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# Insight

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# Welcome...



**Ryan Powell**  
Director of Research


...to the latest edition of our research newsletter, which spotlights some of the exciting and diverse research coming out of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. This edition includes items on a range of new projects from urban peripheries in Ethiopia to the changing priorities of real estate investor decision-making in the UK, and from planning in the public interest to shifting housing aspirations. It provides a flavour of the range of geographies, research topics and innovative methodologies across the Department and also profiles members of our vibrant postgraduate research community.

It has been another exciting year for research with a range of new research projects, Fellowships, awards and publications to celebrate. Departmental colleagues have continued to translate exciting research ideas and challenging urban questions into research funding with awards from the Antipode Foundation, Economic and Social Research Council, British Academy, Natural Environment Research Council, Leverhulme Trust and the Urban Studies Foundation, among others. We are also delighted to have welcomed to the department a further five externally funded Fellows in Katie Higgins (Urban Studies Foundation), Charlotte Hoole, Jim Kaufman (both Economic and Social Research Council), Aidan Mosselson (Newton International Fellow) and Lindsay Sawyer (Leverhulme Trust). The ESRC UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence is now well established and a range of new research projects across the multitude of housing issues continue to emerge from it.

There have also been a number of outstanding individual achievements over the last 12 months. Tom Goodfellow won the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research (IJURR) Best Article Prize for his paper 'Urban Fortunes and Skeleton Cityscapes: Real Estate and Late Urbanization in Kigali and Addis Ababa'. John Flint has been elected to the Academy of Social Sciences, and he will also sit on the Research Excellence Framework panel for the Architecture, Built Environment and Planning unit of assessment – a role he also fulfilled in 2014.

The research footprint of the Department continues to expand internationally, while also retaining a focus on national and local challenges. As ever, colleagues are always keen to engage with interested partners from academia, policy and third sector/community organisations, wherever in the world you may be. So please do get in touch if you would like to know more or would like to work with us.

## Working in the public interest?



**Professor Malcolm Tait**

Historically, the notion of a unified public interest has been a key justification for state-employed planners directing decision making around development. Understood as politically-neutral bureaucrats, planners were seen to stand above individual interests to serve a common good. Although this justification has long been problematised it remains central to professional practice. →



In recent decades and particularly in the context of austerity, reforms have seen some state planning functions devolved to local communities, whilst the market's role has expanded with the commercial sector increasingly providing planning services. Nearly half of Chartered Planners in the UK now work for private firms and recent Governments have been ever seeking to expand private sector involvement. Yet there has been little research on the effects of privatisation on professionalism and how the public interest is understood in planning.

The ESRC funded Working in the Public Interest project looks to fill this gap, representing the first major investigation in the UK into the increasing involvement of private companies in carrying out planning work for local government. Bringing together colleagues from USP, University College London, Newcastle University and the RTPI, the project aims to explore whether and how the privatisation of spatial planning activities is reshaping professional practices and justifications of how planning serves the public interest.

**Dr Jason Slade and  
Professor Malcolm Tait**  
January 2019

The first report from the project, 'Serving the public interest? The reorganisation of planning services in an era of reluctant outsourcing', which principally draws on the focus groups we conducted with practicing planners across the UK, was launched at the RTPI's Parliamentary reception in January 2019.

We have also undertaken a Freedom of Information request to ascertain the scale of outsourcing and other arrangements with the private sector across the UK. Our work has found that local authority planning is becoming increasingly commercialised and business-like, but that few councils have sought to fully outsource their planning services. It also finds that planners find that these trends, allied to under-resourcing of the sector have led to a box-ticking culture that inhibits space for reflection, and proactive planning in the public interest. The report also finds that these trends are being differently experienced, with planners in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland far more positive about the future of their local services than their colleagues in England. The project continues to summer 2020, with further detailed work looking at how the private sector and local authorities are managing their planning work, a range of in-depth interviews with planners, and historical work to put into context the role of the private consultancies in planning.

# Urban peripheries

## in South Africa and Ethiopia



The 'Living the Peripheries' project aims to understand the drivers behind urban change and how residents in the peripheries of three city-regions in Africa experience everyday life in relation to their changing cities.

We found that some of the drivers behind urban change in the peripheries are *how investments are shaped by the boundaries of the city regions, municipalities and tribal leadership*. Across all cases investment in housing was a key driver highlighting how successful, or not, different state housing schemes are and how the lay out of, and facilities in the wider neighbourhood, the specific building designs, and the cost of living in such places affect people's everyday lives.

