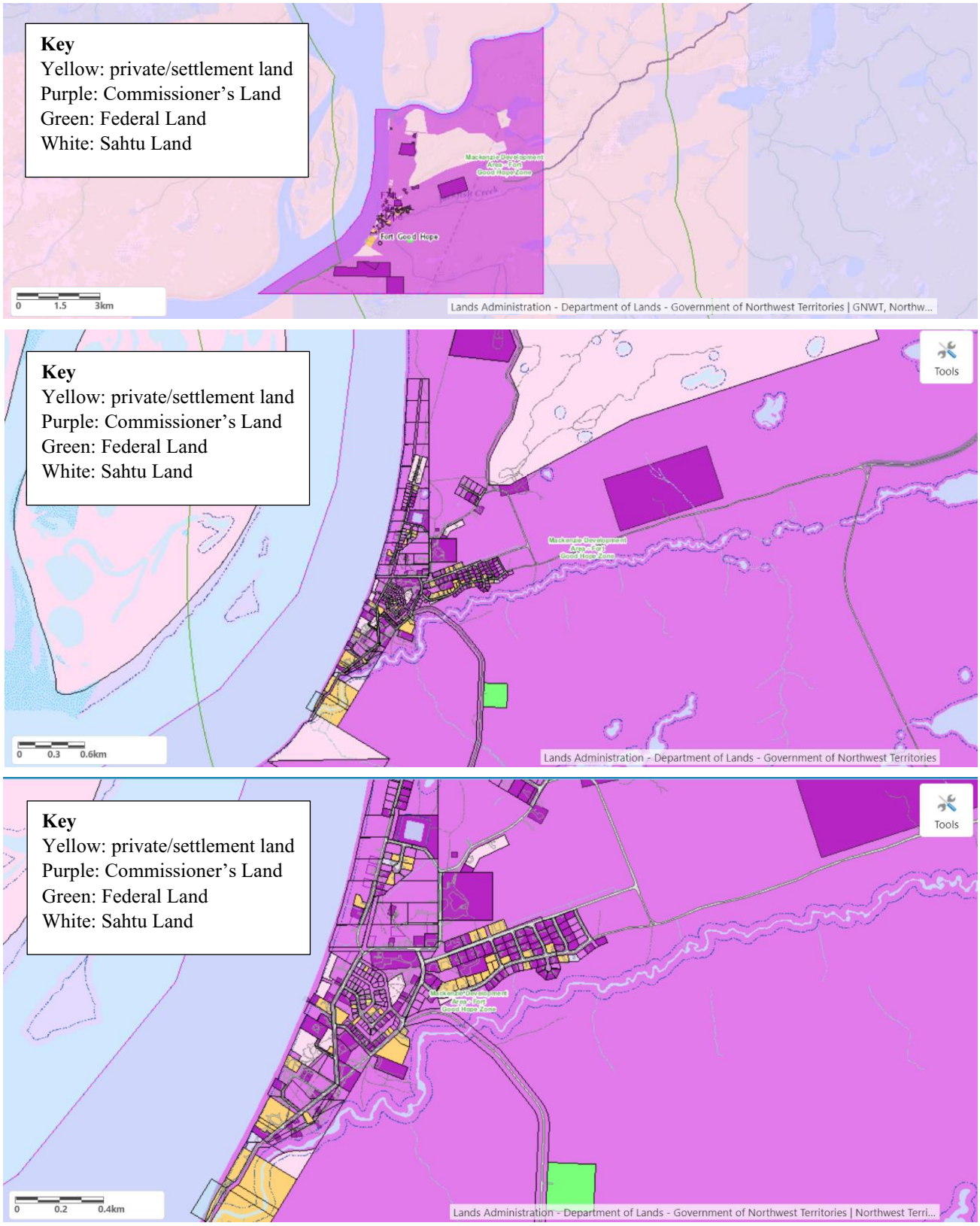

Figure 4: Maps of Fort Good Hope's community boundaries. Key to show the land tenure information. Maps provide varying detail at varying scales. Source: GNWT ATLAS (2021)[75]

[75] Government of the Northwest Territories. (2021). Administration of the Territorial Land Acts System (ATLAS). Available online: ATLAS (gov.nt.ca) (Accessed: 5/01/2021).

Shedding some light as to how this could happen, this previous employee of the Department of Lands spoke to the example of Sahtu First Nation Déline and their negotiation of community-based self- government, explaining that the GNWT was keen to retain ownership over land on which government assets were situated such as schools and hospitals, but also the land under people's homes that had outstanding mortgages or moneys owing to the Housing Corporation. Although admitting it would be tough to say why more land in Fort Good Hope's municipal boundaries had not been given to the Sahtu through the land claim agreement, it is likely that a similar line of thinking was at play. As a result, we see the small, segregated pieces of yellow private or settlement land on which the church or residential private property, such as the HAP log homes, lies.

With some understanding of how this landscape came to be, I then sought to understand how a community-led model of housing delivery is to access lands administered by the GNWT. The KGHS, as a non-profit society, can either apply to lease land at a discounted rate or to purchase land through fee simple title which is the highest level of land ownership in the NWT. The K'áshó Got'ıné Community Council also has the ability to obtain land through the same avenues, although it should be noted that GNWT policy enables municipalities to acquire land title for a nominal fee of $1 to make it more accessible for development and provision to residents or businesses. Meanwhile, community members can apply for a lease and pay 5% of the assessed value for the area of land they are leasing on an annual basis. Applications submitted by any party then go through a lengthy consultation process with Indigenous governments and any other stakeholders.

Coupled with this interviewee's valuable knowledge of the way land is administered is simultaneous experience of the problems that characterise these processes. For example, they question why for an application made by the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society, a community-led non-profit organisation, the long process of consultation must be followed. In addition, the money a community member must pay to lease a parcel of land is at once cost prohibitive, particularly for someone experiencing unemployment. Beyond this still, the interviewee takes broader issue with the government's processes of property assessment in the NWT that assess land in the Inuvik region—which includes the Sahtu for these regulations—at an unjustly higher value than elsewhere in the Territories.[76] With base land values at $29.00/square metre

[76] See GNWT Property Assessment Regulations at GNWT. (n.d.). Property Assessment Regulations. Available at: https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/files/legislation/property-assessment-and-taxation/property-assessment-and-taxation.r4.pdf. Schedule C splits the NWT into the old federal administrative divisions of Inuvik (Beaufort Delta and Sahtu) and Fort Smith (Dehcho, North Slave, and South Slave), and assigns a base value to each region.

in the Inuvik region and $24.50/square metre in the Fort Smith region, land leases in the Sahtu and Beaufort Delta are consistently priced higher than those in southern NWT despite being generally more economically disadvantaged areas. That is to say that an average residential land plot in Fort Good Hope is valued between $30,000 and $40,000, which then demands an annual residential lease between $1,500 and $2,000 plus property taxes. Subsequently, the cost for a community member to lease land in Fort Good Hope is too much. A further cost-prohibitive barrier is presented by the GNWT requirement that a plot of land must be legally surveyed for fee simple title of it to be acquired. At several thousand dollars to bring a legal surveyor into a community such as Fort Good Hope, this systemic requirement serves as a significant obstacle to the KGHS or community members trying to gain tenure over undeveloped land or even the land under homes that were constructed before land in the community was subdivided, and as a result many people in Fort Good Hope have no tenure on their property. On the other hand, land can be leased without being legally surveyed with the Department of Lands simply attaching a map to the lease that marks the boundaries of the plot with GPS coordinates. Another interviewee with extensive experience of delivering housing in the NWT also shared concerns for the challenges involved with gaining land tenure, notably that in order to get a mortgage from a bank one needs to have homeowner's insurance which typically requires titled land, and thus land leases present a critical barrier to accessing mortgages and insurance.

4.7. Planning and Construction

The only piece of this housing delivery process I was sure of when I began my efforts to understand it, was planning and construction. Even with very little contextual knowledge of the NWT's housing, I knew that for any physical shelter to be erected there were stages of planning and construction that would be required. I must admit however that with this known grounded in experiences and knowledge of largely urban development in England, I had not given thought to the nuance and challenge with which these stages might play out in a different place, particularly a remote community like Fort Good Hope. "Our parents you know they built their own houses with logs… they paid for all the material, everything" James Caesar of the KGHS told me in one conversation. "But today it's not like that, you know people have to spend a lot of money to buy their own materials, you know pay for power hook up, pay for qualified carpenters to put the building up to the building code of Canada. You know, you don't just get a whole lump of lumber and start building a house because it fits. We have to build those things up to the building code, at the very minimum… So what do we do? We hired an

architect who was charging an arm and a leg to put blueprints together… and then we've got to get a qualified carpenter to start putting it together, and then you have to pay for electrical power hook up by qualified electricians."[77]

Vignette 5: Building a house

Planning and construction processes are required when a new structure or changes to an existing one are proposed. For NWTHC-led programming, which is largely responsible for the provision of new structures or changes to existing ones in the NWT, the NWTHC must engage in the planning process of obtaining licenses, meeting regulations, and organising the construction. Contracts for construction, renovation, and maintenance are awarded to building contractors through the Business Incentive Policy (BIP), which preferentially offers work to NWT-based companies. In this way the BIP supposedly ensures that construction in the NWT will create employment, wages, and skill development opportunities for NWT residents rather than companies and workers from southern Canada. Such a policy and the deliberate practice it promotes is required because NWT-based companies often hold less capacity to meet the costs of northern construction than a larger southern Canadian company, which positions them as less favourable in the bid for contracts. The challenge of high construction and operational costs associated with developing infrastructure in the territory commonly appears in NWT housing conversations, as the remoteness of many communities means getting contractors and building materials to them is expensive work—a challenge that has only been exacerbated by the labour shortages and supply-chain disruptions brought by the Covid-19 pandemic.[78]

Within a community-led model of housing, community housing organisations like the KGHS take over the programming that has previously been largely NWTHC led, and thus they also take over responsibility for any planning and construction processes that their programming requires. However, for a community like Fort Good Hope that is accessible only by air, by winter road or by boat in the summer months, accessing resources and trades people is a significant challenge, as is fitting in with the government's regulations for planning and construction. Comments from James in Vignette 5 shed light on the obstacles to their efforts presented by Canadian building codes and procedures, which force the KGHS to abandon the

[77] Caesar, J. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.
[78] See: Andrews, B. (2021). "YK architect unsurprised by high cost to build affordable homes". Cabin Radio. [online]. Available at: YK architect unsurprised by high cost to build affordable homes (cabinradio.ca) (Accessed 12/01/2022); CMHC. (2021). Northern Housing Report. [online]. Available at: Northern Housing Report - 2021 (cmhc-schl.gc.ca). (Accessed 12/01/2022); Whitehouse, S. (2021). "'Dene Delivers' modular rapid housing unit to Katlo'deeche First Nation near Hay River, NWT". [online]. Available at: 'Dene Delivers' modular rapid housing unit to Katlo'deeche First Nation near Hay River, NWT (nnsl.com) (Accessed 12/01/2022).

self-building ways of their parents and instead hire architects, electricians, and carpenters to conduct planning and construction in a way determined by the Canadian government. Multiple interviewees outlined how the challenges of limited access to tradespeople and materials that are faced by the territorial government, are just transferred to communities taking on responsibility for housing programs. With planning and construction in community hands these challenges grow much larger, with delayed construction timelines and the capacity demands of decontextualised Canadian planning processes straining the financial and personnel capacities of community housing organisations like the KGHS. Such strains in Fort Good Hope have informed specific efforts within their community housing strategy to increase the capacity of the community to deal with the challenges of planning and construction. For example, the portable sawmill that was purchased in 2018 increases the capacity of the community to produce its own material for construction and maintenance work, while the KGHS seeks the funding and opportunity to train community members in skills of plumbing, carpentry, and electrical instrumentation.

4.8. System Summary

Having just written my way through the various stages involved with delivering housing in the Northwest Territories, it may be helpful to use my improved understanding of the way this system works and summarise it for any reader who has not the time, or maybe the patience, to follow the entirety of my mapping story so far.

This process begins in Yellowknife, with the territorial government, where the NWTHC decides how to meet the NWT's housing needs. Funding for programming is provided by the federal government and added to by the GNWT under the conditions of a bilateral agreement between the two governments. The federal government also provides some funding directly to communities through specific initiatives within the National Housing Strategy. The funding received by the NWTHC goes largely towards the maintenance of the territory's public housing stock, while the rest goes towards a series of programs promoting homeownership, support for homelessness, and the administrative costs of the corporation. NWTHC funding decisions and housing need assessment are informed by various surveys and in-person discussion forums. For the construction of new infrastructure or the repair and maintenance of existing structures, the NWTHC oversees the drawing up of plans that meet Canadian building codes and then has companies bid for construction contracts which are preferentially awarded to NWT-based

companies when possible. It is the job then of the selected contractors to organise for the arrival of trades people and resources needed to conduct the work.

In a model of community-led housing delivery, and eventually the self-government of housing, community organisations such as the K'ásho Got’ı̨ne Housing Society and Indigenous governments seek to take on the control for much of this process. Meaningful community consultation is placed at the centre of assessing housing and homemaking needs in the community, the results of which are then used to set policy priorities and design contextualised programming that is best placed to meet them, which in the case of Fort Good Hope all comes together under a housing strategy and action plan. In order to implement this programming Indigenous governments and their housing bodies must then apply for funding, either through NWTHC policy streams or directly from the federal government via programs such as the National Housing Co-Investment Fund or projects such as the Indigenous Homes Innovation Initiative. If new infrastructure is part of the housing plans, then land must also be acquired, which in a community like Fort Good Hope where the majority of land is still administered by the GNWT, is then pursued with difficulty through the GNWT’s Department of Lands. Following the acquisition of necessary funding and land a process of planning is required to ensure any structures adhere to Canadian building codes, before construction, maintenance or repair work can unfold through the often-challenging navigation of a community’s capacity to access the trades peoples and receive building materials. In Fort Good Hope these challenges have directed the K'ásho Got’ı̨ne Housing Society to focus specific energy on capacity building, including the capacity of community members to conduct the skilled work of plumbing, carpentry or electric instrumentation, and the capacity of the community to produce its own lumber for construction.

4.9. Obscuring the Map: Thematic Discussion of Barriers

My hope is that at this point in your reading of this chapter you now have an answer to my first research question—what is the current process of decision-making required to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope? In the previous sections I have documented a map of money, of decisions, of resources, and of control, that reveal the governing process through which the KGHS attempts to deliver Fort Good Hope’s vision of community-led housing. However, as indicated by James and Arthur’s comments in Vignette 1 and the discussion throughout this chapter so far, this map of the governing system is in fact layered with barriers to the community-led and future self-governed delivery of housing; layers of both localised obstacles

and broader systemic features that at once obscure the decision-making map and reflect the real landscape in which the KGHS' self-governing efforts are hindered.

With that in mind, I look now to bring this mapping story together by responding to my second research question and make explicit the themes through which these barriers to self-governed housing delivery in Fort Good Hope have emerged. These themes are summarised in Table 3.

4.9.1. Control

The first thematic area surrounds control of housing delivery. The Assembly of First Nations that represents First Nation citizens in Canada recognises that the Creator has given Indigenous peoples the right to govern themselves and the right to self-determination.[79] Although we know that self-government is not synonymous with self-determination,[80] at the core of both concepts is Indigenous control, autonomy, and decision-making power.

Anishinaabe scholar and jurist John Borrows centres the importance of self-determination around what it means for both gaining control and advancing Indigenous agency.[81] Similarly, for Indigenous author Bob Joseph it is the control and power to make internal decisions and shape the wellbeing of their First Nations community, that are the foundational conditions underpinning successful self-government operations.[82] Indeed, it is a return to self-government and the power to structure their own solutions Joseph argues, that is foundational to the nation building that self-determination strives for. While then self-government does not equate to the same outcome as self-determination, the two concepts do align valuably in the direction they seek to achieve for Indigenous peoples.

With this in mind, the conditions of control and Indigenous agency that can be realised under self-government, and are necessary to support meaningful structures of it, will ultimately support self-determination visions in the long term.

[79]Assembly of First Nations. (2019). Charter of the Assembly of First Nations | Assembly of First Nations (afn.ca).
[80] Irlbacher-Fox, S. (2009). Finding Dahshaa: Self-Government, Social Suffering, and Aboriginal Policy in Canada. UBC Press: Vancouver, Toronto.; Walker, R. & Barcham, M. (2010). Indigenous-inclusive citizenship: The city and social housing in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. *Environment and Planning A.* 42(2); Pp. 314-331.
[81] Borrows, J. (2016). Freedom and Indigenous Constitutionalism. University of Toronto Press.
[82] Joseph, B. (2016). "Indigenous Worldviews vs Western Worldviews". [online]. Available: https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-worldviews-vs-western-worldviews (Accessed: 10/04/2021).

Table 3: A summary of this chapter's analytical themes and the main points of analysis that fall within each theme.

Theme of Analysis	**Explanation**	**Examples**
Control	First Nation control over the housing delivery process is severely lacking. Decision-making power in fact lies largely outside of communities, in the hands of the federal and territorial governments.	-Funding amounts are controlled by the federal government while its allocation is controlled by the territorial government. -Control over land in Fort Good Hope is maintained largely by the GNWT's Department of Lands. Accessing this land is a challenge for many in Fort Good Hope due to lengthy periods of processing applications and the prohibitive costs of leasing and land surveying for fee simple title.
Sectoral Governance	The sectoral nature of governing informed by Western epistemologies – in which housing is separated from other aspects of community development and wellbeing – cannot support holistic Indigenous conceptualisations of home that connect housing to other aspects of life such as health, education, and employment.	-Siloed provision of funding. -Non-Indigenous assessment of housing needs at territorial government level produces policies and programs that neglect connected needs.
Accessibility and Capacity	The NWT's system of housing delivery is characterised by administrative complexity and practical inaccessibility.	-Capacity demands of funding proposals, land acquisition and surveying, and adhering to Canadian planning regulations. -Inaccessibility of funding information.

However, in her critical intervention *Finding Daasha,*[83] Stephanie Irlbacher-Fox exposes the inadequacy of self-government negotiation practices in the NWT, highlighting the reluctance of governments to relinquish authority and allow for Indigenous control. Using housing in Fort Good Hope as a site of engagement here to expose the specificities of how control is withheld from communities, then builds on Irlbacher-Fox's critique and serves an important part in revealing the realities of self-government in the NWT.

My engagement with the system through which community-led housing delivery in Fort Good Hope currently operates, has revealed many ways in which the Indigenous and community control so important to supporting effective self-government, is largely absent. That is to say that in the decision-making map established throughout this chapter, the real decision-making power lies largely outside of the community, and ultimately in the hands of the federal and territorial governments.

4.9.1.1. Control over funding

For the part of the process where funding for housing is provided by the federal government, bilateral agreements through which money is channelled to and cost-matched by provinces and territories present as a significant mechanism of control. Despite the reduced role the federal government professes to want in Canada's social housing profile, the utilisation of such funding agreements ensures it retains a hand in deciding how combined funds are allocated at the provincial or territorial level for addressing different housing needs. In other words, this money is not simply and freely provided by the federal government in recognition that they are perhaps not best positioned to target funding where the need is highest; instead, it has conditions set on it.

Look, for example, to the cost-sharing assumptions of the National Housing Strategy. The bilateral agreement signed between the CMHC and the NWTHC under the 2017 National Housing Strategy works to secure both federal and territorial funds for working towards housing solutions.[84] However, it also works to outline the conditions of use for these funds, first declaring that "CMHC Funding and Cost-Matched Funding under this Agreement must be used only for (i) Housing in accordance with the Initiatives and in alignment with the agreed-to Action Plans, and in compliance with this Agreement", before setting out further

[83] Irlbacher-Fox. Finding Daasha.
[84] CMHC. (2018). CMHC – Northwest Territories Bilateral Agreement Under the 2017 National Housing Strategy. Available at: cmhc-nwt-bilateral-agreement-en.pdf (windows.net). [online]. (Accessed: 3/03/2021). Pp. 5.

instructions. As this small extract makes clear, this bilateral agreement allows the federal government to assert control in having the NWTHC allocate funding to the areas of housing need identified not by the NWTHC or indeed communities, but by the CMHC.

The resulting lack of local control is further exacerbated by the structure and bureaucracy of the NWTHC. After the CMHC's conditions are met, the remaining funding allocation decisions are made by the NWTHC, which distributes funds to the specific programs and services discussed in Table 2. Therefore, with the exception of specific monies received directly from the federal government, by the time territorial government money for housing reaches Fort Good Hope there is little to no control that the community have over it.

This problem underpins the question raised by James and Arthur in Vignette 1, asking "how do we get more money for building our own houses, or more cabins out on the land"? This question was asked in frustration after the KGHS identified a housing need in the community but struggled to access the necessary funds to address it, because neither the federal or territorial government makes space for such a contextualised need. In interviews, the disconnection between federal funding mechanisms and the context of the NWT was made clear through discussions of proposal demands that far outweigh the capacities of northern and remote communities.

Furthermore, the lack of space for the NWT's modern treaty or unsettled First Nations within federal government funding mechanisms—that are instead geared more towards on-reserve First Nations—was specifically addressed by both James and Arthur of the KGHS, and Jason Snaggs of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. In fact, Jason suggests the direct federal funding that is now available for modern treaty and unsettled First Nations in the Northwest Territories is likely a result of the lobbying for it done by the participants of the Gordon Foundation's Northern Policy Hackathon in 2019.[85]

It is worth acknowledging here an encouraging sign of a shift by the territorial government on this balance of funding control, having recently handed over authority for the home repair and maintenance program to the KGHS.[86] In a conference call in February 2021, Arthur told my colleagues and I that this agreement means a budget is given to the KGHS by the NWTHC

[85] Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. (2019). "Northern Policy Hackathon: Recommendations On Housing". The Gordon Foundation. [online]. Available: https://gordonfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TGF_Booklet_Hackathon_Recommendations_2019.pdf (Accessed: 05/05/2020).
[86] Bird, H. (2020). "Fort Good Hope to get greater control over its housing". CBC News. [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/fort-good-hope-housing-control-1.5844494. (Accessed: 4/03/2021).

for repair and maintenance needs in the community, plus the administrative costs of running the program. The implications of this agreement are in practice substantial, with Arthur describing the previous organisation of this program by the NTWHC as a problem. He explains that it would tender out the repair and maintenance work required by residents to contractors who would in turn wait to accrue several jobs to make the trip to Fort Good Hope worthwhile, resulting in residents having to wait long stretches of time for their repairs. Now however, the KGHS has the authority and funding capacity to train community members for both the skilled labour and administrative work involved in operating the program, and as such control over the timelines of repairs. Perhaps this transfer of autonomy could pave the way for similar changes. Having said that, it is pertinent to note that while this case portrays an encouraging shift of control, this does not necessarily equate to an increase in decision-making power – a point I will return to in the next subsection.

4.9.1.2. Control over land

Beyond the systemic features that keep the control over funding out of the community's hands, a significant barrier to self-governed housing delivery in Fort Good Hope is also presented by the issue of land authority, whereby control over land in Fort Good Hope is again kept largely out of the community's hands. As discussed in subsection 4.6, the territorial government has authority over a majority of the land within Fort Good Hope's community boundaries, rather than the regional Indigenous government (the Sahtu Secretariat Incorporated) that has authority over lands settled under the 1993 Sahtu Dene and Métis Land Claim Agreement. This lack of control that the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society and indeed community members have over plots of land that they wish to construct on creates significant 'hold ups', as James and Arthur indicated in Vignette 1, with their efforts to meet housing needs. That is because acquiring this land involves engagement with a bureaucratic process of form filling and payments administered by the GNWT's Department of Lands—a process so far removed from the community, by way of both approach and physical distance, some residents refrain from engaging out of objection.[87]

The interviews discussed in subsection 4.6 shed particularly critical light on the temporal and cost barriers imposed by the way land is currently administered by the Department of Lands. The lengthy periods of processing applications combined with the prohibitive costs of land surveying for fee simple title and the fee for leasing, led one GNWT employee to share

[87] Personal communications with Fort Good Hope community member.

significant concerns over the inability of these procedures to support community-led or self-governed housing efforts. Getting to the crux of this problem with land in the territory, they ultimately declared that "we need to decide if we're looking at [land] as a resource or a right I guess basically, and I think the policies that the government has in play right now point to it as more of a resource that can be a source of income. We haven't even sorted out how people can live on it yet".[88] Thus, once again, the lack of control held by the community and the KGHS over accessing land—a critical part of the process to deliver housing—creates a major barrier to Fort Good Hope's self-governing efforts taking place at the site of housing. Maintenance of authority by the territorial government over the community's land bank only limits the control the community can exercise over their processes and efforts to develop and self-govern.

Control is a critical feature of Indigenous self-government and self-determination. Therefore, in seeking to understand the key policy and governance barriers to the self-determination of housing in Fort Good Hope, this chapter explored the balance of control in the process of decision-making. It is clear that there is an array of systemic features—from federal funding mechanisms and the bureaucracy of the NWTHC, to the way land is administered by the Department of Lands—that keep authority firmly in the hands of the federal and territorial governments. These features then characterise a housing delivery system in which control over priority areas, approaches to programming, and timelines of work does not lie with the community, which ultimately translates into significant barriers to the community-led and future self-governed delivery of housing in Fort Good Hope.

4.9.2. Sectoral Governance

Further barriers to the KGHS' community-led housing efforts in Fort Good Hope are caused by the sectoral approach that characterises governance in the current system of housing delivery. Although there is an important difference between the *structures* of governance utilised by Indigenous and Western peoples,[89] I am interested here specifically in the tension that exists around their *approaches* to governance. That is to say that enabling an Indigenous approach to governance is critical to supporting Indigenous self-government, and thus, an important step in the long-term drive for Indigenous self-determination.

[88] GNWT Employee. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.
[89] Poucette, T.L. (2018). Spinning wheels: Surmounting the Indian Act's impact on traditional Indigenous governance. *Canadian Public Administration.* 61(4); Pp. 499-522.

While Indigenous peoples in Canada and beyond do not form a homogenous group, it is understood that there are many similarities in the worldviews, values and beliefs held by Indigenous peoples. The difference between these ontologies and epistemologies, and those held by non-Indigenous peoples, hold the key to understanding the difference between Indigenous and Western approaches to governance. Bob Joseph explains:

> The root of the difference between the worldviews is that they generally subscribe to opposite approaches to knowledge, connectedness, and science. Indigenous cultures focus on a holistic understanding of the whole that emerged from the millennium of their existence and experiences. Traditional Western worldviews tend to be more concerned with science and concentrate on compartmentalized knowledge and then focus on understanding the bigger, related picture.[90]

Once this significant difference in worldviews is grasped, the tension that exists between the governance approaches they inform is better understood. An Indigenous approach to governance is largely informed by the view that society operates in a state of relatedness, with people, the environment, and objects all interconnected.[91] In this way, the connectedness that is so fundamental to an Indigenous worldview gives root to a style of governing that is holistic—an approach to governance that holds sustainability at its core and combines cultural, social, economic and ecological objectives, rather than separate them.[92] Not only does this holistic approach to governing society and development offer a more sustainable trajectory than problematic paths of exploitive development,[93] but critically it is also aligned with the push for and trajectory of Indigenous self-determination.[94]

However, this holistic governance approach stands in opposition to—and is in fact entirely contradicted by—the sectoral approach to governing favoured by Western culture that dominates in Canada. The sectoral approach is informed by a view of society as compartmentalised rather than connected, and that subsequently seeks to deliver services through sectoral compartments of, for example, health, employment, education, and housing.

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[90] Joseph, B. (2016). "Indigenous Worldviews vs Western Worldviews". [online]. Available: https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-worldviews-vs-western-worldviews (Accessed: 10/04/2021). Pp. n/a.
[91] Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. (2021). Indigenous-Self-Government.pdf (ictinc.ca)
[92] Godden, L. and Cowell, S. (2016). Conservation Planning and Indigenous Governance in Australia's Indigenous Protected Areas. *Restoration Ecology.* 24(5); Pp. 692-697.
[93] See the following for examples of Indigenous epistemological holism being centred in dialogues around sustainability and governance: Loomis, T. (2000). Indigenous Populations and Sustainable Development: Building on Indigenous Approaches to Holistic Self-Determined Development. *World Development.* 28(5); Pp. 893-910; McGregor, D. (2014). Traditional Knowledge and Water Governance: The Ethic of Responsibility. *AlterNative.* 10(5); Pp. 493-507; Macpherson, E. & Salazar, P. (2020). Towards a Holistic Environmental Flow Regime in Chile: Providing for Ecosystem Health and Indigenous Rights. *Transnational Environmental Law.* 9(3); Pp. 481-519.
[94] See Loomis. Indigenous Populations Sustainable Development, for a discussion of holistic approaches to development by Maori in Aotearoa and their alignment with Indigenous self-determination.

In the decision-making process and system map storied throughout this chapter, a significant barrier to self-governed housing delivery by the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society in Fort Good Hope is posed by the sectoral approach through which housing is addressed and governed by the federal and territorial governments as a separate entity. In one conference call with the KGHS, Arthur illustrated the interconnectedness so fundamental to Indigenous epistemology, explaining the relationships drawn between home—and the housing that provides the physical base for home—to employment, community economic development, physical and mental health, and struggles with addictions and alcohol dependence. Home is seen in Fort Good Hope as central to many of the community's social problems, so delivering housing and working towards home requires attention not just towards physical shelters but to social problems too. Such a conceptualisation of home in Fort Good Hope elevates the need for a holistic approach to housing delivery.

Meanwhile, funding for housing is siloed off by the federal government, and then separated out further by the territorial government's NWTHC in alignment with separate areas of housing need priority and programs. The sectoral nature of the current governance system was indeed problematised by employees of the GNWT I interviewed, with one highlighting the communication challenges of having so many different players at the table, whilst they all have different tables, speaking to the vast difference in knowledge and perspectives on housing and home held by Indigenous governments, the territorial government and the federal government. Meanwhile others specifically address the absence of federal government understanding for the northern and Indigenous context of the NWT in its programming and policy, citing the lack of continuity with federal staff involved in the Territories as a possible cause. When the federal government then decide how and where to provide funding for housing, it does so through siloed channels, and without any sensitivity for the interconnected housing and governance preferences of Indigenous communities. As a result, the KGHS and other governing bodies in the community are unable to translate the connections they see between housing and health, wellbeing, employment, community development, and education—among many other spheres of society—into their efforts. That is to say that the understandings, funding mechanisms, and programming that construct housing governance in the NWT separate housing from other community development sectors, which leaves a system that does not support the interconnectedness that underpins Indigenous conceptualisations of governance, wellbeing and home in Fort Good Hope.

To demonstrate this, I return to the home repair and maintenance program discussed in subsection 9.1.1, that the KGHS has recently taken over responsibility for from the NWTHC. As indicated previously, this shift in control is significant for the support of self-governed housing delivery it offers, at a glance. With a deeper look however, although the KGHS is being given the funds for delivering the services of this program, this shift advances the community's control in only a small way given that the money comes with preconceived parameters for its use.

During a conference call with the KGHS in February 2021, Arthur spoke to this barrier. He told my colleagues and I of a recent two-week spell of extremely cold weather during which the KGHS was flooded with requests from people for furnace repairs. Arthur explained however, that without skilled people in the community to undertake this type of repair and maintenance work immediately, they have to fly people in to fix the problems, which takes up critical time when residents are facing temperatures below -45°C without a functioning furnace. This issue has only been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, with Arthur explaining that construction hold ups faced by the KGHS in the last year are the result of trades people - that usually come from southern Canada - being unwilling to complete the unpaid two-week self-isolation period required upon arriving in the NWT. Given the significant barrier to delivering and maintaining housing the lack of trained community members presents, the KGHS is trying to create opportunities for people to be trained. However, such opportunities require funding, and in the system of housing governance the KGHS operates in, money is most often tied up in specific programs and services that allow little space for the broader need of training people in construction and labour skills; a need that spans across sectors rather than fitting neatly into the parameters of one such as housing. Thus, the KGHS is looking for alternative sources of funding.

This example demonstrates the inability of the KGHS to adopt a holistic approach to housing governance that would support the interconnections Fort Good Hope community members see. When funds are siloed by the federal and territorial governments and dedicated to pre-determined areas of need—whether or not those funds are then provided to the community—the community is prevented from being able to deliver services in a truly self-determined way that would be most effective at addressing their needs.

Not only does a holistic approach to governance grounded in an Indigenous epistemology offer sustainability and critical support for self-determination, but for the community of Fort

Good Hope, it is already known to function successfully as an approach. In the 1980s, the innovative and popular system of housing delivery that unfolded under the community's self-management of the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) utilised a holistic approach to governing that engaged with the expanded social role housing takes on within the community's conceptualisation of home . That is to say that, through this housing program, the community succeeded in meeting multiple social, economic, and cultural objectives beyond the isolated provision of physical shelters. In addition to the delivery of culturally supportive, high quality log homes still loved in the community today, expanded outcomes included the training of local administrators through the programming process, the provision of jobs and valuable construction experience, the contribution of locally spent wages to boosting the community's economy, and an increase in community pride, self-esteem, and independence.[95] This confirms the development and benefits to be reaped in northern and Indigenous communities when the governance of housing takes on the interconnectedness central to Indigenous epistemology, rather than the compartmentalisation of the NWT's current governance system. Furthermore, placing Indigenous epistemologies above Western knowledge in this way is a critical step towards Indigenous self-determination and ultimately decolonising the systems through which the health and wellbeing of Indigenous populations are established.

It is clear that the sectoral approach which characterises governance in the NWT—in which housing is separated from other aspects of community development and wellbeing—simply cannot support the Indigenous conceptualisations of home that the community-led delivery of housing in Fort Good Hope seeks to achieve. Moreover, the case of the home maintenance and repair program illustrates that even with increased community control, the deep-rooted systemic approach to governance denies the community of full self-governing and self-determining capacity. Positioning these observations alongside the significance of housing as a connection point for so many different needs in the community, presents the current decision-making process and governance system as profoundly insufficient. This indicates the deep epistemological shifts and systemic change that is required to support the self-governed delivery of homes in Fort Good Hope and northern communities beyond.

4.9.3. Accessibility

The third thematic area through which barriers to self-governed housing in Fort Good Hope can be identified, is around accessibility. As I explored and inquired through the processes of

[95] Rees & Hulchanski. Housing as Northern Community Development. Pp.1.

both research and writing, it became clear that the system of housing delivery in the Northwest Territories is complex, poorly communicated, and deeply inaccessible. The complexity of this system was further confirmed by one interviewee employed by the GNWT, who advised me to be mindful when conducting this work that everyone involved in the housing delivery process is missing pieces in their understanding exactly because it is so complicated.