The role of the private sector capital in shaping the peripheries is also an important driver. However, the type of investment affects residents in different ways. For instance, investments into shopping malls were perceived very positively by residents because they provided an immediate source of goods and services, although not much in the way of employment. Additionally, the forms of capital also mattered with megaproject investment such as an international airport offering little in the



way of employment opportunities for surrounding communities. Furthermore, attempts to revitalise decaying industrial parks developed through apartheid decentralisation policies focussed more on supply-driven infrastructure provision for the private sector than on sustainable or innovative industrial development which would create vibrant economic activity on the periphery.

Another driver behind urban change in the peripheries is employment, and most significantly unemployment. Employment presents as the biggest concern facing people across all South African cases. It illustrates how joblessness and job seeking are explicitly shaped by living in peripheral locations. Furthermore, different kinds of settlements also affect the ability to access work because of difficulties in access to and affordability of transport, along with poor access to education and training for employment. In Addis Ababa, although many residents were employed and were living in these new state subsidised developments, they were still really struggling to make ends meet. This was very comparable to people in South Africa who were often unemployed and experienced anxieties over the costs of living. This gave clear insights into the viability of life in the peripheries for many residents in Ethiopia as well as in South Africa.



We gained an understanding of residents' experiences of living in the peripheries through various quality of life indicators as well as their detailed comments on how they found life in these places. Variations in a lack of access to water, electricity, services, health care, schools, local shops, the police etc are common. They illustrate the significant needs felt by residents for local infrastructural investments in their areas. Micro interventions were found to be critical to everyday life and resident well-being, including the building of a school or shop, toilets, bus shelters. On the other hand, big changes and interventions sometimes pass some residents by, such as the investment in an airport, because they lack the connections (political and / or physical), skills or social capital to benefit.



We then also argue that there is no such thing as 'an urban periphery', rather we see *multiple peripheries and peripheries within the periphery* and we view peripheries as geographic, relational and lived. Considering the peripheries as a more heterogeneous space is important as it will enable us to create a more realistic and nuanced understanding of people's lives in these places. They are significant spaces, experienced at multiple scales, shaped through interventions, investments, and other drivers of change, including many that are state-directed.

**Find out more:**

<https://www.wits.ac.za/urbanperiphery/>

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## Profile: Divine Afaso

Started his PhD in the department of Urban Studies and Planning focussing on land conflicts and housing development in peri-urban spaces in the global south.

**What question are you trying to solve with your PhD and why is it so important that we look into this issue?**

My research focuses on examining the nexus between land conflicts and housing development in peri-urban spaces of the global south. Land conflict is not a new phenomenon to countries in the global south but its recent development and rapid increase in peri-urban spaces (urban peripheries) is raising serious concerns about land administration, tenure security, planning and spatial development. Poor land management, uncontrolled land market and ineffective land governance are among the major causes of environmental and social challenges such as slum development and informality in most cities of the global south including Accra, Ghana. Associated with these is the increasing disaster risks such as floods, fire and disease epidemics.

I am seeking to explore the following questions. First, to understand the extent to which the land market is changing in peri-urban Accra and what factors are accounting for these changes. Second, to investigate how various institutions are responding to these changes occurring within the peri-urban land market. Third, to explore the extent to which peri-urban land conflicts are influencing the process of housing development as well as the associated risks faced by house builders.

**Who will benefit from your research?**

My research will benefit international agencies such as the UN-HABITAT, State and Non-State institutions, traditional leaders, and private entities such as the real estate and individual (developer) housebuilders. However, the key stakeholders who will directly benefit from the study, especially in Accra, Ghana include MMDAs, the Land Commission, the Police, the Judiciary, Traditional Authorities and Developers. More importantly, the Lands Commission of Ghana, which is generally responsible for the registration of land, will benefit from this research as the findings will heighten their understanding of the current changes that customary land tenure and land use is undergoing in the peri-urban areas. This will enable them to formulate policies and land administration practices, which will meet the current demands of the land market.

**What are some of your key findings?**

Land in peri-urban Accra in recent times has become an economic asset other than a communal resource. This deviates from the previous practices where lands were leased to strangers (migrants) and they only had to pay a small fee with bottles of alcoholic drinks and few other items as a form of showing appreciation to the head of family or the chief who gave out the land.

The legal frameworks guiding land in peri-urban Accra reflects the interaction of both the state and customary authorities (Chiefs and Families). The co-existence of the institutions who work parallel to each other with some overlapping functionalities depicts a governance framework called institutional multiplicity. Furthermore, a significant finding on the land market reveals that there is no legal framework guiding the sale and pricing of land. That is, the market is largely controlled by the forces of demand and supply, which is embedded in socio-economic and political factors.

The economic transformation of the land market has impacted on social relations and families to the extent that the process of land transaction, which is solely the responsibility of a chief or a family head (as recognised by Ghana's constitution) could now be managed by any family member and external people such as landguards. Poor accountability by some family heads and chiefs, coupled with indeterminate boundaries, poor implementation of spatial plans and sheer greed was identified by the study as factors contributing to land conflict and tenure insecurity in peri-urban Accra.

Importantly, the study further identified that there is a significant relationship between land conflicts and the process of housing development. Though the peri-urban space is serving as the new centre for development, the land conflict associated with this is hindering housing development and particularly sustainable development.



**Dr Paula Meth**  
Reader



As part of the Global Leadership Initiative (GLI) four of our students attended the World Urban Forum 9 (WUF9) in Kuala Lumpur in March 2018.

Taking place every two years, the World Urban Forum tackles issues of sustainable development. The theme of WUF9 was "Cities 2030, Cities for All: Implementing the New Urban Agenda" which contains many parallels with the MA Cities and Global Development (CGD) and the MA Town and Regional Planning.

"Almost everything that we cover on CGD was discussed at WUF9, because CGD is all about a critical approach to urbanism, planning, and its place in global political and developmental currents. Because of the course, going in to the conference I had a theoretical grounding in a variety of issues discussed. This meant that I was able to engage with the talks and discussions as a peer with the other practitioners, academics and activists, which led to some fantastic conversations," said Francis Clay, one of the attending students.

Xiaowen Dai, who studies the MA Town and Regional Planning said, 'the course provides me with a solid academic foundation to understand the content of different sessions and events in the WUF 9. The independent learning skills and critical thinking skills I gained from the course enable me to acquire and absorb knowledge in the WUF 9.'

The GLI initiative is part of the Faculty of Social Sciences flagship programme: Global Learning Opportunities in the Social Sciences (GLOSS). The programme is designed to help social sciences students understand their course in an

international context, increase their skills and knowledge and actively engage with international policy makers, stakeholders and partners.

Alice Preston-Jones said: "I felt I gained more confidence in myself and my knowledge during the conference which will be very helpful for job applications and my future career. Our group of students and academics all worked really well as a team, especially having not really met before the summit, which has definitely improved my team working skills and working with people from different disciplines."



"A highlight was being asked by a member of UN-Habitat if I would like to undertake an internship with UN-Habitat in Nairobi. This came about due to the fact that I stood up and asked a question in one of the sessions. This has made me realise that in order to gain opportunities like that you have to put yourself out there, even if it is a bit daunting!"

For more on the GLOSS or GLI programme go to:  
[sheffield.ac.uk/gloss](http://sheffield.ac.uk/gloss)

Dr Gareth Young discusses the key priority areas of the Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE).

## UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence: One year on



CaCHE has now been operating for nearly 18-months. We were established in August 2017 as a multidisciplinary partnership between academia, housing policy and practice. Over this period, we have undertaken a number of initial research projects and evidence reviews, as well as building our external presence.

A key piece of work during this time was to engage with partners across the UK to undertake deliberative workshops to help identify and set the research priorities for years two and three. Following analysis of these initial meetings, we have identified a number of key priority areas that CaCHE researchers will focus on over the next few years. The Hub for North England and the Midlands, which is run from USP here in Sheffield, will be moving forward with the priorities and challenges identified in these regions.

Other important work that we are running from Sheffield is the development of our early career scholars. In July 2018 we ran the first CaCHE PhD Summer School, helping to support future researchers to build their confidence in building partnerships, engaging with policy and practice and to think about the non-academic impact that they can achieve through their own work. The 2019 summer school will be running in Sheffield in June, with details to be announced shortly.

Alongside this, co-investigators have also been working on projects over the first year. One key project, undertaken by USP and Geography colleagues is 'Understanding changing housing aspirations'.

**The UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE) is a consortium of 14 institutions led by the University of Glasgow.** The centre, which was established in August 2017, is a multidisciplinary partnership between academia, housing policy and practice. Over the course of the five-year programme, CaCHE researchers will produce evidence and new research which will contribute to tackling the UK's housing problems at a national, devolved, regional, and local level. CaCHE is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, Arts and Humanities Research Council and Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Dr Jenny Preece discusses some of the key issues from the CaCHE project 'Understanding reconfigured aspirations, expectations and choice'

# Understanding changing housing aspirations



**Despite increased policy and research interest in addressing people's housing aspirations, there is little clarity about what is meant by the term, and how people negotiate housing systems when what they hope for may be increasingly out of reach.**

We carried out an exercise to map the research literature on housing aspirations and choices then reviewed the evidence into whether aspirations were being reconfigured by changing housing (and related) systems.