The piece of my mapping story that discusses federal funding for housing in subsection 4.5 provides some indication of these barriers. As I documented there, my efforts to trace the funding were confused by unclear or missing communications, including but not limited to the re-statement of previously accounted for money in new announcements of federal financial support. Such practices made it difficult to gain a comprehensive and clear understanding of the exact amounts of funding available, and through which pathways and orientation of needs it could be accessed for delivering housing in Fort Good Hope. Combining this lack of clarity with the sporadic and uneven nature that so often characterises the federal government's provision of funding for housing produces significant confusion, for all the actors in need of this funding. For example, the NWTHC repeatedly expresses concern in its annual reports for its inability to make long-term plans without confirmation of reliable and sufficient federal funding. This concern is shared by many actors involved in housing delivery in the NWT including the KGHS. The absence of sustainable operational funding for facilities and programs such as the transitional home for men, means the KGHS was forced to first find and then apply for many different pots of funding, eventually accessing twenty different pieces of funding to run the home. Such applications, as interviewees spoke to in subsection 4.5, demand a great deal of time and administrative labour, the capacity for which is not in abundance in small communities like Fort Good Hope attempting to lead their own housing delivery.

In addition, further barriers to accessing this system exist within the story of territorial government decision making told in subsection 4.4. In attempting to put together all the parts necessary for understanding the role of the NWTHC in the process of housing delivery in Fort Good Hope, I found a complicated corporation structure, and a further lack of clarity in communications. In the case of the NWTHC this lack of clarity most often derives from what information is not available or made explicit, as I struggled to develop a complete picture of the services and programs available to Fort Good Hope and what is required of residents attempting to access them. For James and Arthur, it is specifically the lack of clarity around who is involved with different housing-related processes that is problematic, asking as cited in Vignette 1; *how do we promote responsible homeownership when it is unclear who is*

responsible for which housing needs? Such confusion was recounted through a particular experience whereby the NWTHC did nothing in response to leaking fuel tanks in the community, leaving a private company to fly in and repair them, and people questioning who is actually in control. Meanwhile, interviewees further demonstrated the inaccessibility that derives from the NWTHC's operations with regard to the role of Local Housing Organisations. The deep understanding of the people in Fort Good Hope and their housing needs that is clearly held by Angela Grandjambe, manager of the community's LHO, is not reflected in the influence she has over NWTHC responsibilities and decisions. For example, her perception of the need to provide smaller units for single people or young families stands in significant contrast to the recent NWTHC decision to construct a seniors' complex in the community, which due to inadequate community consultation on housing need is now struggling to find Elders who are willing to move in. For Angela this case signals a much broader problem with the way housing need is assessed by the Housing Corporation, describing the practical barriers of online surveying when people are without access to the internet, or in person surveying conducted by outsiders that many residents are unwilling to speak with. This observation is also supported by Sandra Turner, a previous employee of both the GNWT and CMHC, who believes that that the NWTHC does not utilise its LHOs enough, instead operating largely from a top-down Yellowknife perspective, using the LHOs to merely enforce policy rather than using them to provide feedback, and thus making housing corporation operations less accessible to community members. For Sandra, the need to mobilise staff living and working in communities for their superior understanding of what is needed and how best to meet these needs, is essential.

Moreover, the NWTHC clearly recognises the need to enhance accessibility to its services and programs, making clear efforts as part of its response to the Covid-19 pandemic to improve its communications, simplify application processes and speed up processing times. This response subsequently demonstrates the importance of accessibility and clarity surrounding available services, in establishing stable support for residents and housing providers. That is to say, there is no stability when it is unclear what resources are available and how they are to be accessed.

My experience with navigating this system, plagued with uncertainty, confusion and inaccessibility, becomes problematic when you position community housing providers, already overburdened by the responsibilities of their position, as the people trying to find information, whether that be funding sources or programs and services for residents' needs. Community

housing actors need to access and have the capacity to participate in the processes through which housing is delivered in the NWT. However, the NWT's system of housing delivery is characterised by administrative complexity, with the capacity demands of funding proposals, land acquisition and surveying, and adhering to Canadian planning regulations, indicating its practical inaccessibility. Thus, the decision-making processes and the practical requirements of housing delivery in the NWT need to be made far more accessible if community housing providers and self-governments are to operate in it successfully.

4.10. Concluding Thoughts

This chapter has sought to map the system of policy and governance through which housing comes to be delivered in Fort Good Hope and build on experiential accounts from the KGHS to shed light on the barriers within this system that undermine the self-determination of housing in the community. In doing so, I have responded to the first and second of my research questions that drive this study. The current process for housing delivery in Fort Good Hope was traced from its historical roots, through the policymaking and programming of the NWTHC, the provision of funding for housing by the federal and territorial governments, the acquisition of land in the community, and the procedures of planning and construction. Explanations of each piece were also accompanied by a look at how the KGHS is trying to engage with this system in its efforts to deliver Fort Good Hope's community-led housing strategy. Drawing on material from policy scoping and interviews, these sections presented a system of current housing governance that is ineffective, far-removed from community voices, control, and priorities, and tends to reproduce colonial power relations. Top-down housing governance and the contextually and culturally inappropriate housing it produces in the NWT does not support home.

Moreover, using the specific community-led housing efforts of the KGHS to examine this problematic system revealed that it hinders rather than supports community-led or future self-governed housing. While housing advocates suggest that greater self-government in housing policy and provision could promote more effective and appropriate responses to the housing crisis, the discussion of barriers to community participation within NWT housing delivery highlighted the systemic characteristics of government control, sectoral practices, and inaccessibility that make it very difficult for communities to gain greater self-governance of housing delivery.

In addition, for most of this chapter I have utilised an autoethnographic creative writing style, with the exception of the more conventionally academic discussion of the thematic barriers to self-governed housing delivery in Fort Good Hope. This style of writing was simultaneously a novel challenge to me, and a deeply valuable mode of inquiry. Indeed, as I storied each of the elements of this governing system and my stages of engagement with it, I came to understand areas of confusion for myself and my research partners at the KGHS; answered questions posed by James, Arthur, and I; and realised upon further questions that had to be asked—some of which are still to be answered. That is to say, that writing this piece has helped me to navigate and comprehend the decision-making process that ultimately leads to housing delivery in Fort Good Hope. Moreover, the value of this writing style will I hope extend around the accessibility of this piece for my reader, providing if nothing else a small departure from the sometimes-unyielding prose of conventional academic writing that dominates academic communications. With this all in mind, the importance of this type of writing as a mode of communication but also as a method of inquiry is clear, and thus serves as a meaningful methodological takeaway from this chapter.

To conclude, in responding to my first and second research questions this chapter has performed a critical diagnostic role in this thesis; exposing and understanding the barriers to self-governed housing delivery in Fort Good Hope. With that, I move to my next chapter to ask: what now? How can this system of housing governance in the Northwest Territories better promote ‘home’ and self-determination?

Chapter 5

Home as a site of resilience: Moving towards the self-determination of housing in Fort Good Hope, NWT

> I think our vision for housing is a good one. It's a good sound one, it comes from the community and like I said in the past, everything that should be done with housing should have the community perspective, and that's where they should start off from, every community should have a plan of its own on how they want to deal with housing.[1]

5.1. Introduction

Northern and Indigenous communities across Canada are confronting a housing crisis that threatens the health and wellbeing of their populations. Like many of these communities, the Dene First Nation of Fort Good Hope is seeking to address the chronic housing insecurity and increasing rates of homelessness that characterise this crisis with a community-led housing strategy and a realisation of their right to greater self-determination. In Fort Good Hope, these efforts towards self-determined housing are led by the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society (KGHS), whose work to advance a community driven vision for housing is helping to inform the community's ongoing negotiations for self-government. However, as discussed and explored in Chapter Four, the self-governed housing efforts of the KGHS are hindered by both localised and systemic barriers encountered in the NWT's processes of housing delivery.

The inadequacies of decontextualised northern housing policy, rooted in the colonial legacies of historical social welfare and housing interventions in Canada, have been well-documented,[2] as has the call for policy to centre Indigenous conceptualisations of home and practices of homemaking.[3] Meanwhile, the inherent right of First Nations such as Fort Good

[1] Tobac, A. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.

[2] Carter, T. (1993). Evolution of northern housing policy. Winnipeg: Institute of Urban Studies. Available: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/144470418.pdf (Accessed: 30/03/2021).; Collings, P. (2005). Housing Policy, Aging, and Life Course Construction in a Canadian Inuit Community. *Arctic Anthropology.* 42(2); Pp. 50-65.; Robson, R. (1995). Housing in the Northwest Territories: the Post-War Vision. *Urban History Review.* 24(1); Pp. 3-20.; McCartney, S., Herskovits, J. & Hintelmann, L. (2018). Failure by Design: The On-Reserve First Nations Housing Crisis and Its Roots In Canadian Evaluation Frameworks. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies.* 38(2); Pp. 101-124.

[3] Christensen, J. (2013). 'Our home, our way of life': Spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada. *Social & Cultural Geography.* 14(7); Pp. 804-828.; Christensen, J. (2016). Indigenous housing and health in the Canadian North: Revisiting cultural safety. *Health & Place.* 40; Pp. 83-90.; Lauster, N. & Tester, F. (2014). Homelessness and health in the crowded Canadian Arctic: Inuit experiences. In Hwang,

Hope to Indigenous self-determination—a right currently pursued in the NWT through the negotiation of self-government—should direct policy pathways that aim to improve Indigenous health and wellbeing,[4] though these pathways are undermined by the shortcomings of institutionalised self-government negotiations.[5]

To this end, recent scholarship has positioned community-led housing as part of the solution to the northern housing crisis and sought to advance the engagement of First Nations in housing delivery processes such as housing design[6] and needs assessment.[7] However, more work is needed to bring housing, home and self-determination into dialogue to inform future directions that support Indigenous aspirations for self-determined housing. Indeed, despite the recognition of First Nations' right to self-determination and self-government, and the understanding that communities are best placed to meet their own housing needs, the barriers experienced by the KGHS indicate that it is not yet known how the self-determination of housing is to be supported by the current system of housing delivery in the NWT.

In this chapter then, I use housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement to explore the dynamics and trajectories of self-determination and self-government in the NWT. I see self-government as a tool for localised control over decision-making processes that deliver

S.W., Guirguis-Younger, M. & McNeil, R. (Eds.), Homelessness and health in Canada (87-109). Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press.; Thistle, J. (2017). The National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Toronto: York University Press.; Penfold, H., Waitt, G., McGuirk, P. & Wellington, A. (2020). Indigenous relational understandings of the house-as-home: embodied co-becoming with Jerrinja country. *Housing Studies.* 35(9); Pp. 1-16.

[4] Walker, R. (2008). Aboriginal Self-Determination and Social Housing in Urban Canada: A Story of Convergence and Divergence. *Urban Studies.* 45(1); Pp. 185-205.; Auger, M., Howell, T. & Gomes, T. (2016). Moving toward holistic wellness, empowerment and self-determination for Indigenous peoples in Canada: Can traditional Indigenous health care practices increase ownership over health and health care decisions? *Canadian Journal of Public Health.* 107(4-5); Pp. e393-e398.; Katz, A., Enns, J. & Kinew, K.A. (2017). Canada needs a holistic First Nations health strategy. *CMAJ.* 189(31); Pp. E1006-E1007.; Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. (2019). "Northern Policy Hackathon: Recommendations On Housing". The Gordon Foundation. [online]. Available: https://gordonfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TGF_Booklet_Hackathon_Recommendations_2019.pdf (Accessed: 05/05/2020); O'Sullivan, D. (2019). "How to improve health outcomes for Indigenous peoples by making space for self-determination". The Conversation. [online]. Available: https://theconversation.com/how-to-improve-health-outcomes-for-indigenous-peoples-by-making-space-for-self-determination-120070 (Accessed: 01/06/2020).; Moodie, N., Ward, J., Dudgeon, P., Adams, K., Altman, J., Casey, D., Cripps, K., Davis, M., Derry, K., Eades, S., Faulkner, S., Hunt, J., Klein, E., McDonnell, S., Ring, I., Sutherland, S. & Yap, M. (2020). Roadmap to recovery: Reporting on a research taskforce supporting Indigenous responses to Covid-19 in Australia. *Australian Social Policy Association.* 56; Pp. 4-16.

[5] Irlbacher-Fox, S. (2009). Finding Daasha: Self-Government, Social Suffering, and Aboriginal Policy in Canada. UBC Press: Vancouver, Toronto.; Walker, R. & Barcham, M. (2010). Indigenous-inclusive citizenship: The city and social housing in Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. *Environment and Planning A.* 42(2); Pp. 314-331.; Stacey, R. (2018). The Dilemma of Indigenous Self-Government in Canada: Indigenous Rights and Canadian Federalism. *Federal Law Review.* 46(4); Pp. 669-688.

[6] Larcombe, L., Coar, L., Singer, M., Denechezhe, L., Yassie, E., Powderhorn, T., Antsanen, J., Avery Kinew, K. & Orr, P. (2020). Sekuwe (My House): building health equity through Dene First Nations housing designs. *International Journal of Circumpolar Health.* 79(1); Pp. 1717278.

[7] McCartney, S., Herskovits, J. & Hintelmann, L. (2021). Developing occupant-based understandings of crowding: a study of residential self-assessment in Eabametoong First Nation. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*. 36(2); Pp. 645–662.

housing in a community—effectively a tool to formalise the type of community-led housing efforts currently being made by the KGHS. In contrast, self-determination equates to the broader capacity to determine what those decision-making processes are, or in other words the ability to decide how housing gets delivered in a community and thus direct the process through which home can be developed. As such I engage in this chapter with self-determination as the bigger, long-term goal for Indigenous communities, and with self-government as a process that can advance progress towards it. With this in mind, I am interested here in how Indigenous conceptualisations of home and pathways towards the self-determination of housing can be supported by the system of housing governance in the NWT. To this end, this chapter draws on material gathered during a series of in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted with personnel involved in the delivery of housing in the NWT, and seeks to respond to the third research question of this thesis: (3) How might housing policy and current structures of governance be adapted to better support 'home' as it is articulated in Fort Good Hope? I also provide the content for considering research question four – how is housing policy itself an 'active site of engagement'[8] for understanding the dynamics of self-determination in the Northwest Territories? Seeing and using housing in Fort Good Hope as a site of relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways and epistemologies, is precisely what has allowed me to understand the barriers experienced by the KGHS that stand to obstruct self-determination of housing in the NWT. Thus, I will directly address this research question in Chapter Six by reflecting on the work I do in this chapter.

This chapter argues that self-government as it is offered in the current system of NWT governance may not be sufficient to achieve self-determination in housing and deliver housing solutions that reflect Indigenous conceptualisations of home. That is because self-government focuses on Indigenous communities obtaining control over decision-making processes, but in a system that they do not define. For self-determination in housing Indigenous communities require control over housing delivery processes that they define. To make this argument I start by exploring interviewee perspectives on home and the self-government of housing, revealing conflicting understandings between Indigenous and non-Indigenous representatives. Despite this difference, there is a consensus amongst interview participants, that the capacity of Indigenous communities to engage with the current system of housing delivery and self-government could be increased with more community control, more efficient governance, and

[8] Todd, Z. (2014). Fish pluralities: Human-animal relations and sites of engagement in Paulatuuq, Arctic Canada. *Études/Inuit/Studies*. 38(1-2); Pp. 217–238.

by listening to communities. In the following discussion I take these results and confront the assumption of self-government as the pathway to self-determination in the NWT. While changes to the current system can increase community capacity to participate in it, I find that this system and the version of self-government offered within it cannot support the interconnections which underpin Indigenous conceptualisations of home and self-determination. As such I look to Indigenous home as a framework for imagining and planning an alternative politics of self-determination in the NWT.

5.2. Results: Moving towards home and self-determined housing

While there may in theory be multiple pathways towards Indigenous self-determination, in practice the self-determination of housing in the Northwest Territories currently means community-led or self-governed housing within the existing system of governance. Having previously identified in Chapter Four the systemic barriers that hinder community-led housing efforts in Fort Good Hope, I now explore the ways in which housing governance in the NWT can support this work and seed space for the pursuit of Indigenous home. Interview data presented in the following sections emphasises the importance of self-governed housing that is rooted in an Indigenous conceptualisation of home, and offers a series of changes to the current governance system that would increase support for community-led and self-governed housing.

5.2.1. Conceptualising self-governed housing

The series of interviews I conducted revealed a tension between the self-governance of housing that remains situated within the current intergovernmental housing system, and the self-determination of housing rooted in Indigenous community values and conceptualisations of home. For interview participants in Fort Good Hope self-governed housing is pursuing home; it is independence from the territorial government; it is having the control to direct funding towards problems identified by residents; and it is using housing as a springboard for social programming. Arthur, James and Wanda of the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society outline hopes for a self-governed and sustainable future of housing in which they have multi-year funding for programs, can provide access to land tenure for residents' homemaking practices, and are able to facilitate increased opportunities for homeownership. In a similar vein, for Angela Grandjambe, Manager of the Local Housing Organisation in Fort Good Hope, the self-government of housing is about community control over decision-making.