It became apparent that housing aspirations are often discussed interchangeably with other terms such as preferences, choice, and expectations, when these concepts are really distinct. Our research uses a working definition of aspirations as: desires to achieve housing-related ambitions in the future, drawing on optimistic assessments of what can be realised.



Reviewing the international evidence on housing aspirations, we found that research is relatively bounded and is particularly dominated by the challenges young people face in accessing homeownership. Therefore, much research considers issues such as semi-dependent living, extended parental co-residence, the role of the private rented sector, and labour market insecurity. There was much less evidence on how such system changes may be reshaping housing aspirations.

Whilst tenure is a key dimension that frames how individuals think about housing aspirations, our review shows that we need to think more broadly about the range of aspirations that exist. This is crucial if we are to develop housing systems that more effectively meet individuals' hopes for their housing futures. For example, housing aspirations are often considered in relation to choices that people are making about their housing, but our research argues that aspirations exist independently of choices. Even those with very constrained choice may have aspirations for housing, yet they are rarely the subject of research.

Our work with stakeholders in developing a future research agenda shows real interest in drawing on a broader understanding of housing aspirations as multidimensional and subject to a variety of influences. It is also evident that delivering forms of housing that individuals aspire to means working across policy domains, from housing to employment and education.

*Find out more:* Professor John Flint and Professor David Robinson lead the CaCHE research theme on 'choice'. Find out more at [www.housingevidence.ac.uk](http://www.housingevidence.ac.uk)

*The project team included: Joe Crawford, John Flint, Kim McKee, Jenny Preece, David Robinson and Gareth Young.*

## **Upcoming projects** **Forms and mechanisms of exclusion in contemporary housing systems**

The project team, with the help of new CaCHE researcher Dr Emma Bimpson, are starting work on a project to examine contemporary and emerging mechanisms of exclusion from housing systems. The team will review the field, place it in historical context, and engage with stakeholders to explore how new mechanisms are affecting access to housing for the most marginalised populations.

**Find out more:**  
<http://housingevidence.ac.uk/publications/understanding-housing-aspirations-and-choices-in-changing-contexts>.

# Changing priorities in investor decision-making: the sustainability agenda

## Dr Cath Jackson discusses how the property industry has reacted to the growing prominence of sustainability within the sector.

Dr Cath Jackson explores how the property industry has reacted to the growing prominence of sustainability within the sector in a new report sponsored by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and co-written by Dr Allison Orr of the University of Glasgow.

A key area of the study, which focused on the commercial property sector, examines whether investors pay more for sustainable buildings with better energy ratings - a 'green premium' - both in terms of rent and property ownership.

The study found that the dominant sustainability rating system in the UK, BREEAM, has risen to be the 3rd most important attribute considered by investors when buying property. This is in stark contrast to its position of 7th a decade ago, reflecting the fact that sustainability strategies are now much more commonplace in the UK investment sector.

However, there can be conflict in the implementation of strategies and in asset management decisions, with financial factors often dominating purely sustainability-related motivations. Drivers for investing in sustainability vary, but include internal green initiatives and CSR policies, reputational factors, client and tenant requirements and external pressure.

The study concludes that no 'green premia' are felt to exist in the UK real estate sector, despite recent research suggesting that such premia exist in US markets, for example. It appears that in other countries higher values are paid for 'green' stock than can be justified by the cost savings resulting from the sustainability initiatives.

Dr Jackson and Dr Orr believe that, in the UK, a lack of evidence for, or perception of, green premia is holding back future plans for greater implementation of sustainable policies.

The report indicates six key recommendations, including improvements in Energy Performance Certificate or EPC system, as Dr Jackson and Dr Orr believe that, currently, it is insufficiently sophisticated to deal with the complexities of the industrial sector. It is hoped that these recommendations can raise awareness and help further the implementation of environmental sustainability strategies.

### Find out more:

Dr Cath Jackson

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### What question are you trying to solve with your PhD and why is it so important that we look into this issue?

The main objective of my PhD research is to examine the changing nature of strategic spatial planning in England. More specifically my aim is to understand how, and the extent to which, local politicians and planning officers work together across local authority boundaries to resolve cross-border issues such as those relating to planning for housing and economic growth.

My research coincides with a period of significant transition in national planning legislation and policy. In recent years Regional Spatial Strategies have been abolished and replaced with a locally-led 'Duty to Cooperate', and new spaces of sub-regional governance have emerged. These have included Local Enterprise Partnerships, Combined Authorities and, in certain city regions, the introduction of elected mayors. Together these transitions reflect a period of critical change in the ways in which local authorities are expected to work with one another to resolve strategic planning issues.