> I really have hope for [the self-government of housing]… Before I retire I'd like to see the community doing their own programs, running the whole housing under

> one roof and taking care of the needs of the community. They would know the needs in the community much clearer than somebody in Norman Wells or Yellowknife… If you make that decision in the community, seeing the needs and what needs to be done and what needs to be fixed up, I would say we'd be much better. So, I have hope that the community will develop and run their own program. Housing under one roof and take care of the needs of the community, I really have hope for that.[9]

Angela expresses a vision of self-governed housing in the community that centres on self-building, and increasing opportunities for residents to develop their own homes as they did under the Homeownership Assistance Program in the 1980s. For Angela, the sustainability of the log homes that were self-built under this program, and have been lived in for 37 years now, combined with the pride and independence of this pathway to homeownership should characterise community self-governed housing in Fort Good Hope. This vision also reflects the importance of homeownership to the community of Fort Good Hope, continuing the historical legacy that began in the 1970s whereby owning one's home instead of renting became strongly associated with pride and freedom. The desire to promote self-building in Fort Good Hope is grounded in the aspirations of the community expressed by the KGHS to be more self-sufficient, and specifically more independent from the territorial government.

Moving away from the ways of the territorial government is also an important step towards self-governed housing for Jason Snaggs, community-based housing advocate and YKDFN CEO at the time of interviewing. In many ways, the directions of YKDFN's community-led housing strategy stem directly from critiques of the NWTHC and a need to fill the gaps left by its work. Jason outlined the need to build houses that are appropriate for the climate and culture; to reduce the cost of owning and maintaining a home; to create a sense of community when families gather at people's homes; and to engage with members and contractors that live within the community to participate in the construction of these houses so that they have "sweat equity in something that belongs to them and that's been developed and designed by them".[10] To this end, for Jason and the YKDFN self-governed housing also means assessing housing success in a way determined by the community, with criteria developed around such factors as cultural appropriateness, suitability in climatic conditions and the longer-term path it enables, rather than the NWTHC's viewing of success through number of units built. Ultimately, self-governed housing from Jason's perspective means positioning housing as part of a longer-term

[9] Grandjambe, A. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, telephone.

[10] Snaggs, J. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.

and holistic plan for the community, and not a reaction to heightened moments of need or crisis. For the YKDFN this larger plan incorporates social and mental health and wellness support for residents, recreation centres, a cultural centre, and financial training and education to prepare homeowners.

Overall, for these interviewees, self-governed housing means realising home, and thus the practicalities of self-governed housing for them are oriented around having community control and the ability to do things their way. As James, Arthur, Wanda, Angela, and Jason all outline in their respective communities, home is ownership and independence, safety and health, or feeling pride in building and maintaining a space to connect with culture and family. Current community-led housing and the future self-government of housing in both Fort Good Hope and the Yellowknives Dene First Nation means centring home and in this way building towards the self-determination of housing, because home changes the values that are given to housing as it fits within the socio-cultural constellation of a community.

Interviewees based in Yellowknife and working for the territorial government agree with the practical requirements of self-governed housing discussed by community-based participants in their calls for increased community control over housing-related processes and decision-making. However, the broader framework through which self-governed housing is conceptualised by these interviewees differs significantly, as they understand self-government as a transfer of the current housing delivery process to community hands. GNWT interviewees suggest that there is a great disconnect between the future aspirations for self-governed housing expressed by community-based interviewees, and the practical abilities of communities to engage with housing delivery.

One participant with extensive experience working for the housing corporation commented that, for communities to realise their aspirations of self-governed housing, they must find ways to navigate the challenging geographies of housing delivery in the NWT, including the seasonality of employment, the high cost of materials and labour, the lack of skilled professionals living in smaller communities, and the high cost of shipping and construction. Moreover, for two more interviewees and employees of the housing corporation, grappling with these realities of housing delivery in the NWT demands a slower transition to self-government, with a need for territorial government intervention where Indigenous governments do not have the capacity or decide not to take on all aspects of delivering housing. For both of these participants self-governed housing means the transfer of the Housing

Corporation's current role as landlord to Indigenous communities. With such a perspective, they consider self-governed housing an overwhelming model of delivery that has the potential to burden Indigenous communities and organisations with problems that are currently the responsibility of the GNWT. Their dominant framing of self-governed housing through its potential challenges rather than the space it offers for Indigenous resurgence, does not necessarily infer a common perspective of the territorial government, but it does provide insight into the epistemological contestation involved with pathways to self-government in the NWT.

Indeed, Associate Deputy Minister of the NWTHC James Fulford contributes a critical perspective on territorial-community housing relations, conceptualising self-governed housing as an Indigenous right and challenging the institutionalised form it has taken in the NWT: "I think maybe we've been unduly focused on the law passing and less about the very practical ways that we can work together to help advance those aspirations".[11] Here James makes an important challenge to the GNWT's status quo, reminding us that the Indigenous right to self-government, and to that end self-determination, is not synonymous with the state-led processes of achieving self-government that have become the centre of self-determination actions and dialogues in the NWT. He posits that the obtaining of funding and subsequent application of community-led housing ideas exhibited by the KGHS, demonstrates that the self-determination of housing can progress outside of the law-making framework of the GNWT's self-government mandate. Conceptualising self-governed housing as an inherent right with multiple pathways to its realisation, is a significant and critical departure from its conceptualisation by other GNWT employees as predominantly a challenge to communities' capacities. James' perspective also shows that state actors are not unitary in their thoughts around self-government and thus there are some potential avenues for renegotiating territorial-community housing relations.

The conceptualisation of self-governed housing informs how its various pieces are brought together and thus how it is set out to be moved forward and supported. This section has explored the understanding presented by community-based interviewees of self-governed housing as a tool to gain community control and advance the values of home that underpin self-determination. Other interviewees present the contrasting understanding of self-governed housing as a mechanism that keeps housing delivery operating within the current system albeit in community hands. These opposing understandings along with James Fulford's

[11] Fulford, J. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.

conceptualisation of self-government as an Indigenous right that need not be institutionalised, shows the tensions around what self-government means just within this interview series. Collectively, the data presented in this section invites reflection and consideration around what self-governed housing is, what different conceptualisations make possible, and particularly how those conceptualisations may be bounded by the current system. Ultimately, space must be made to support the different forms of what self-governed housing means to Indigenous communities and consider these visions outside of the current housing delivery system.

5.2.2. Using "home" to understand the self-determination of housing

Community-based interviewees place a holistic, Indigenous conceptualisation of home at the centre of their aspirations for self-determination in housing because home shifts the values and priorities associated with housing. Previous research conducted in the NWT has identified the connection of self-determination to the concept of home along lines of physical, mental and cultural wellbeing.[12] For interviewees in this study, 'home' is the centre of the life of your family, the land, a space to practice traditional activities like working on wood and contribute to your home. It is stability for a community, empowerment, pride, wellbeing, and it gives you the capacity to be a contributing member of your community. Furthermore, interviewees position housing as a space in which home is built and sustained, viewing home as a feeling that can be nurtured within the physical structure of a house.

Jason Snaggs suggests that a house is "a social and psychological centre of peoples' lives and… plays a critical role in the wellbeing of the individual or family that lives within the community, that lives within that house".[13] Home is also nurtured on the land, with education and employment, and by connecting to language and cultural traditions. In this way the concept of home captures the connections between physical shelter and family, culture, physical health and mental, social and economic wellbeing.

Housing as a space in which to build home is positioned as a foundational social support in Fort Good Hope by James, Arthur and Wanda of the KGHS. "I don't know, we seem to be like the ones… having to fix a lot of the issues. I mean… how did that come to be?... we just took on housing! How is it that all the social things are on our plate as well?"[14] As these remarks from Arthur show, their work has led the KGHS to a shared understanding of housing as a

[12] Christensen. Indigenous housing and health.
[13] Snaggs, J. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.
[14] Tobac, A. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.

significant determinant of social landscapes, which was a central theme that underlay our interview discussion.

> When we're talking about housing, you're talking about the social aspects like, you know, the health of people, the mental health, physical health, emotional health, all of these kind of things rely a lot on housing, having a house where you can actually go… if you have a place to rest and sleep you can work the next day… you can further your education… if you have your own apartment you can probably do really well as a young person and thereby learn to be a contributing member of the community or something.[15]

These comments capture the holism that characterises home and housing in Fort Good Hope, shedding light on the web of social issues and community values that the KGHS have to consider when dealing with housing. These connections are particularly evident when considering young people in Fort Good Hope, for whom the lack of adequate houses in which to establish home has become a significant barrier to personal development, leaving many suffering from addictions and a devastating rise in deaths by suicide. Other interviewees also reinforced these connections between housing and wellbeing, employment, education, justice and correctional processes, community leadership, esteem, and pride.

This holistic perspective on housing and home makes a strong case for a more holistic approach to governing housing. For both Jason Snaggs and Sandra Turner, former specialist in northern housing with the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, housing policy and programming in the NWT needs to shift significantly in order to recognise home. Both agree that in order to deliver homes instead of housing units, control over housing decisions and programming needs to be with the communities who know what home means for them, which requires the NWTHC to step back from its role as landlord or controller. For Jason, such a shift in the balance of power would facilitate First Nations expansion of housing programming beyond the physical provision of units to include manual and financial training, education, and wraparound supports for wellness that enable community members to participate in the building of their homes, to build with their cultural values in mind, to own and maintain their homes, and to take pride in their homes. Meanwhile, speaking from 31 years of experience with housing in Fort Good Hope, Angela Grandjambe believes that delivering housing in the community must begin with an understanding that your home is where you are with your family, where you are with your grandchildren. Such a starting point would alter the trajectory of housing delivery processes, such as housing assessment, which Angela explains is

[15] Tobac, A. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.

problematically based on income. In fact, Jason Snaggs, James Caesar and Arthur Tobac in addition to Angela all speak in their interviews to the issue of income-based housing provision, through which residents are essentially disincentivized to find full employment because raising their income often makes them ineligible for income support or subsidised housing and leaves them unable to afford the full market rent, as well as food for their family, and educational support for their children. Navigating such housing policy, people decide it is better to remain in subsidised housing and on welfare support.[16] In Fort Good Hope, Angela summarises, some applicants have too high an income to access social housing in the community, while the absence of market housing in the community means they are unable to get a bank loan for building their own home. And what if people do not have any income at all? In this way, income-based housing provision bears no consideration for the holistic conceptualisation of home as the centre of a family, rendering it instead as a technical process that sees housing just as a physical structure and fails to centre the very real needs of residents.

Angela further demonstrates the importance of starting policy directions with 'home' through commentary on the senior's complex that was constructed in Fort Good Hope and opened in March 2021. "The Elders say, I'd rather be in my own home with my own wood stove… Having my tepee, doing my hides, doing my tanning, and working on my traditional food in my tepee. They would rather have that than this new place."[17] Due to the subsequent refusal of some elders to move into the new complex, the NWTHC is having a hard time filling up the unit. To this end, Angela thinks that centring home goes hand in hand with community consultation to inform programming, as opposed to decisions being made in Yellowknife. She posits that if the complex was for young people it would be full – a need that could have been identified by listening to residents and understanding what is important to the community. Instead, a lack of community consultation and a resulting silence around the homemaking needs of residents, has produced an expensive new building that makes little progress towards meeting the housing needs of residents in Fort Good Hope. That is to say that such inadequacy of policy and programming is compounded by a housing delivery system in which decision-making is so far removed from the community to a place where meanings of home in Fort Good Hope are not well understood.

[16] The politics of this relationship between housing, employment, and income, while important, are beyond the scope of this research. For further details on this dynamic of housing policy in the NWT see: Christensen, J. (2017). No Home in a Homeland: Indigenous Peoples and Homelessness in the Canadian North. UBC Press: Vancouver.
[17] Grandjambe, A. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, telephone.

5.2.3. Increasing community capacity to engage with self-government

An Indigenous view of housing as home forces us to re-think how housing is governed. As such, home provides guidance for understanding and moving towards the self-determination of housing and the connections that characterise housing's place in social and governance landscapes in the NWT must be at the centre of community-led and future self-governed housing. Although interviewees do not share the same understandings of self-governed housing and home, they are united in calling for systemic change that would facilitate community-led housing efforts and increase the capacity of communities to participate in the NWT's current governance system. To speak of increasing community capacity here means building capacities amongst residents to engage with housing delivery processes, but it also means changing and moulding processes within the system around the community capabilities that already exist. I realise the tension that arises here between the desire of Indigenous communities to self-determine the processes and required capacities for delivering housing, and the calls from most interviewees to build community capacity for participating in the current system of housing delivery. Of course, this tension is part and parcel of the broader transition to self-determination that is unpaved and ongoing in the NWT, and reflects the conflict conveyed by most interviewees between desired changes and those perceived as realistic.

5.2.3.1. Housing need assessment and programming

In their calls for community-led and self-governed housing, interview participants present a need to shift control over housing delivery from the federal and territorial governments to communities themselves. Some respondents place particular importance on communities gaining control over the assessment of their housing needs, utilising their capacity to understand the response that is required, and determine housing options accordingly. Angela Grandjambe draws on her many years of experience in Fort Good Hope's LHO to understand what housing is required in the community, calling for responses to the housing needs of single adults as well as young families that are having fewer children. She suggests smaller, one or two-bedroom units would help provide housing options for most of the people currently on the waiting list for public housing in Fort Good Hope.

The roots of inadequate social housing options in Fort Good Hope lie for Angela in the Housing Needs Survey that the NWTHC bases most of its decision-making off; a survey that many community members struggle to participate in because they cannot access a computer or the internet and cannot print it out. Getting to the crux of the issue, Angela explains that those

most in need cannot take part, and thus the picture of housing need received by the NWTHC is far from complete. Surveys passing information from residents to the NWTHC are not necessary if the community has control over decision-making and can utilise their capacity to understand the context and need around their housing to inform housing decisions. "If you make that decision in the community, seeing the needs and what needs to be done and what needs to be fixed up, I would say we'd be much better" states Angela.[18]

Short of this devolution of control to local authorities, Angela suggests that better community consultation would improve NWTHC decision-making and provide community members with an avenue to exercise their understanding of what the housing need is and inform relevant solutions. Engaging in proper community consultation, listening to residents' stories, and responding to them is an essential step towards improving the territorial government's housing delivery and indirectly placing some control over assessing housing needs into the hands of the community. Furthermore, if surveys are used to gather data and assess housing needs, they should be conducted by community residents that are known and trusted, and who people will thus be willing to speak to, as opposed to strangers from Yellowknife that will be turned away at the door. As well as listening to residents, Angela and Sandra Turner both reflect on the need for the NWTHC to better engage with and listen to Local Housing Organisations such as the one Angela manages in Fort Good Hope, as well as other Housing Corporation personnel already in the community, all of whom hold a much more contextualised and therefore valuable understanding of local housing dynamics than employees based in Yellowknife.

Another interviewee, an employee of the GNWT, calls on the regulations and processes of housing delivery in the NWT to reflect northern contexts and the resources that are available in small and remote communities like Fort Good Hope. "There needs to be a northern Indigenous focus around how you roll out housing programs because when you look at what is in place right now, it's really just taking policy, federal CMHC policy, and just trying to implement it in a context that doesn't have the resources and it's not built for that type of context. So, it really needs to be something that is developed based on what resources exist in the community and then adapting policy and adapting funding."[19] One mechanism that would aid such a process they suggest is the development and use of northern building standards as

[18] Grandjambe, A. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, telephone
[19] GNWT Employee. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.

opposed to importing them from southern Canada. Subsequent housing policy and procedures could then be somewhat more contextualised to the nuances of northern living, accounting for climatic and cultural needs in housing design, and employment landscapes, available skillsets and access to materials during construction.

Meanwhile, most interviewees outline the need to increase community capacity in the skilled processes of housing delivery. Multiple employees of the Housing Corporation highlight the attention that must be directed towards increasing community capacity to engage with the NWT's system of housing delivery, such as in planning administration and trades involved with construction and maintenance. The Community Housing Plan Project provides some opportunity for such capacity building, through the employment of a community coordinator who receives training to engage with planning processes and knowledge of housing delivery in the NWT. Meanwhile, for Sandra Turner, one of the ways administrative capacities can be enhanced in communities is through the establishment of an overarching housing body or repository in the NWT that folks can tap into for information, resources and help, perhaps for example gaining insight into other projects and how other communities chose to address their housing challenges.

5.2.3.2. Funding

For James, Arthur and Wanda at the KGHS, it is the control over funding currently monopolised by the NWTHC that should be in the hands of communities. James tells the story of a call for proposals or bids issued by the NWTHC for the building of 34 modular units in communities around the NWT, part of the Housing Corporation's plan to use $60 million that the federal government had provided through the National Housing Co-Investment Fund a few years ago.[20] However, James says that the bid criteria sent out by the territorial government is "152 pages long and the process is complicated. You know, right now I don't know of anybody in the NWT that could qualify for that bid".[21]

Such a bid leaves only larger companies likely from southern Canada with the capacity to put a contract proposal together, so James suspects no one in the community will be hired in the process of delivering these units. Presenting an alternative process, James suggests Fort

[20] Gleeson, R. (2020). "$60M housing fund for N.W.T. remains untouched". CBC News. [online]. Available: $60M housing fund for N.W.T. remains untouched | CBC News. (Accessed 09/11/2021).; Tucker, A. (2021). "$60M housing fund for N.W.T. to be spent, 2 years after it was first announced". CBC News. [online]. Available: $60M housing fund for N.W.T. to be spent, 2 years after it was first announced | CBC News. (Accessed 09/11/2021).

[21] Caesar, J. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.

Good Hope be simply given their share of the allocated funding for community members to build their own houses, as opposed to the territorial government constructing homogenous modular units for different and unique communities in the NWT.