My research focuses upon Sheffield City Region and its Combined Authority as a case study to examine how local planning actors and decision-makers have interpreted these legislative, organisational and governance changes, and how their interpretations influenced the collaborative and strategic spatial planning practices that are taking place. The approach I used was broadly ethnographic, meaning I used observational research methods and analysis of documents as the main ways of gathering data. I also held interviews with selected individuals to help corroborate and reflect on my findings.

## Profile: Kirsten Ward



### What are some of your key findings?

My research has revealed how forms of collaborative working are influenced by actors' interpretations of the changing structural context and by their tendency to repeat certain patterns of behaviour. For example, local planning officers have been found to favour more formalised structures and spaces of collaboration than local politicians who tend to favour more informal methods. As such, local politicians have been more resistant to working within the newly formed governance structures of the Combined Authority. This has led to tensions between different groups that have been further exacerbated by the growing political and territorial divisions within the City Region, particularly along county lines. The resultant lack of spatial cohesion and strategic leadership caused by these institutionalised tendencies has constrained the ability of Sheffield City Region to pursue a substantive strategic spatial planning agenda, at least at the present time.

### Who will benefit from your research?

This research will be particularly useful for policy makers at the national, regional and local levels as it will help them to better understand the effect of inherited patterns of behaviour and wider structural changes on local planning actors, and the circumstances that affect how actors work together to try and resolve strategic planning issues. Understanding the factors that influence these forms of cross-border collaboration will become an increasingly critical concern as the government continues to pursue its devolution agenda and as local authority resources become further constrained. This research will also hopefully contribute to wider academic and theoretical debates about the role of institutionalised structures in shaping actor behaviour and how these institutions can evolve over time.

# New Projects



## Power, authority and land in Lagos, Nigeria

In Lagos, customary authorities (based on the ownership of land) have long been entwined with state authorities in dynamic, constantly shifting configurations. Although formal institutions are weak and corruption, poverty and inequality are widespread, the city continues to function through de facto modes of governance beyond the official realm. Customary actors can play a pivotal role in processes of urbanisation, yet little research has been done on the complex relationship between such actors and formal institutions.

In this 3-year Leverhulme Trust Fellowship, **Dr Lindsey Sawyer** will explore governance dynamics in Lagos through the comparison of two processes of urbanisation that underpin the rapid expansion of the city – extensive large scale developments on the periphery, and informal housing construction by small plot owners across the city. The project seeks to achieve a more nuanced understanding of the role of customary authorities in Lagos, and the impact they have on the development of the city.

**Find out more:**  
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## Profile: Charlotte Hoole



I am delighted to join USP as a Fellow under the ESRC Postdoctoral Fellowship Scheme. This is a fantastic opportunity for researchers who like me are in the immediate postdoctoral phase of their career and are looking to consolidate their PhD through developing their publications, research ideas, networks and professional skills.

During my Fellowship I am investigating the way that urban and regional policy is consumed and contested in 'place', influenced by local agents delivering policy on the ground. This is an extension of my PhD research carried out in 2015-16 which examined sub-national leadership and governance in England, following a major restructure of the national institutional landscape since 2010 to accommodate city-regions that support a supposedly functional economic reality. A key finding of my research, however, suggests that governance based on functionality overlooks the importance of local relationships, practices and identities embedded within local knowledge, norms and values. Whilst a broad literature exists which examines the prominence of the state in determining institutional forms, much less is known about how policy and institutions are shaped from 'below'. The focus of my research is Doncaster in the Sheffield City Region, bringing an alternative perspective to urban research that tends to prioritise glamorous accounts of metro success.

My intention over this next year is to position my research within a contemporary urban narrative that surrounds core-periphery divisions in England, in addition to the political and economic uncertainty of Brexit and its governance and devolutionary implications.



## Mobilising citizens for adaptation

Funded by the Natural Environment Research Council, and led by **Liz Sharp**, this project explores whether and how rainwater harvesting could work to reduce flood risk.

Rainwater harvesting is the process of collecting rain (in a rain butt, tank or pond) and using it for another purpose (like flushing the toilet). It is a popular means of addressing drought, particularly in countries with chronic water shortage. If many nearby properties undertake rainwater harvesting, it could also be an effective means of preventing floods.

In this project, researchers will work with residents and community groups in two locations near Hull which currently contribute to downstream flooding problems in the region. The research team will explore whether, where and how rainwater could be stored more effectively in the case study sites. The findings will contribute knowledge about when and how rainwater harvesting for flood prevention can fit in with people's everyday lives.

**Find out more:**  
**Dr Liz Sharp**  
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## Examining the social cost of relocation in urban China

China's rapid urbanisation has led to the relocation of millions of residents and their subsequent loss of social networks. To avoid public resistance, the state specially developed resettlement neighbourhoods (Dongqian anzhi fang) to accommodate relocated residents. Three decades on since the first large waves of resident relocation, still very little is known about its long-term impact and whether relocated residents have managed to rebuild their sense of community.

Using the case of Shanghai, this project explores the extent to which relocated residents have been able to maintain or rebuild a sense of community, the difficulties they have experienced while doing so and strategies employed to overcome such obstacles. The project seeks to contribute to debates about the (long-term) impacts of large-scale urban redevelopment and urban relocation programmes. The project is led by **Dr Zheng Wang** and funded by the British Academy.

**Find out more:**  
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## Little Capital: the life of wealth elites in the everyday metropolis

Tackling inequalities is one of the most pressing challenges for contemporary society. Segregation and social division are increasingly visible indicators in cities across the world. Following the Global Financial Crisis in 2008, the lives and activities of the 'super-rich' has gained much media attention. This has been followed by an emerging academic interest in wealth inequalities and how these are shaping 'global cities' such as London, Singapore and New York.

In the UK, the pre-eminence of London amongst the global elites is clear. Yet, the impact of wealth and the very wealthy on 'second-tier' cities, such as Manchester and its surrounds, remains almost entirely unexplored. In this Urban Studies Foundation Fellowship, **Dr Katie Higgins** seeks to explore – how wealth elites are (re)shaping the urban beyond global cities; the gendered reproduction of wealth; and the utility of concepts such as 'class spatialization' and 'spatial retreat' among the very wealthy in Manchester.

**Find out more:**  
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# Urban fortunes + skeleton city scapes

Dr Tom Goodfellow won the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research (IJURR) Best Article Prize for his research paper 'Urban Fortunes and Skeleton Cityscapes: Real Estate and Late Urbanization in Kigali and Addis Ababa'.



This article explores the puzzle of why construction and real estate development seem to draw in so much capital even in cases where governments have consistently tried to incentivise people to put their money elsewhere, or in cases where rents are clearly dropping and there is an oversupply of the very properties that people keep building.

Dr Goodfellow said that the paper came about the first time he ever went to Ethiopia in 2014 for another research project. "I was astounded by the scale of construction going on," he said. "Although I'd seen booming construction in other parts of the world, this was kind of extraordinary. It really dwarfed what was happening in other parts of that area of Africa."

In Ethiopia, he saw a country with very low income and a country that was trying to channel resources into agricultural transformation and industrial development. "But so many resources seemed to be going into buildings which were not used or only partially used, or people didn't know what they were for."

When talking to people involved in developing property, it became clear that this was actually a hostile environment for people who wanted to develop real estate. It was difficult to get loans to develop real estate from the banking sector and also very expensive to import materials from abroad. Interest rates were also incredibly high in banks, and it was very expensive to build.

"And yet it seemed to be so tempting to put money into the built environment," Dr Goodfellow said. "What became apparent when talking to various stakeholders is that the fact that it is so costly to develop real estate and the fact that people want to do it are two sides of the same coin."

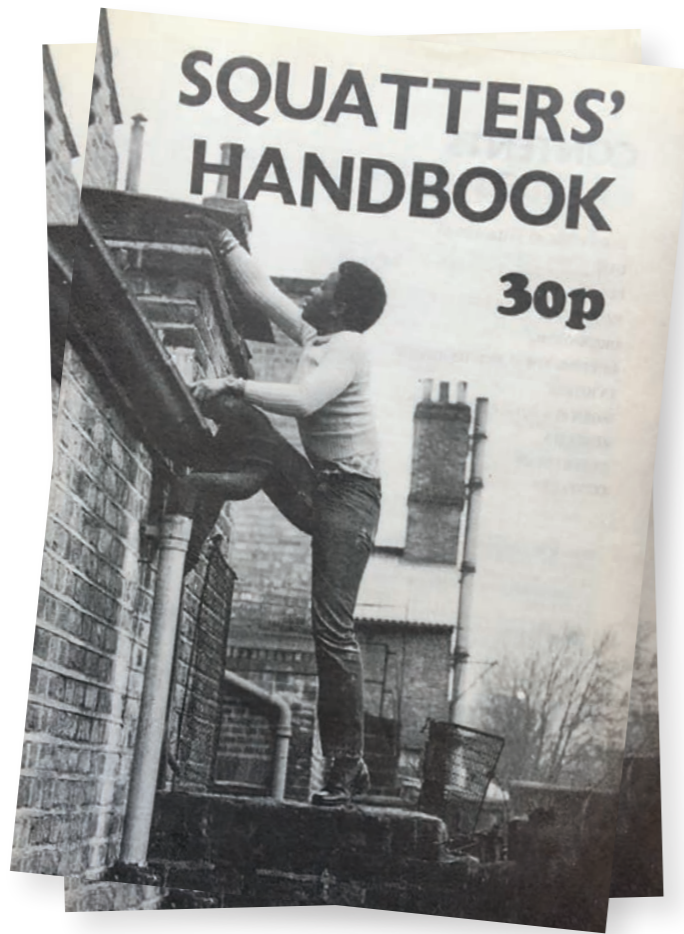
"Those who manage to go through the process - get the land, get the necessary materials and permissions and build something - can make a lot of money. But then, over time, the idea of real estate as the 'safest bet' takes on a life of its own. Even when the rent starts to drop and the demand isn't really there, people are still doing it."