NWTHC and CMHC retiree Sandra Turner reflects on the social housing allocation the NWTHC has for each community, that usually materialises as two or three units a year. For Sandra this monetary allocation must be directed by the community: "let the community decide the configuration of what it is they need and how they want to run it".[22]

Funding needs to be in the hands of communities, for faster action that draws on local resources and skills for construction and for contextualised community needs to really be met. If you consider and compare the standardised modular units the territorial government plan to build and import into communities across the NWT, with the log homes built by Fort Good Hope residents during the HAP era designed individually to meet their nuanced needs, James' case is clear. Expressing an encouraging view on this, James Fulford, Associate Deputy Minister for the NWTHC, accepts that federal funding for housing does not need to flow through the territorial government, and the role of the housing corporation in this area should be instead to facilitate better access to funding for Indigenous governments, perhaps by assisting with the development of proposals and applications. The community are best placed to know what is required to meet their housing needs so they must be given control over funding and thus the capacity to implement these requirements.

Other interviewees reinforce this need for community control over funding and emphasise that it is control over unbounded and flexible source funding that is required, as opposed to funding that has already been siloed into separate departments and programs. Jason Snaggs sheds light on the extra challenges encountered by modern treaty and unsettled First Nations like Fort Good Hope and YKDFN respectively when attempting to stitch together funding for their housing programs. Without reserves or settled land tenure First Nations in the NWT are ineligible for some federal housing funding, due to inadequate funding administration structures which lack the contextualised understanding of Indigenous geographies necessary for distributing housing funding in the NWT.

Indeed, Jason suggests what is really needed is economic independence for First Nations, from the territorial and federal governments. "Wouldn't it be a novel idea if we owned our own

[22] Turner, S. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. June 2021, online.

housing? Built our own housing? …We could develop skills… we could develop jobs and cottage industries that would participate in eliminating unemployment and contribute to the well-being of the people within the territories".[23] The eventual acquisition of funds for YKDFN's community-led housing program shows that the money exists and is available for such endeavours, but the dispersed nature of these funds that have to be lobbied for and stitched together creates unnecessary obstacles to their use. Thus, it appears clear that funding for housing would be best administered and utilised if control over it lay more in the hands of communities.

One employee of the GNWT with experience working for the Housing Corporation, positions an integrated service delivery model as essential for recognising the interdependency of the NWT's social landscape that housing is situated within. Such a model would see a client focused version of program delivery, that follows the needs of the clients and supports them to have better outcomes, instead of being directed by a rigid mandate of the department and policy that a program derives from. However, this interviewee sees the significant challenge to integrated service delivery that is presented by government systems which separate funding out by departments. All the while funding is attached to specific profiles of homelessness, mental health and employment they posit as an example, communities are forced to go after the resources that support those priorities and will likely struggle to fund a more holistic approach to servicing their residents. Such a problem suggests that funding usually divided between different social services should instead be channelled as a whole and directly from the federal government to Indigenous governments.

5.2.3.3. Improved and integrated governance

Overall, interviewees highlight the need for less siloed and more efficient governance practices across the whole system. All interviewees acknowledge that the governance of housing in the NWT does not fall neatly within the remit of a single profile and department on housing, citing the interrelatedness between housing and issues in the NWT around land claims, employment, community economies, the lack of resources, and the lack of emergency infrastructure in remote communities.

Arthur Tobac of the KGHS comments on the inadequacy of the territorial government "separating themselves; the health department separates itself from housing or education… and

[23] Snaggs, J. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.

yet they're all interlaced between each other."[24] One interviewee employed by the NWTHC claims that in order to achieve housing progress and social development in the NWT, departments have to be combined in their initiatives. Meanwhile, James Fulford, tasked with leading the renewal of the Housing Corporation, also recognises that they need to be working cross-functionally rather than in silos, telling me of a new federal-territorial working group on housing. Multiple departments aim to work together to counteract the silos of housing governance, including Housing, ECE (Education, Culture and Employment), Health and Social Services, and Lands at the territorial government level; and ISC (Indigenous Services Canada), CIRNAC (Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada), NRCan (Natural Resources Canada) and CMHC (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation) at the federal level. As James notes, "it's quite the cast"[25] that's necessary for a comprehensive look at the governance of housing in the NWT. Thus, it becomes clear that not only are there practical interrelations that make it impossible to govern effectively in silos, but a sectoral governing system that separates housing from education, health, social services and employment is also unable to respond to the connections between these social entities that exist in Fort Good Hope and northern communities beyond.

Agreeing with this notion is one employee of the Housing Corporation for whom interconnected governance requires an improved flow of communication and understanding between territorial government departments and different governing entities. They suggest that arming everyone with a better understanding of what each piece of the governing system is doing would enable a more comprehensive approach to initiatives—an approach that is necessary in a context where delivering housing involves many different pieces such as land governance and the education of tradespeople in the territories. Further, this improved flow of communication must encompass communities, with James Fulford identifying the need to develop collaborative rather than paternalistic relationships with Indigenous governments and communities.

Understanding that territorial government decisions around housing have historically been used as a tool of colonisation and recognising that the ways of forming those decisions are sometimes disconnected from the need, James hopes the renewal of the Housing Corporation will see meaningful relationships with communities being duly prioritised. In fact, the recently

[24] Tobac, A. (2021). Interview with KGHS conducted by Aimee Pugsley. May 2021, online.
[25] Fulford, J. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.

established Community Housing Plan Project signals hope for NWTHC movement in this direction, as employees work in partnership with community leadership to develop housing plans that gather and outline information on housing need and data, community visions for housing futures, and applicable housing programs. As such, the housing plans should see NWTHC employees assisting and facilitating community-driven endeavours to define housing problems, consider solutions, and find the necessary funding. In this way, the project has also enabled an effective mechanism of feedback from communities to the NWTHC, with one interview participant noting the changes to income assessment for certain subsidised programs and to the design of doors in housing units that the Housing Corporation has made since listening to communities during the Community Housing Plan process.

In summary, the system of housing delivery in the NWT must change if it is to support self-governed housing. Interviewees call for increased community control and improved, more interconnected governance practices to make space for communities and their capabilities. Communities are best placed to understand and respond to their needs so should thus have the control and capacity to assess them and fund solutions. While it is acknowledged that communities need to build capacity in trade and administration skills to better participate in housing delivery and pursue self-governed housing, it is also clear that there are existing community capacities that the system must support.

5.3. Discussion: Towards an alternative politics for self-determined housing

The story of self-governed housing and home articulated through these results thus far, complicates the trajectory of self-determination and housing in the Northwest Territories. There is a significant difference between the self-government discussed by some interviewees which is bounded by the current system and has communities taking on the processes of current NWTHC-led housing delivery, and the self-government conceptualised by community-based interviewees which centres home and acts as a pathway to greater self-determination. While interviewees propose systemic changes that will support community-led housing and future self-government of housing within the current system, even with these changes the system offers little support for the social interconnections that underpin Indigenous values of home and aspirations for self-determination. In other words, there are changes that can increase Indigenous community control over current housing delivery processes, but those processes remain undefined by Indigenous communities and their conceptions of home. Thus, these results invite reflection on the suitability of currently assumed self-government pathways to

Indigenous self-determination in the Northwest Territories. This discussion draws on the contributions of critical Indigenous scholars who have challenged the extent to which self-government truly enables self-determination, to inform such reflection and make space to consider options for moving towards the self-determination of housing and home outside of the current system.

5.3.1. Self-government as a pathway to self-determination

Interview results reveal that the current system of NWT housing governance offers a limited version of self-government bounded by the existing process of housing delivery, which provides little support for home and self-determination. Interviewees highlight the need for systemic changes that would increase the capacity of communities to participate in housing processes and access this self-government, but these changes are not enough to support home and the self-determination conceptualised by community-based participants. They advocate for increased community control and modified procedures and regulations that would support some elements and values of home – some capacities and knowledge – but not all of them. Critically, there are no suggestions for changes that would support the holism which characterises interviewee understandings of home, despite interviewees locating housing in Fort Good Hope and the NWT in a deeply interconnected social landscape with land, education, culture, and wellbeing among other elements. In fact, interviewees recognise that certain aspects of the system make it unable to support housing governance informed by an interconnected Indigenous epistemology, such as the siloed provision of funding to separate departments and priorities. Thus, although increased community control would provide communities the space to design and deliver housing programs around an Indigenous understanding of home, the foundations of housing governance remain in a system that reflects the norms and ways of the settler state and leaves no space for Indigenous ways of thinking.

Contributions from critical Indigenous scholars suggest that the self-government bounded by the NWT's current system of housing governance is not the only pathway to the self-determination of housing. Such scholars document the constraints of settler-colonial state structures, legal frameworks, and imaginaries on the trajectories of self-determination and self-government, and highlight the need to challenge the state-defined field of possible pathways

through which these trajectories are curated.[26] Subject to particular critique are the politics of affirmative recognition that characterise the Canadian government's engagement with reconciliation processes such as Indigenous self-government, but which fail to disturb the sources of Indigenous dispossession found in settler colonial economic, governance, and cultural structures.[27] Ultimately, scholars outline a fundamental need to discuss, expand on, and diversify pathways to the self-determination of housing. Indeed, Associate Deputy Minister of the Housing Corporation James Fulford reminds us that Indigenous self-determination is not confined to the state-led processes and legal frameworks of self-government that have become the centre of self-determination actions and dialogues in the NWT. Of course, community-based interviewees also conceptualise a different form of self-government that departs from NWTHC influences and instead centres Indigenous home.

However, interviewees demonstrate the challenge of imagining possibilities for self-determination outside existing structures, expressing practicalities of self-governed housing that are limited to what is possible within the current system. Some participants made explicit this challenge when the only form of housing governance that has ever been in place has been administered by settler-colonial governments. For example, one NWTHC employee said, "I don't think anyone really has in their minds just yet what that looks like… of course it's my perspective as a settler that doesn't live in one of the communities, but it's that the housing corporation has just always been here and they've provided their housing… it would be quite a shift to move on from that I think".[28]

The work of Tania Murray Li[29] aids in understanding the imaginative limits at work in a colonial system and the challenge of seeing possible paths forward outside of the system you are a part of. Murray Li sheds light on the work of contemporary international development programs and pathways in Indonesia that merely reproduce the limitations of previous colonial governance and fail to disturb the structural conditions of problems and injustice. In doing so Murray Li problematises the colonial imaginaries and frameworks that define needs and

[26] Alfred, T. & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being Indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. *Government and Opposition.* 40(4); Pp. 597-614.; Irlbacher-Fox. Finding Daasha.; Simpson, L. (2011). Dancing on our turtle's back: Stories of Nishnaabeg re-creation, resurgence and a new emergence. Winnipeg, MB: Arbeiter Ring Publishing.; Coulthard, G. (2014). Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, MN.; Daigle, M. (2016). Awawanenitakik: The spatial politics of recognition and relational geographies of Indigenous self-determination. *Canadian Association of Geographers.* 60(2); Pp. 259-269.

[27] Coulthard. Red Skin, White Masks.; Shaw, D. Z. & Coburn, S. (2017). "The Colonial Politics of Recognition in Trudeau's Relationship with Indigenous Nations". [online]. Available at: https://www.e-ir.info/2017/09/07/the-colonial-politics-of-recognition-in-trudeaus-relationship-with-indigenous-nations/ (Accessed: 26/04/21).

[28] GNWT Employee. (2021). Interview conducted by Aimee Pugsley. July 2021, online.

[29] Murray Li, T. (2007). The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics. Duke University Press: Durham and London.

problems to justify and thus bound certain available interventions and responses. Being mindful of this critique highlights the need to create purposeful space for thinking about what is and what might be outside of the current housing system.

The discussion in interviews of community capacity to participate in housing delivery demonstrates the imaginative constraints of settler-colonial space that communities need to overcome in the NWT. Many participants expressed concerns for the lack of community capacity to engage with the current NWTHC processes of housing delivery. For Arthur and the KGHS, building community capacity in trades and administrative work is essential for self-governed housing delivery, with the travel and mobility restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic revealing to them how scarce that capacity is. This is a point agreed upon by other participants, with Sandra Turner problematising the lack of technical and knowledge capacity in communities, and the short timelines they are forced to operate within, that prohibits the utilising of sophisticated financing and planning tools in the housing delivery process. Meanwhile employees of the Housing Corporation highlight the challenge that communities face in the dearth of administrative and connectivity capacity to manage the records of land tenure or access government housing programs online.

Yet, if the current process of housing delivery leaves little space for Indigenous expertise and thus fails to support home and self-determination, one must question whether capacity to engage in it needs to be built, or if instead the process needs to change and perhaps be re-shaped around the capacities that do exist in communities. Scholars already mentioned have noted the shortfalls of pathways to Indigenous self-determination that are bounded by the structures of settler states. Others have added to this, problematising the subsequent state-like bureaucracies, forms of governance and ways of life which depart from their traditional forms, that First Nations have to develop in order to assert their sovereignty and access the powers legalised through modern Indigenous-State agreements.[30] That being said, we are reminded by Nicole J. Wilson[31] not to allow these critiques to erase the agency and resilience First Nations assert as they move towards their self-determination through participation in governance channels such as self-government made possible in settler colonial systems through mechanisms such as

[30] Nadasdy, P. (2003). Hunters and bureaucrats: power, knowledge, and aboriginal-state relations in the southwest Yukon. UBC Press: Vancouver.; Nadasdy, P. (2017). Sovereignty's Entailments: First Nation State Formation in the Yukon. University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division.; Alfred, T. (2005). *Wasase: Indigenous pathways of action and freedom*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.; Natcher, D.C. & Davis, S. (2007). Rethinking Devolution: Challenges for Aboriginal Resource Management in the Yukon Territory. *Society & Natural Resources*. 20(3); Pp. 271–279.

[31] Wilson, N.J. (2019). "Seeing Water Like a State?": Indigenous water governance through Yukon First Nation Self-Government Agreements. *Geoforum.* 104; Pp. 101-113.

comprehensive land claim agreements. Ultimately however, Wilson does concede, at least in the context of Yukon First Nations' efforts to develop self-governing water legislation, that the broader governance system within which they operate needs to be deeply transformed if elements of Indigenous epistemology are to be afforded legitimacy.

There are parallels here with the context of Indigenous efforts to self-govern housing delivery in the NWT then. While it is with great resilience that First Nations like Fort Good Hope work hard to navigate the system and build the community capacity to operate in it, perhaps at least some of these capacities are not necessary to build. Delivering housing in a different way—one grounded in Indigenous conceptualisations of home and connectedness—would alter the capacities that are required. It seems the case made by interviewees for building capacity in communities to engage in the NWT's housing delivery process falls back on the assumption that future housing delivery must follow its current form and Indigenous nations must "assume the trappings of the state".[32] Again, this signals a constraint of current settler state structures on the possible futures of housing in the NWT. All of this is to say that the current system offers support for the self-government of housing by giving communities control over processes, but makes little space to support the self-determination of housing that is underpinned by Indigenous epistemologies and communities' broader ability to decide. If the self-determination of housing would be best supported outside of the current governance system, space and targeted efforts must be made to imagine new possibilities.

However, in the same way that self-governed housing is currently limited to what is possible within the existing governance system, stepping outside that system to pursue the true self-determination of housing does not mean Indigenous nations escape from the state. Indeed, engaging with the self-government of housing in the NWT demonstrates that Indigenous nations are always and immediately entangled with the state under ongoing settler colonialism, even amidst moves towards self-governance. The existing version of self-government is a site of encounter between Indigenous nations and the state, and anything outside the current system of structures, regulations and procedures will also be a site of encounter with the state. With this in mind, the limitations of the state-led self-governed housing that is currently available in the NWT, bounded by what is possible within the state's existing governance system, reveal the challenges posed by this entanglement.

[32] Nadasdy. Sovereignty's Entailments. Pp.7.

5.3.2. "Home" as a framework for self-determined housing governance

Faced then with the need to make both imaginative and practical space for an alternative pathway to the self-determination of housing in the Northwest Territories, we might start to consider what this looks like. Whilst I am not willing or indeed able to make a claim as to the shape of possibilities that are founded in Indigenous epistemologies, this research does offer 'home' as a framework for developing them. The self-determination of housing demands that Indigenous communities have the ability to decide what the process of housing delivery is, referring us to the epistemological contexts in which such processes are determined. It is evident from the results discussed throughout this study that home as a cultural concept changes the values that are given to housing, capturing the holism and relationships at the heart of Indigenous housing and wellbeing. Thus, engaging with home as a governance concept makes way for Indigenous epistemologies to inform housing delivery processes. As such, using home as a framework for governance offers the means through which to reimagine with more autonomy the space in which Indigenous nations encounter the state as they move towards self-determination.

The concept of home as it is discussed throughout the social sciences and humanities has multiple meanings; it always takes us beyond housing as just a physical dwelling, but while some understand home as a source of identity and social reproduction or a space of control, others focus on home as a feeling, experience, or a "network of connections that do not rest in one place or self alone".[33] In this way home becomes a fluid concept, at once multiple in its subjectivity. This multiplicity extends to the Indigenous conceptualisations of home, which Jesse Thistle[34] presents broadly as "circles of interconnectedness that together form the heart of healthy Indigenous social and spiritual emplacement". It is the nuanced Indigenous understandings of home and homemaking falling within this definition and that capture

[33] Després, C. (1991). The Meaning of Home: Literature review and Directions for Future Research and Theoretical Development. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research.* 8(2); Pp. 96-115.; Robinson, C. (2002). I Think Home is More Than a Building: Young Home(less) People on the Cusp of Home, Self and Something else. *Urban Policy and Research*. 20(l): Pp. 27-38. Pp.9.; Blunt, A. & Dowling, R. (2006). Home. Taylor & Francis: Abingdon.; Moore, J. (2007). Polarity or Integration? Towards a Fuller Understanding of Home and Homelessness. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research.* 24(2); Pp. 143-159.; Brickell, K. (2012). 'Mapping' and 'doing' critical geographies of home. *Progress in Human Geography.* 36(2); Pp. 225-244.; Atkinson, R. & Jacobs, K. (2016). House, Home and Society. London, Palgrave HE UK, Macmillan Education.

[34] Thistle. National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness. Pp.15.

connections between social, physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing, that need to be centred in sustainable policy responses to northern and Indigenous housing crises.[35]

In Fort Good Hope, home is the space in which relations are nurtured: with one's wellbeing and self, with one's family and ancestors, with the community, with education and knowledge, with employment, and with the land. Housing then can provide a space for home to be built and sustained. For community-based interviewees in this study, home is plural and deeply connected to Indigenous self-determination, with results speaking to the holism, connections and relationships that characterise home, housing and wellbeing in Denendeh, and that must be recognised in a sustainable self-determined future of housing delivery.

While the results of this study line up with the body of established thinking around the socio-cultural work of home as a concept, they go beyond to also see meaning in Indigenous home as a governance approach. I argue that while we accept the concept of home should be used to shape what is delivered through a northern housing system, Indigenous home should also direct how it is delivered by disrupting the assumptions and ways of thinking surrounding northern housing governance. Home advances a more holistic approach to governing community development that recognises Indigenous views of the connections between housing and areas such as health, land, family, and education. The critical need to support these connections and the relational perspectives held by Indigenous peoples for sustainable and self-determined futures, has been well established by the vast body of literature that attends to Indigenous health and wellbeing. Broadly speaking, scholars find that in order to improve Indigenous health outcomes a holistic approach is necessary for the governance of health and wellbeing; promoting traditional healing practices, recognising the interconnected network of elements that shapes wellbeing in Indigenous epistemologies, and thus departing from an isolated biomedical understanding of health.[36] As such, this literature argues for Indigenous communities to have the resources and authority to realise a holistic approach, and effectively positions self-determination as an important distal determinant of health because it promises to

[35] Christensen. 'Our home, our way of life'.; Christensen. Indigenous housing and health.; Alaazi, D., Masuda, J., Evans, J. & Distasio, J. (2015). Therapeutic landscapes of home: Exploring Indigenous peoples' experiences of a Housing First intervention in Winnipeg. *Social Science and Medicine.* 147; Pp. 30-37.; Thistle. National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness.; Penfold, Waitt, McGuirk & Wellington. Indigenous relational understandings.

[36] Richmond, C.A.M.; Ross, N.A.; & Bernier, J. (2007). Exploring Indigenous Concepts of Health: The Dimensions of Métis and Inuit Health. *Aboriginal Policy Research Consortium International (APRCi).* Pp. 3-16.; Auger, Howell & Gomes. Moving toward holistic wellness.; Johnson, D., Parsons, M. & Fisher, K. (2021). Engaging Indigenous perspectives on health, wellbeing and climate change. A new research agenda for holistic climate action in Aotearoa and beyond. *Local Environment*. 26(4); Pp.477-503.

provide the conditions in which the governance of wellbeing can be underpinned by Indigenous epistemologies.

With the contributions of this literature in mind, I make here the same case for a holistic governance approach, anchored in housing rather than health, and suggest home provides the framework to develop such an approach. Lorna Fox[37] has worked to carry the concept of home and the meaning assigned to it through a wide range of academic inquiry, into the legal domain. Fox sees the need for a legal concept of home, to translate the personal yet often intangible values and terminology attached through understandings of it into actionable items in the realm of property law. I suggest that there is a similar opportunity within the context of northern housing governance, whereby the overarching and plural framework of home could be used to inform a contextualised and sensitive system of housing delivery in the Northwest Territories.

In Fort Good Hope it is clear that home provides direction towards housing delivery that recognises interconnections, with the KGHS using home as a framework for the community's current housing strategy to capture values of kinship, connectedness, and self-sufficiency that are central to the K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Dene epistemology. Furthermore, the community's self-management of the Homeownership Assistance Program in the 1980s bears some indication of what holistic housing governance might look like in Fort Good Hope. The programming was designed by the community to support multiple objectives rather than the isolated task of building log homes, assigning great importance to training and skill development by having residents participate in the construction processes. Additionally, in interviews discussed by Rees and Hulchanski in their report on the HAP in Fort Good Hope community members identify an opportunity within the provision of HAP housing to address social or health problems faced by residents that may inhibit their ability to care for and maintain their home. While there was no formal program within the community's management of the HAP to provide such assistance, some support for residents with alcohol addictions was provided by a Community Council member and social worker in effort to help them maintain their HAP houses. The recognition of and attempt to address the connection between housing and mental health or social issues in this case demonstrates the potential value that lies in community governance of a relationship or connection instead of isolating one element of an interconnected network.

[37] Fox, L. (2002). The Meaning of Home: A Chimerical Concept or a Legal Challenge? *Journal of Law and Society.* 29(4); Pp. 580-610.; Fox, L. (2006). Conceptualising Home: Theories, Law and Policies. Hart Publishing: Oxford; Portland, Oregon.

Fox finds that home is able to shape differently the discourse that determines the stories and solutions found in housing law and policy around the human experience of housing, rather than its physical and financial aspects.[38] In the realm of northern and Indigenous housing governance then, home offers space for the right stories to be told. Home provides the language, understanding, and ability to see and govern connections, such as those between housing and employment or education, rather than approaching nodes of the connected network like housing as separate, isolated entities. If colonial structures and imaginaries control and give rise to a set of available solutions by bounding the way a problem is framed and storied,[39] Indigenous home provides an alternative framework or set of imaginaries through which housing landscapes can be storied and subsequent solutions can be developed with Indigenous epistemologies and an understanding of multiplicity at the core.

The proposition to use home as a framework for housing governance connects directly to calls for alternative pathways for self-determination to be recognised and advanced outside of state-led self-government agreements. We see in section 5.2.1 the conceptualisation of self-governed housing by GNWT employees through its challenges and potential to burden Indigenous governments who engage with the version of self-government that currently exists in the NWT. Yet the hopes expressed by community-based participants for self-governed housing to realise Indigenous visions of home invites a different version of what self-government could be in the future. An Indigenous, anti-colonial conceptualisation of self-governed housing that is not state led provides the opportunity to promote already existing political, economic, social and spiritual structures that have remained mobilised by Indigenous peoples despite settler colonial systems and the suppression of Indigenous nationhood.[40] Indeed, the everyday transmission of Indigenous ways and knowledge, through storytelling traditions, Indigenous languages and the harvesting and sharing of country foods for example, offer an alternative and immediate politics for self-determination that is enacted through the everyday geographies of resilience and resurgence.[41] Such displays of Indigenous nationhood can pave the way for a version of self-governed housing that is guided by the legal orders,

[38] Fox O'Mahony, L. (2013). The Meaning of Home: From Theory to Practice. *International Journal of Law in the Built Environment*. 5(2); Pp. 156-171.
[39] Murray Li, T. (2007). The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics. Duke University Press: Durham and London.
[40] Simpson, A. (2014). Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States. Duke University Press, Durham, NC.; Manson, J. (2015). "Relational Nations: Trading and Sharing Ethos for Indigenous Food Sovereignty on Vancouver Island". MA Thesis. University of British Columbia, Vancouver.
[41] Daigle. Awawanenitakik.

governance structures and kinship relations that Indigenous epistemologies give rise to.[42] Currently, scholars argue that when conceived through western settler colonial frameworks the processes and structures of Indigenous-State reconciliation and Indigenous sovereignty establishment, such as self-government, force Indigenous governments and First Nations to conform with settler ways of thinking and being, and thus compromise their pathways to self-determination.[43] I suggest here that if home is used as a framework for developing the self-government of housing, an alternative process can be conceived that gives legitimacy to Indigenous ways through the recognition home bears for the connectedness of Indigenous epistemology, and thus a pathway to self-determination can be supported.

In order for such a framework to be utilised, the capacities that are required to engage with the self-government of housing must be challenged. Earlier I problematised the ideal of capacity building which interviewees presented as a necessary component of supporting self-governed housing delivery, in light of the underlying assumption that the only way to deliver housing in the NWT is through the current system. This is to say that a new version of the self-government of housing developed within the framework of home and underpinned by Indigenous epistemology, would allow space for different processes of housing delivery and thus require different capacities. Jason Snaggs speaks to such possibilities as he contrasts the Yellowknives Dene First Nation's community-led housing efforts with the territorial government's way of delivering housing. Demonstrating a process of land administration and acquisition that aligns with YKDFN epistemology, Jason explains that land in Ndilǫ and Dettah is assessed as suitable for building on through a navigation of the traditional knowledge that sheds light on the geology and ecological function of the land, its religious or spiritual significance, and a long-term community plan that dictates what and where it would be useful to construct. In this way, the capacity to acquire land through complex and bureaucratic processes and assess its suitability for construction using a land surveyor is shown to be out of place. The case for alternative land administration is reinforced by the comments from one employee of the Housing Corporation who highlights the difference in conceptualising land as a capitalist resource rather than an Indigenous right and relation, indicating the foundations and

[42] Borrows, J. (2010). Canada's Indigenous constitution. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.; Napoleon, V. (2013). Thinking about Indigenous legal orders. In Dialogues on Human Rights and Legal Pluralism, ed. R. Provost and C. Sheppard. New York, NY: Springer Netherlands. Pp. 229-245.

[43] Nadasdy. Hunters and bureaucrats.; Nadasdy. Sovereignty's Entailments.; Alfred. *Wasase: Indigenous pathways*.; Natcher & Davis. Rethinking Devolution.

underlying epistemological assumptions that must be challenged to make way for new processes.

The efforts of the KGHS to recognise interconnectedness and govern the social landscape of Fort Good Hope more holistically than what the current system facilitates, further demonstrates the readiness of Indigenous peoples to engage with the self-government of housing developed through a framework of home. In one example, following a complete assessment of needs by the KGHS based not just on housing but also on a consideration of education, employment, and physical, mental and emotional wellbeing; the recently completed Kádúyíle transitional home for men seeks to provide wraparound supports including on the land workshops required to enable those living in the home to become contributing members of the community. These acts demonstrate the resilience of existing Indigenous capacities which serve as mechanisms for the incremental assertion of self-determination, and thus should be allowed to shape processes of housing delivery in the NWT.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter has engaged with housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement to explore the trajectories of housing delivery and Indigenous self-determination in the Northwest Territories, using the stories of personnel involved in housing delivery gathered through a series of semi-structured in-depth interviews. Following the inquiry documented in Chapter Four that revealed significant barriers to Fort Good Hope's community-led housing efforts directed by the KGHS, this chapter sought to understand how the self-government of housing in the NWT can be better supported. These efforts began by looking at the way self-governed housing is conceptualised by interview participants, before exploring how the concept of home informs understandings of the self-determination of housing, and finally attending to the specific changes participants suggested for the current system of housing delivery to better support self-government and home. Yet in the process of exploring how home and self-government could be supported rather than hindered by the current housing delivery system, it became necessary to challenge the contributions of this system and indeed the form of self-government being negotiated in the NWT. As such, through the discussion section I problematised the assumption that the current form of self-governed housing being offered is the only pathway to the self-determination of housing in the NWT, by first unpacking the imaginative constraints of colonial structures that prohibit thinking of alternative pathways and

then offering home as an alternative framework for overcoming these constraints and finding ways towards the self-determination of housing outside of the current system.

The results and their discussion presented in this chapter tell a story of home as a physical space, but also as an epistemological or imaginative space, and the structures and systems that are positioned to create this space and promote home. In the initial sections, connections are drawn between home as it captures the holism of housing and self-determination. Yet, the self-government conceptualised by community-based participants that would see these connections supported finds conflict with the current form of self-government being negotiated and indeed the broader politics of self-determination that exists in the NWT. Suggestions that the NWT's housing delivery system must shift control from settler governments to communities and improve the efficiency of its governance, are agreed by all interviewees. Discussing ways that the NWTHC renewal will respond to such suggestions, James Fulford provides hope that the GNWT is prepared to make changes that will support community-led housing efforts. However, the practical inability of the system to give legitimacy to Indigenous epistemologies, namely understandings of connectedness and the holism with which home should be governed, suggests that the form self-government takes within a settler framework does not truly enable self-determination. Therefore, the discourse around self-governed housing as it exists currently in the NWT being the only pathway to the self-determination of housing, is problematic. In other words, self-government under the current system does not beget self-determination.

To make this argument, this chapter draws on the critical work of those challenging the current politics of self-determination and the subsequent state-led structures intended to establish Indigenous sovereignty, for their failure to disrupt the foundations of Indigenous dispossession and their forcing of First Nations to conform to settler frameworks.[44] Combining such work with the finding that self-governed housing is currently limited to what is possible within the existing system, makes the case for space to be made for Indigenous peoples to imagine, voice and plan for alternative pathways to the self-determination of housing. To aid in this effort this research considers the concept of Indigenous home as a framework for developing such plans; for Indigenous understandings and everyday geographies of home continually serve to enact Indigenous self-determination and provide the resurgent space to imagine, think and act in line with Indigenous epistemologies.

[44] Nadasdy. Hunters and bureaucrats.; Nadasdy. Sovereignty's Entailments.; Alfred. *Wasase: Indigenous pathways*.; Natcher & Davis. Rethinking Devolution.

Overall, this chapter has demonstrated the clear value of bringing housing and self-determination into dialogue, and the need for further such inquiry, raising questions that are essential for guiding the sustainable unfolding of both trajectories. Ultimately, it seems that while changes can be made to the process through which housing is currently delivered in the NWT in order to better support self-governed housing, the future of northern, self-determined housing exists outside of the current delivery system and engaging with home as both a cultural concept and governance approach provides the opportunity to move towards this future.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

Home is increasingly being centred in northern and Indigenous housing dialogues and policy circles as essential for informing sustainable housing futures in northern Canada.[1] The capture of home that extends beyond physical structures to relationships with the land, community, culture, physical and mental wellbeing for example, demands northern housing policy depart from the inadequate form it has taken since its conception in the mid-20th century when the settlement of Indigenous peoples by the Canadian government was accelerated. Today, with rising rates of housing insecurity and homelessness shaping a housing crisis across northern Canada, community-led housing options that prioritise Indigenous understandings of home are being positioned as something of a guiding light in discussions around solutions. The K'ásho Got'ı̨ne Housing Society is responsible for implementing the community-led housing strategy of Dene First Nation Fort Good Hope in the Northwest Territories and have received significant attention for their hard work and innovative efforts to date.[2] For Fort Good Hope though, these efforts are not isolated to the improved provision of housing as they align with a broader aspiration for self-determination while the community engage in the negotiation of a community-based Self-Government Agreement with the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada.

However, the obstacles and barriers that have been experienced by the KGHS since its work began in 2016 demonstrate that the NWT's current system of housing delivery has not been responsive to calls for greater self-determination in housing. Simultaneously, as Indigenous peoples in Canada strive to assert their nationhood and right to self-determination through the settler state-provided structures of Modern Land Claim Agreements and subsequent Self-Government Agreements, critical Indigenous scholars are challenging the assumption of this

[1] Christensen, J. (2013). 'Our home, our way of life': Spiritual homelessness and the sociocultural dimensions of Indigenous homelessness in the Northwest Territories (NWT), Canada. *Social & Cultural Geography.* 14(7); Pp. 804-828.; Christensen, J. (2016). Indigenous housing and health in the Canadian North: Revisiting cultural safety. *Health & Place.* 40; Pp. 83-90.; Thistle, J. (2017). The National Definition of Indigenous Homelessness in Canada. Canadian Observatory on Homelessness. Toronto: York University Press.

[2] Sibley, S. (2021). "Fort Good Hope housing group wins national award". Cabin Radio. [online]. Available at: Fort Good Hope housing group wins national award (cabinradio.ca) (Accessed: 25/01/2022).

pathway.[3] If such structures force Indigenous Nations to "assume the trappings of the state" then we must question how constructive they really are for progressing towards true Indigenous self-determination.[4]

Much of the literature on northern and Indigenous housing has so far neglected to bring housing together with self-determination and self-government, and thus create any space for considering critical questions—both practical and conceptual—around the future of northern and Indigenous housing. This thesis therefore set out to illuminate the system of housing governance in the NWT, unpack how it stands to support or hinder the self-government of housing, and explore how the self-determination of housing could be better supported. To this end, it uses housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement through which to investigate the story of self-determination in the NWT. To realise these objectives, I used a combination of policy scoping, archival research, creative writing, and remote, semi-structured in-depth interviews with key personnel involved in NWT housing delivery. Through these methods and objectives, I sought to aid research partners at the KGHS in their work by gathering the information needed to answer their questions, such as: Why is money for housing from the Federal government not making its way into the community? Why are there hold ups with the Department of Lands? How do we get more money for building our own houses, or more cabins out on the land?

6.2. Summary of Results

In Chapter Four, I mapped the process through which housing comes to be delivered in Fort Good Hope using interview data and a close reading of historical and current policy documents, grey literature, and media commentaries—the outputs of which were then unravelled and pieced together using a creative, journalistic method of writing. The delivery of housing in the NWT was traced through territorial government programming and priority setting, the provision of funding by the federal and territorial governments, and the processes of land acquisition, planning, and construction. Analysis of this process aligned with existing critiques of NWT housing delivery, revealing a top-down and ineffective system of housing governance

[3] Alfred, T. & Corntassel, J. (2005). Being Indigenous: Resurgences against contemporary colonialism. *Government and Opposition.* 40(4); Pp. 597-614.; Alfred, T. (2005). *Wasase: Indigenous pathways of action and freedom*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press.; Simpson, L. (2011). Dancing on our turtle's back: Stories of Nishnaabeg re-creation, resurgence and a new emergence. Winnipeg, MB: Arbeiter Ring Publishing.; Coulthard, G. (2014). Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, MN.