The lack of effective taxation on properties and rental incomes coming from properties was also a contributing factor to the desire to build. "Authorities collect income taxes and taxes from businesses quite well at the national level in both Ethiopia and Rwanda, but then there is a loophole where rich elites can accumulate vast amounts of property and make a lot of money renting them out and often pay very little tax on that."

**“Figuring out how to deal with that is a big challenge.**  
If you do have a banking system where people don't want to save their money because inflation rates are so high, and a situation where it is very difficult to find productive industries to invest in, it will always be tempting to invest in buildings, so the challenge is how to make sure they're the kind of buildings that have real lasting benefit.”

**Find out more:**  
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# Making Space



As part of the ESRC Festival of Social Sciences in November 2018, Making Space brought together archival research on the fascinating (if often overlooked) history of squatting and housing movements in the UK.

Written by Dr Sam Burgum.

In addition to using material from more formal archival institutions - such as the Bishopsgate Institute and Black Cultural Archives - the exhibition also featured activist collections from the Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS) archives and Resistance Exhibition with whom I have been taking part in regular community-led archiving workshops in London, inviting activists to bring their collections for digitisation (leaflets, powers, letters, newspaper clippings, photos, videos...).

One of the aims of Making Space was to use these archives in order to 'unsettle' the ways in which we have become accustomed to think about ownership, entitlement, and the accepted limits of what we can or cannot do with property. In the context of the current UK housing crisis, in which at least 200,000 houses are long-term empty whilst rough sleeping and homelessness increase year-on-year, returning to these histories of squatting, trespass, and direct housing action allows us to frame property use differently. By putting the past into action through archives and exhibitions, the aim was to re-orientate our accepted narratives of housing and property, and subsequently open up possibilities for alternatives in the present.



Open for one week at the Union St Co-op café in Sheffield, the intention was to bring these histories to a public audience, but also to create opportunities for debate, networking, and engagement with movements and campaigns dealing with urban inequalities and injustices today. Throughout the exhibition, each event in the timeline was connected and compared to housing and property conflicts in the present, featuring material from both national and Sheffield-based campaigns (including Acorn tenants union, Assist asylum support, and the Sheffield tree campaign). The exhibition also fell over the same weekend as a national convergence of Reclaim the Power in Sheffield (a UK-based direct action network fighting for social, environmental and economic justice) creating opportunities for interaction between activists, academics, the public, and history.

*The exhibition was accompanied by a zine, and there are plans afoot to take the posters to events, cities and festivals throughout the UK in 2019. Written by Dr Sam Burgum.*

Find out more:  
[www.squattinglondon.wordpress.com](http://www.squattinglondon.wordpress.com) ✉ [s.burgum@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:s.burgum@sheffield.ac.uk) 🐦 @sjburgum



# Creating spaces for social innovation: coproduction in action

■ Devolution to English city-regions has reignited the debate on effective mechanisms and scales for citizen participation in urban decision-making. The ESRC-funded Jam and Justice project seized the opportunity of Greater Manchester's devo deal to explore what 'co-production' offers in addressing this challenge, with a commitment to generating understanding, building capacity and informing strategy and policy development. As the project enters its final year, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) are turning project findings into actions, building on the evidence base to stimulate policy debate, direct investment and develop organisational capacity and approaches. ■ Stimulated by the team's *Developing Co-Productive Capacities* resources, GM Mayor Andy Burnham recently invited his ten Local Authorities to support development of communities of practice for co-production. Tools are now being trialled with city-regional authorities in Sheffield, the West Midlands and Gothenburg to help them assess the scope and limits of co-production, generating an urban resource package with international relevance. ■ At the heart of Jam and Justice is an Action Research Collective (ARC) formed of academics, practitioners, public servants and active citizens. Since its inception in 2016, the ARC has worked to