[4] Nadasdy, P. (2017). Sovereignty's Entailments: First Nation State Formation in the Yukon. University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division. Pp.7.

that holds little space for community voices, priorities, and perspectives, and fails to support Indigenous conceptualisations of home. Further still, the encounters of the KGHS with this system revealed barriers to its work and demonstrated that community-led and future self-governed efforts to improve housing delivery in the NWT and support home are hindered rather than promoted by the current governance system. The mechanisms that keep control over land, funding, and decision-making largely out of Indigenous government and community hands were problematised, alongside the sectoral nature of the governing system that is unable to support the holism and interconnectedness of Indigenous conceptualisations of home and ways of thinking. Meanwhile the significant practical and administrative capacity demands attached to land acquisition, funding proposals, and planning regulations flagged the overriding complexity and inaccessibility that characterises the system. Overall, Chapter Four showed that the current system through which housing in the NWT is governed makes it very difficult for First Nations like Fort Good Hope to exercise any real control or self-determination over housing and home.

Responding to the identification of these community-led housing barriers, in Chapter Five I studied interviews conducted with key personnel involved in housing delivery at the community, territorial and federal government levels to investigate the future of self-governed housing delivery and more broadly of self-determination in the NWT. Interview data shed light on a critical difference between the self-government of housing that exists within the NWT's current governance system, and the self-government of housing envisioned by community-based interviewees that is rooted in Indigenous community values and conceptualisations of home and forms a pathway to self-determination. Through participants' stories home emerged as a central concept in the formulation of Indigenous self-determined housing directions, capturing the interconnectedness of housing in Fort Good Hope and the NWT and positioning housing as a space in which home can be developed. Interviewees also provided a series of suggestions to build community capacity or revise systemic procedures in needs assessment, programming, funding, and overall governance integration, that would enable community participation in housing delivery and the self-government of housing that is offered within the current governance system. Overall, the results discussed in Chapter Five show that the current system of governance in the NWT proffers a limited version of self-government bounded by the existing processes of and framework for housing delivery, which provides little support for self-determination and Indigenous conceptualisations of home. In this way the current system can offer support for the self-government of housing by shifting control over processes to

communities, but it is unable to support the self-determination of housing that is underpinned by Indigenous epistemologies and communities' broader ability to decide. Thus, self-government, while necessary, may not be sufficient to achieve self-determination in housing and deliver housing solutions that reflect Indigenous conceptions of home.

Complicating the assumption of state-led self-governed housing in the NWT is important, to make discursive space for and give legitimacy to Indigenous sovereignty assertion and self-determination outside of state-defined pathways. However, it also forces us to confront the reality and challenge that Indigenous nations and the state are entangled in any future of self-determination. Self-government in the NWT is a site of encounter between First Nations and the state and pursuing the self-government of housing outside the NWT's current system of governance does not mean the state disappears. As such, in the discussion of Chapter Five results this study proposes that home can be used not only as a cultural concept but also as a governance framework, to reimagine the space of self-determination in which Indigenous nations encounter the state. Home as it is understood by interviewees provides the language and a sense of the connections that characterise housing in Fort Good Hope needed to discuss a form of northern housing governance that is different from its current state and encourage a more holistic approach. In this way, home provides a framework that tells different stories and holds different priorities, that capture the values of kinship, connectedness, and self-sufficiency which are at the core of Indigenous epistemology, and that makes way for aligning solutions to be developed.

The results and findings presented in this thesis and summarised here serve to connect in the literature the already deeply intertwined practical trajectories of self-determination and housing in the Northwest Territories. The critical lack of work bringing Indigenous self-determination, northern housing and home into direct dialogue leaves academic literature failing to reflect the discursive landscape constructed by the grey literature outputs of Indigenous and territorial governments, Indigenous organisations, and the United Nations.[5] For such stakeholders, knowing and supporting the connections between housing and self-

[5] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. (2019). Inuit Nunangat Housing Strategy. https://www.itk.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019-Inuit-Nunangat-Housing-Strategy-English.pdf ; Northern Housing Forum. (2019). Northern Housing Policy Recommendations. [online]. Available at: https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/polar-polaire/documents/pdf/northern-housing-forum/NHF%20-%20Policy%20recommendations%20-%20EN%20-%20FINAL.pdf (Accessed: 07/02/2020).; Northern Policy Hackathon Participants. (2019). "Northern Policy Hackathon: Recommendations On Housing". The Gordon Foundation. [online]. Available: https://gordonfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/TGF_Booklet_Hackathon_Recommendations_2019.pdf (Accessed: 05/05/2020); United Nations. (2019). "Report on the right to adequate housing of Indigenous Peoples". [online]. Available at: A/74/183 - E - A/74/183 - Desktop (undocs.org) (Accessed: 29/01/2022).

determination is essential for the sustainable development of both trajectories. The results support the case made in Indigenous health literature for continuous funding and real transfers of control to facilitate holistic approaches to governance, the assertion of Indigenous self-determination and/or self-government, and thus the improvement of welfare service delivery and health outcomes.[6]

Further to this, the barriers to Fort Good Hope's community-led housing efforts identified in Chapter Four builds on existing scholarship that problematises colonial and decontextualised First Nation housing policy and delivery,[7] and extends this commentary to the mapped system of NWT housing delivery. The specific focus that is dedicated to this system and how it could better support the self-determination of housing in the NWT also responds to the gap in between calls for northern housing policy and governance to support contextualised programs and Indigenous conceptualisations of home, and their practical implementation.

In addition, using housing as a site to engage with self-determination in the NWT provided valuable space in this thesis to contribute to challenges of the state-led institutional arrangements in place for Indigenous peoples to exercise their right to self-determination. The findings discussed in Chapters Four and Five support the observations made by scholars that self-government as it is conceived in a settler framework leaves no space for engaging with Indigenous ways of thinking and being. Further still, the findings build on this scholarship and add to it a new layer; with the application of its critique to the self-government aspirations and structures that are set to guide the future of housing in the NWT. In a similar way, Wilson[8] adds the context of water governance in Yukon First Nations.

Having challenged the assumption of self-government, in the discussion section of Chapter Five I considered an alternative politics for self-determination. In an alignment with Daigle's[9] call to attend to the "diverse ways Indigenous peoples think about and live self-determination outside and/or alongside formal state and intergovernmental structures", this thesis draws a link

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[6] Walker, R. (2008). Aboriginal Self-Determination and Social Housing in Urban Canada: A Story of Convergence and Divergence. *Urban Studies.* 45(1); Pp. 185-205.; Moodie, N., Ward, J., Dudgeon, P., Adams, K., Altman, J., Casey, D., Cripps, K., Davis, M., Derry, K., Eades, S., Faulkner, S., Hunt, J., Klein, E., McDonnell, S., Ring, I., Sutherland, S. & Yap, M. (2020). Roadmap to recovery: Reporting on a research taskforce supporting Indigenous responses to Covid-19 in Australia. *Australian Social Policy Association.* 56; Pp. 4-16.

[7] McCartney, S. (2016). Re-thinking housing: From physical manifestation of colonial planning policy to community-focused networks. *Urban Planning.* 4(1); Pp. 20-31.; McCartney, S., Herskovits, J. & Hintelmann, L. (2021). Developing occupant-based understandings of crowding: a study of residential self-assessment in Eabametoong First Nation. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment.* 36(2); Pp. 645-662.

[8] Wilson, N.J. (2019). "Seeing Water Like a State?": Indigenous water governance through Yukon First Nation Self-Government Agreements. *Geoforum.* 104; Pp. 101-113.

[9] Daigle, M. (2016). Awawanenitakik: The spatial politics of recognition and relational geographies of Indigenous self-determination. *Canadian Association of Geographers.* 60(2); Pp. 259-269. Pp.259.

between the resilient and existing geographies of Indigenous home, and the subsequent everyday assertion of the self-determination of housing. To this end, and in an extension of the scholarly dialogue around Indigenous home, I made the case for home to be used as a governance framework as well as a cultural concept to develop a form of self-government or alternative pathway to self-determination cultivated by Indigenous stories and epistemologies. Given the power of home to construct discourse and available solutions in property law and policy around the human experience of housing instead of its physical and financial aspects,[10] Indigenous home is able to story the housing landscape and produce required actions in line with Indigenous values and understandings rather than non-Indigenous settler colonial ones.

Using housing in Fort Good Hope as an active site of engagement in this study has revealed a housing governance system in the NWT that is unable to shift its epistemological foundations, and thus must be dismantled if the self-determination of housing is to be supported. Thus, to address my final research question—how is housing policy itself an 'active site of engagement' for understanding the dynamics of self-determination in the Northwest Territories—is to reflect on the access this thesis has to not only governance operations but to the epistemological contexts of NWT housing delivery. Engaging with housing in Fort Good Hope has provided an understanding of the barriers that stand in the way of community self-government, broadly around control over funding, land, and programs, unnecessary complexity, and decontextualised capacity demands. It then highlights actioned or proposed changes that stand to offer support for self-government, such as the shift of control from the NWTHC to Fort Good Hope over funding for the home repair and maintenance program or the transfer of capacity from the GNWT to communities through the Community Housing Plan Project. However, the particular engagement with housing as a site of relations gave me the opportunity to see and explore the binary between Indigenous and non-Indigenous epistemologies of housing and home expressed by participants. From this emerged the inadequacy of a sectoral governance approach which siloes funding and attention and subsequently denies a holistic view of housing and Indigenous home connected to education, land, culture, and employment, amongst other spheres of society. This understanding then challenged the assumed trajectory of self-government in the NWT, that gives Indigenous communities control within a system that they have not and can not define. Working through the space of different epistemologies that engaging with housing in Fort Good Hope provides, showed that what is needed for the

[10] Fox O'Mahony, L. (2013). The Meaning of Home: From Theory to Practice. *International Journal of Law in the Built Environment*. 5(2); Pp. 156-171.

self-determination of housing is the power to decide what the processes to deliver housing are rather than just control over those processes. Thus, the role of epistemological contexts within which these processes are determined becomes most significant, and for housing in the NWT it is Indigenous home that should inform this context. Ultimately, using housing policy as an active site of engagement has allowed me to show that the current state structures of self-government placed to move towards reconciliation and Indigenous sovereignty in the NWT, do not support self-determination.

6.3. Lessons Learned: Northern research methods during a pandemic

This research began as, and remains, a partnership-driven endeavour, designed entirely to answer the questions and assist in the work of Fort Good Hope community partners at the KGHS. Like most research though, especially northern and/or community research, it has evolved and changed from its beginning form with the development of understanding and circumstances. Of course, the major circumstantial shift to shape the evolution of this study arrived with the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020. Unable to travel to the Northwest Territories for the in-person conducting of research methods in Yellowknife and Fort Good Hope that I had planned prior to the pandemic, this research shifted from being community-based to being community-engaged. The inability to develop meaningful relationships in person and thus ethically and practically connect with community-members in Fort Good Hope led to the decision to study up, exploring the system of housing delivery in the NWT and its barriers to self-governed housing using existing data and materials available online first, and then remote interviews conducted with key personnel involved in the process when research ethics clearance was granted.

Crafting an understanding of the system through only online materials in the first stages of data collection was more challenging than it may have been if at the same time I had had access to people working within the system who were able to explain its processes. However, as a direct result of not having that avenue available for seeking clarity, and given the unknown wait time for ethics clearance to make it available, I explored creative writing as a method of inquiry to untangle the system myself. In this way I learnt of the value in using creative writing in research, to provide space for thinking to expand and travel in unexpected directions; for arriving upon new lines of questioning; and for developing the deeper understanding required for making content communicable through more accessible language. Furthermore, I found the comprehensive understanding of the system I developed in these stages to be most beneficial

and important during the interview stage of my methods in the summer of 2021. At this time in the pandemic, I had a heightened sense of the valuable time I was requesting from potential participants, many of whom occupied positions in NWT governance where, like many regions around the world, a crisis response had been dictating stressful and sometimes urgent operations. To that end, I needed to be as informed as possible to maximise my time with interviewees and avoid wasting theirs. Ultimately then, the enhanced understanding of housing delivery in the NWT that I established through the policy scoping and creative writing stages of the study, enabled me to be more efficient during interviews and have more thorough discussions about elements of the system that I would not have been able to if I had no previous knowledge of it.

As a non-Indigenous, settler scholar aligning with the emerging field of critical northern geography and thus committed to the conduct of anti-colonial and non-extractive northern research, my attention to what truly ethical and critical conduct looks like has been an ongoing thread of learning throughout this research journey. Indeed, my experiences doing this research confirm the needs outlined in critical northern studies literature to listen and be honest, to be creative, to be reflexive and flexible, and perhaps most of all to step lightly.[11] My physical absence from the initially proposed field sites in Fort Good Hope and Yellowknife reduced the potential practical research fatigue my presence and need to be hosted may have caused. With my informed and transparent approach to remote interviews I tried to leave a lighter step on the people with whom I interacted, in the hopes of also reducing subsequent mental and emotional research fatigue. A colleague of mine recently commented on similar efforts that they are also making, suggesting that in light of the heightened stress and demands many have felt during the pandemic, we as scholars—and particularly scholars engaged in northern research—are thinking much more carefully about what we are asking of people. We have an increased consciousness of the value of people's time, and in this project, studying up to a system of housing delivery using already existing material and the voices of key governance personnel, I was able to demand less of community members. This is all to say that there is a methodological contribution of this research, produced by the forced colliding of critical

[11] Desbiens, C. (2010). Step lightly, then move forward: exploring feminist directions for Northern research. *The Canadian Geographer*. 54(4); Pp. 410-416.; Leeuw, S.D., Cameron, E.S., Greenwood, M.L. (2012). Participatory and Community-Based Research, Indigenous Geographies, and the Spaces of Friendship: A Critical Engagement. *Canadian Geographer.* 56(2); Pp. 180-194.; Carlson, E. (2017). Anti-colonial methodologies and practices for settler colonial studies. *Settler Colonial Studies*. 7(4); Pp. 496-517.; Goldhar, C., Frenette, A., Pugsley, A., Browne, D., Hackett, K., Madsen, V., McNaughton, G. & Christensen, J. (2022). Critical Northern Geography: a Theoretical Framework, Research Praxis and Call to Action in our (Post)Pandemic Worlds. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies.* 21(3); Pp. 270-283.

northern research and remote methods. While it was not my choice to pursue this northern research remotely, it became an enlightening process that raises the question: once the time comes when we are no longer compelled to employ remote methods in northern research, perhaps we still should?

6.4. Recommendations

Altogether, the main findings of my work here support the argument that for the self-determination of housing in the NWT to be truly supported, the current system of housing governance must be dismantled to make way for a different one. As such, it is crucial that space be made for Indigenous peoples in the NWT to think about and plan for a future of housing delivery that exists outside of this system—space in which Indigenous epistemologies can instruct the parameters and processes through which housing is governed. Simultaneously, the dismantling of a system is not I feel a realistically obtainable recommendation that will help First Nations such as Fort Good Hope in the immediate future. So, for as long as the current system of housing governance continues to orchestrate the delivery of housing in the NWT, there are changes that can and must be made if is to support the future self-government of housing.

Overall, control over housing delivery in communities and First Nations must be in their hands. To this end, funding must flow directly from the federal government to Indigenous governments. That is, regular, reliable and sufficient funding that is provided not in siloes or bounded by particular requirements, but is free from pre-determined conditions. Furthermore, the administrative demands for this funding need to be contextualised to the capacities and geographies of communities in the Northwest Territories, rather than the often-greater clerical and connectivity capacities of non-Indigenous, southern Canada. Meanwhile, access to land tenure must become easier for First Nation residents, by treating applications to the territorial government for fee simple title on a case-by-case basis to ensure an application from an entity such as the KGHS is not subject to the same lengthy consultation process as that of an application made from outside Fort Good Hope. Additionally, the cost of land surveying for land tenure applications should be covered or at least subsidised by the Department of Lands.

Community control over the process by which housing needs are assessed is also essential in a system that supports self-governed housing, and comprehensive community consultation is the first step towards this. Housing options should be informed entirely by the stories of residents, and if surveys are to be conducted in the process of listening to these stories, then let

them be deployed by community members who are known and trusted by residents. In the same vein, the NWTHC must shift the nucleus of its decision-making away from Yellowknife; utilising more effectively their Local Housing Organisations and other staff living and working in communities. For Angela Grandjambe, manager of Fort Good Hope's LHO, such a shift would enable housing provision to become more contextualised rather than one-size-fits-all, which in Fort Good Hope would see housing provided based on homemaking needs rather than income. The construction and maintenance elements of housing delivery must also come into alignment with the capacities and contexts of the NWT's First Nations, which should be triggered by the development and use of northern building standards as opposed to those imported from southern Canada.

Positioning housing in the interconnected social landscape that interview participants map out in Chapter Five will also lead to more appropriate housing delivery in First Nations. Housing must be part of a long term and holistic plan for a community that includes directions for mental wellbeing, education, employment, and other such societal trajectories that it cannot be separate from, rather than an isolated provision of physical units and programs. Perhaps the Community Housing Plan Project needs to be taken up by all service delivery departments in the GNWT and become a more holistic Community Plan Project. Ultimately, the NWTHC has the opportunity in its current and ongoing housing renewal to make meaningful changes to its operations, such as stepping back from the handling and distribution of funding from the federal government to communities. Doing so is critical for re-crafting a system that supports the self-government of housing.

6.5. Future Research Areas

Overall, there is a need for more research that brings housing, home and self-determination into dialogue. An area of interest that was outside the scope of this study is the implementation of self-government in the Yukon, wherein First Nation governments in the territory offer some of the earliest and therefore longest established examples in Canada of self-government and its implications.[12] While the purpose of this work was to provide the Fort Good Hope specific picture of housing and its self-determination with some commentary relevant to the NWT more broadly, a next stage could be to engage comparatively with this picture in the Yukon.

[12] Dacks, G. (2004). Implementing First Nations Self-Government in Yukon: Lessons for Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science.* 37(3); Pp. 671-694.; CBC News. (2020). "Yukon First Nations' 'leading-edge' self government agreements, 25 years in". [online]. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/yukon-land-claims-25-years-1.5464987 (Accessed: 31/01/2022).

Understanding around how the self-government of housing might progress in the NWT would benefit from future research that explores and compares how the self-government of housing by Yukon First Nations was negotiated and asserted, and seeks to learn lessons from how it functions, especially relative to the housing governance of the Yukon Housing Corporation. Meanwhile, following on from the findings discussed in Chapter Five of this thesis, Indigenous-led research in the NWT that voices an interconnected model of service delivery would be most valuable in furthering understanding around how home and its holism is to be centred in housing policy and governance.

Additionally, the unanswered question I have raised at the end of section 6.3 around the future of ethical northern research produces a need for further methodological inquiry into other examples of northern research colliding with remote methods. The review of pivoting, challenges, and creativity with which many researchers involved in northern research shifted their methods from in-person to remote offers rich ground for lessons to be learned about 'doing' critical northern inquiry.

Finally, the way in which I approached the questions that derived from James and Arthur at the KGHS and guided this research is of course completely subjective and may have been approached differently by a scholar with a different positionality, and undoubtedly would have been tackled differently by me if I had been conducting this research before the Covid-19 pandemic. Subsequently, and in light of the dynamic nature of the housing and self-government landscape in the NWT to which this thesis attends, there are many areas for further inquiry not confined to the few I have highlighted in this chapter. Ultimately though, the insight provided in this thesis stands behind the efforts of First Nations in the NWT such as Fort Good Hope to respond to the northern housing crisis with the resilience and innovation of community-led efforts that operate in a system which hinders them.

6.6. Conclusion

In this concluding chapter, I have recounted the scholarly, methodological, and practical contributions of this thesis and in so doing have spoken to the learning experience this research journey has provided. Conducting northern research during the Covid-19 pandemic as a scholar aligned with the principles of critical northern geography is an opportunity that has and will continue to be the source of many ongoing reflections. I learnt through my experience of this study more than any research experience before the need to be flexible and creative with research methods and handling data—and the value that can be gained from engaging with

these values properly. These are also values that I will seek to carry forward in the ongoing journey of this research, particularly in the communication of it for my community partners at the KGHS and other stakeholders.

For Fort Good Hope and the K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society, a sustainable housing future means aligning the community's need for homes and their Indigenous right to self-determination. Given the settler colonial history of inadequate and often harmful interventions in the NWT that have disrupted Indigenous homemaking practices, it is critical that community-led housing delivery efforts founded in Indigenous epistemology and reflecting localised understandings of home, be supported. Such efforts by the KGHS lay roots for the self-government of housing currently being negotiated in Fort Good Hope, through which the community can stabilise a new trajectory of housing delivery focused on "connecting community, supporting cultural resurgence and facilitating individual agency".[13]

This thesis though has illuminated the barriers within the NWT's current process of housing delivery to the community-led housing operations of the KGHS, and thus the lack of support the system stands to offer for the self-government of housing. In mapping the stages of funding provision, housing needs assessment, program design, funding allocation, land acquisition, planning, repair and maintenance, and construction, I explored the barriers to community-led housing presented by a lack of community control, sectoral governance and inaccessibility. Through further investigation, I offered some directions for changes that could modify the current system of housing delivery to better support home and self-government, leaving the NWTHC with some significant shifts to make under the banner of its ongoing housing renewal. However, the insufficient space the system leaves for Indigenous conceptualisations of home and broader understandings of interconnectedness upon which Indigenous self-determination is based, raised the argument that for the long-term realisation of self-determination a rethinking of the way housing is governed is required. Engaging with home as a framework for governance offers a way to conduct this rethinking and depart from the system that sees and governs housing as an entity separated from such nodes as education, employment the land. Indigenous conceptualisations of home provide the language and understanding required to see and govern the connections and relationships amongst which housing is located in Fort Good Hope.

[13] K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society. (2020). Home in RÁDEYĮLĮ KǪ: K'ásho Got'ıne Housing Society Strategic Plan and Action Plan 2020-2025. https://cklbradio.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/KGHS-Strategic-Plan-2020-FNL-WR.pdf. Pp.3.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Ethics Approval from Memorial University's ICEHR

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)

St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864-2561 icehr@mun.ca
www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr

ICEHR Number:	**20210823-AR**
Approval Period:	December 8, 2020 – December 31, 2021 **REMOTE METHODS ONLY**
Funding Source:	NCE & MUN [RGCS# 20190373 & 20201589]
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Julia Christensen Department of Geography
Title of Project:	*Promoting home and self-governance: Housing as an active site of engagement in Fort Good Hope*

December 8, 2020

Ms. Aimee Pugsley
Department of Geography
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Ms. Pugsley:

Thank you for your correspondence addressing the issues raised by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) concerning the above-named research project. ICEHR has re-examined the proposal with the clarification and revisions submitted, and is satisfied that the concerns raised by the Committee have been adequately addressed. However, please be advised that level 2 of the MUN COVID-19 Framework stipulates that only the remote methods in your approved protocol can be used at this time, and any future in-person and/or field research requires that you first request and obtain permission through the framework, as detailed at https://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr.

In accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2)*, the project has been granted *full ethics clearance* to December 31, 2021. ICEHR approval applies to the ethical acceptability of the research, as per Article 6.3 of the *TCPS2*. Researchers are responsible for adherence to any other relevant University policies and/or funded or non-funded agreements that may be associated with the project.

The *TCPS2* **requires** that you submit an Annual Update to ICEHR before December 31, 2021. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer involves contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you are required to provide an annual update with a brief final summary and your file will be closed. If you need to make changes during the project which may raise ethical concerns, you must submit an Amendment Request with a description of these changes for the Committee's consideration prior to implementation. If funding is obtained subsequent to approval, you must submit a Funding and/or Partner Change Request to ICEHR before this clearance can be linked to your award.

All post-approval event forms noted above can be submitted from your Researcher Portal account by clicking the *Applications: Post-Review* link on your Portal homepage. We wish you success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Kelly Blidook, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research

KB/bc

cc: Supervisor – Dr. Julia Christensen, Department of Geography
Director, Research Grant and Contract Services

Appendix II: Northwest Territories Scientific Research License

License No. 16806
File Number: 12 410 1183
April 19, 2021

2021

Northwest Territories Scientific Research Licence

Issued by:	Aurora Research Institute - Aurora College Inuvik, Northwest Territories
Issued to:	Miss Aimee Louise Pugsley Memorial University of Newfoundland 71, Roche Street St John's, Newfoundland and Labrador A1B 1L9 Phone: (709) 219-3104 Email: alpugsley@mun.ca
Affiliation:	Memorial University of Newfoundland
Funding:	ArcticNet Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Team Members:	
Title:	Promoting Home and Self-Governance: Housing as an Active Site of Engagement in Fort Good Hope
Objectives:	To examine and understand how the self-governed delivery of housing in Fort Good Hope by the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society, including the delivery of the transitional housing program, will be promoted or hindered by the current system of governance and policy in place.
Dates of data collection:	April 20, 2021 to December 31, 2021
Locations:	Fort Good Hope

Licence No. 16806 expires on December 31, 2021
Issued in the Town of Inuvik on April 19, 2021

Joel McAllister
Vice President, Research
Aurora Research Institute

Appendix III: Letter of support from the K'ásho Got'ıne Band Council

K'asho Got'ine Band Office
P.O Box 80
Fort Good Hope, NT X0E 0H0
Ph (867)598-2232 Fax (867)598-2024

November 03, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Letter of Support: Re: Veronica Madsen and Aimee Pugsley

The K'asho Got'ine Band of Fort Good Hope in the Northwest Territories support Veronica Madsen & Aimee Pugsley who are research students under Dr. Julia Christensen of Memorial University.

The research work of Dr Christensen and the research students on Northern Housing Policy is very important for our northern communities and most especially for moving forward K'asho Got'ine Housing Strategy Plan.

Please accord them the necessary support they need to carry out this invaluable project.

Sincerely,

Chief Danny Masuzumi

Appendix IV: Interview Consent Form

Informed Consent Form for Research

Title: Promoting home and self-governance: Housing as an active site of engagement in Fort Good Hope

Researcher(s): Aimee Pugsley, Department of Geography
Memorial University of Newfoundland,
alpugsley@mun.ca

Supervisor(s): Julia Christensen, Department of Geography
Memorial University of Newfoundland,
jchristensen@mun.ca

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled *"Promoting home and self-governance: Housing as an active site of engagement in Fort Good Hope"*.

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. Please take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Aimee Pugsley, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

It is entirely up to you to decide whether to take part in this research. If you choose not to take part in this research or if you decide to withdraw from the research once it has started, there will be no negative consequences for you, now or in the future.

Introduction:

I am a graduate student in the department of Geography at Memorial University of Newfoundland. As part of my Master's thesis I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Julia Christensen, which is funded through ArcticNet, SSHRC and CMHC. My research aims to understand how Fort Good Hope and the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society's community-led social housing program can become sustainable, and more broadly how northern housing policy is to better realise home.

Purpose of Study:

The purpose of this research is to explore in collaboration with the K'asho Got'ine Housing Society (KGHS) how their community-led social housing program can become sustainable. Given the negative impacts on wellbeing of the housing crisis in Fort Good Hope and further northern communities, it is important to understand how housing policy and its delivery can support 'home'. My goal is to map out the decision-making processes implicated in the self-governed delivery of housing, and to ultimately facilitate progress towards Fort Good Hope's vision of self-determination and home at both an individual and collective scale.

This study is not an employment, government, KGHS group or band requirement.

What You Will Do in this Study:

If you wish to take part in this research, you will be asked to participate in an interview with the researcher, Aimee Pugsley. During the interview, you will be asked questions about your experience of delivering housing or housing-related support in Fort Good Hope and the Northwest Territories, and your thoughts on how governance structures can support 'home' and the self-government of housing. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer at any time.

Length of Time:

The length of this interview will vary depending on the depth of discussion and your personal knowledge about the topics being discussed. It is expected though, that interviews will take approximately one hour.

Withdrawal from the Study:

You may stop the interview for any reason at any time. Your decision to stop the interview or remove any of your responses will not negatively impact you or your relationship with the researcher, Memorial University, or other groups associated with this project. If you choose to withdraw, in part or in full, any recordings or notes from the interview will be destroyed, unless you indicate otherwise.

If you choose to withdraw after the interview has been conducted, you may contact the researcher by phone (Aimee – 709 219 3104) or email (alpugsley@mun.ca) and your data will be destroyed as soon as possible. You may choose to withdraw your interview until December 31st 2020, at which point the data analysis phase of the research will be completed.

Possible Benefits:

Your participation in this research will benefit:

a) **The K'asho Got'ine Housing Society, the community of Fort Good Hope and the Northwest Territories.** This research will increase relevant knowledge about the delivery of northern housing, that will help the KGHS be better prepared to deliver housing in Fort Good Hope, in a way that best meets the needs and priorities of the community. This research hopes to benefit northern communities beyond Fort Good Hope, as increased knowledge around home and the self-governance of northern housing can be used by the KGHS in their production of a framework for the implementation of self-governed, culturally supportive, northern housing policy.
b) **The scientific/scholarly community**. Your participation will help to fill a gap that exists in scholarly research around the northern housing crisis, by providing information about how

home can be achieved in self-governed contextualized and culturally supportive housing policy in the Canadian North.

Possible Risks:

There are potential emotional risks associated with your participation in this research. Should any of the interview questions elicit negative emotions or make you feel uncomfortable you are encouraged to stop the interview.

Additionally, there are some potential social risks that may be associated with the limits to anonymity in this study, such as the possibility for dispute should a participant's opinions be identified. Please see the anonymity section of this form for an explanation of the actions I will take to mitigate these risks.

Confidentiality:

The ethical duty of confidentiality includes safeguarding participants' identities, personal information, and data from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure.

All information you supply during this research will be confidential. Unless you give consent otherwise, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your identity, personal information, and data you provide will be safeguarded from unauthorized access or disclosure. Your personal information will be recorded separately from the data collected and your identity will be coded. Digital recordings of the interview will be transcribed only by the researcher, Aimee Pugsley.

Anonymity:

Anonymity refers to protecting participants' identifying characteristics, such as the name or description of physical appearance. My purpose is not to collect any private information about you. While some interview questions may address personal involvement or knowledge (i.e. what is your involvement in northern housing delivery?), in all cases the emphasis will be on issues of housing and policies and not on personal or private information.

You will be asked to give your informed consent to have your name recorded and used in any reports or publications that may come from this research, but this is not a requirement to participate in an interview. Should you choose not to be identified in any publications your name will not be recorded or included in any writing that comes from this research, and a pseudonym will be used instead. After the interview and before data is compiled into a final report/thesis, you will be sent a copy of your transcribed interview for you to review and, if you choose, change or retract any information.

Individuals involved in northern housing and the governing of Fort Good Hope and the Northwest Territories represent a relatively small group, and thus it may not be possible to guarantee anonymity. Despite efforts to ensure anonymity, it may be possible for readers to identify you in future publications/reports if you are one of few people within your organization or company that can speak to housing delivery in the NWT. Please be aware of this risk before participating in this interview. However, if you do choose to participate and wish to remain anonymous, every reasonable effort will be made to ensure your anonymity. You will not be identified in publications without your explicit permission.

Recording of Data:

If you consent, the researcher will be using an audio recording device to record this interview. You do not have to consent to this aspect of the interview. Should you choose not to have the interview recorded, the researcher will only take written notes.

Use, Access, Ownership, and Storage of Data:

All digital recordings and transcribed interviews will be stored securely, on password-protected computers. Consent forms will be stored separately from the data in a locked filing cabinet. Any hard copies of notes or transcribed interviews will be kept in the supervisor's (Dr. Julia Christensen) office in a locked filing cabinet. Only the primary researcher (Aimee Pugsley) and supervisor (Dr. Julia Christensen) will have access to this data. There are no plans to archive this data or make it available to other researchers. If this changes in the future, you will be contacted for additional consent. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research.

Reporting of Results:

Interview audio recordings and transcribed interviews will not be distributed, sold, or disseminated in any way, though selected quotes may be used in future publications, with permission. The data will be used for a deliverable to the community, with results reported in co-written journal articles with Dr. Julia Christensen. In follow-up workshops, results and research deliverable including a visual presentation and executive summary/policy recommendations will be provided.

Upon completion, my thesis will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library and can be accessed online at http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

You will be sent the transcribed version of this interview for your review. You may choose to have any information removed or refuse permission for use of the transcript. Individual participants and research partners (KGHS and the NWT Housing Corporation) will be provided a copy of my thesis that will result from this research. In follow-up workshops, results and research deliverable including a visual presentation and executive summary/policy recommendations will be provided.

Questions:

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact Aimee Pugsley, alpugsley@mun.ca. If you wish to contact my supervisor directly, please contact Dr. Julia Christensen, jchristensen@mun.ca.

ICEHR Approval:

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a

participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.
- You understand that if you choose to end participation during data collection, any data collected from you up to that point will be destroyed.
- You understand that if you choose to withdraw after data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to December 31st, 2020.

I agree to be audio-recorded: Yes No

I agree to the use of direct quotations: Yes No

I allow my name to be identified in any publications resulting from this study: Yes No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your Signature Confirms:

- ☐ I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

- ☐ I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.

- ☐ A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

_____ _____

Signature of Principal Investigator 1 Date

Appendix V: Interview Guide

- Housing governance in the Northwest Territories
    - What is/was your involvement in housing delivery or housing related support in Fort Good Hope or the Northwest Territories?
    - Can you describe your experience in that role? Positive/negative? Challenging/simple?
    - What do you think are the main considerations or challenges involved with housing delivery in the NWT?
    - How has your role and experience changed, if at all, over time?
    - Do you think the housing policies and programs through which housing is delivered in the NWT meet the needs of communities?
    - Can you speak at all to the dynamics of relationships between the different governing entities involved in housing in the NWT?

- Self-Government
    - In Fort Good Hope and other First Nations in the NWT the self-government of housing is being positioned as part of the solution to northern housing issues. What are your thoughts on this?
    - What does the self-government of housing mean to you? What does it look like?
    - How supportive do you think this system of governance is of the self-government of housing?
    - Do you have any thoughts on how the process of governing housing in the Northwest Territories could better promote home, and as such self-determination?

- Looking ahead
    - Are there any changes you would like to see in your area of work and/or housing in the NWT in the future?

- Questions for specific interviewees
    - How does a community such as Fort Good Hope access land that is administered by the territorial government?
    - How easy is it for residents to access the programs and services offered by the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWTHC)? Are there any barriers to accessibility that you are aware of?
    - How responsive do you think the NWTHC is to community needs and resident feedback?