Photos: Allen Mellia

create spaces for social innovation to get citizens engaged in decision-making, assembling an evidence base through 10 learn-by-doing projects, each tackling a discrete urban challenge. ■ The first project initiated was the *People's Republic of Energy*. Delivery partners Carbon Coop surveyed international good practice, informing "GM Energy Futures" – a prospectus mapping out the imagined journey of a new energy company from 2020 to 2035. The prospectus was launched at the Mayor's Green Summit in March 2018, which supported a fresh commitment to explore the creation of a municipally-owned energy company. The Summit itself was also informed by co-productive research. In 2017, Urban Studies and Planning embedded a postgraduate researcher at the GM Low Carbon Hub, the arm of the Combined Authority dedicated to reducing the city-region's carbon footprint. Ryan Bellinson is funded by Mistra Urban Futures, as part of the international research programme *Realising Just Cities* of which Jam and Justice is one part. Ryan's role is to support the integration of different forms of expertise and skills into the policy process, with a specific focus on improving engagement with citizens and civil society groups on environment policy and climate change. Reviewing the impact of this research, Cllr Alex Ganotis (chair of the Low

Carbon Hub's board) judged that the expansive set of Summit listening events had transformed the shape of the whole endeavour. A new network, the Greater Manchester Climate Action Network, has also grown out of the research. Meanwhile, the creative flavour of Carbon Coop's collaboration drew in a diverse range of stakeholders. The NGO has subsequently obtained Horizon 2020 funding to roll out similar activities in cities across Europe, from mapping exercises to immersive street theatre. ■ Jam and Justice has seeded projects that have impact beyond their size. Co-analysis of the data from the different Jam and Justice projects is underway in the ARC, ready for the launch of key findings during National Coproduction Week from 1-5 July 2019.

[www.jamandjustice-rjc.org/our-projects](http://www.jamandjustice-rjc.org/our-projects)

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# Books

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**Burgum S** (2018) *Occupying London: Post-Crash Resistance and the Limits of Possibility* (Routledge)

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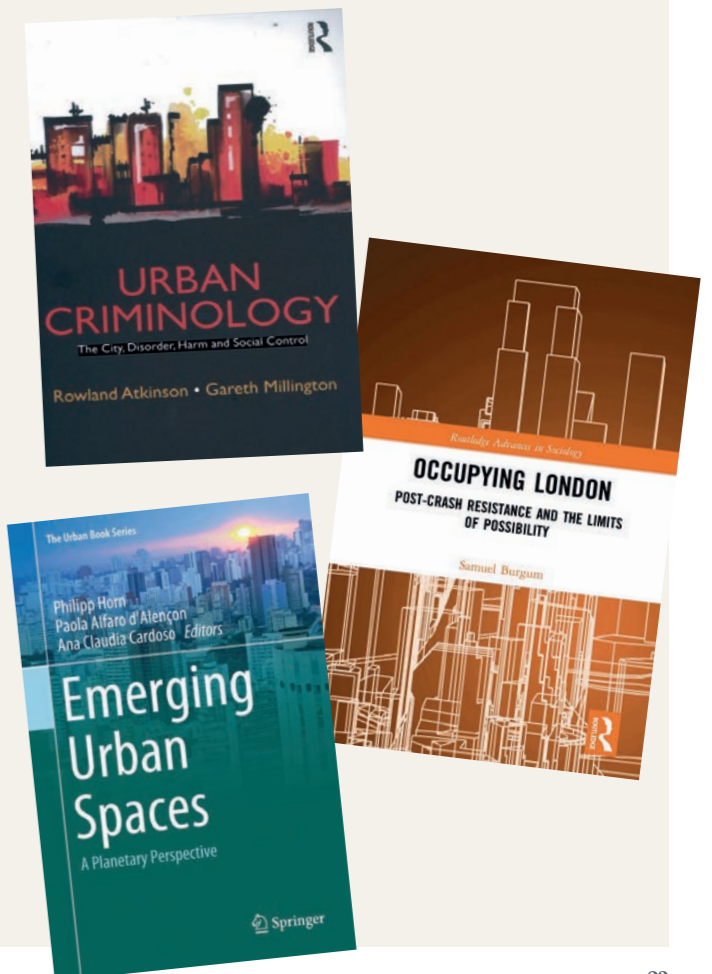
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An aerial photograph of a city skyline, likely Sheffield, is arranged in a circular, globe-like shape. The buildings are densely packed and vary in height, with some taller skyscrapers. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid on it.

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