



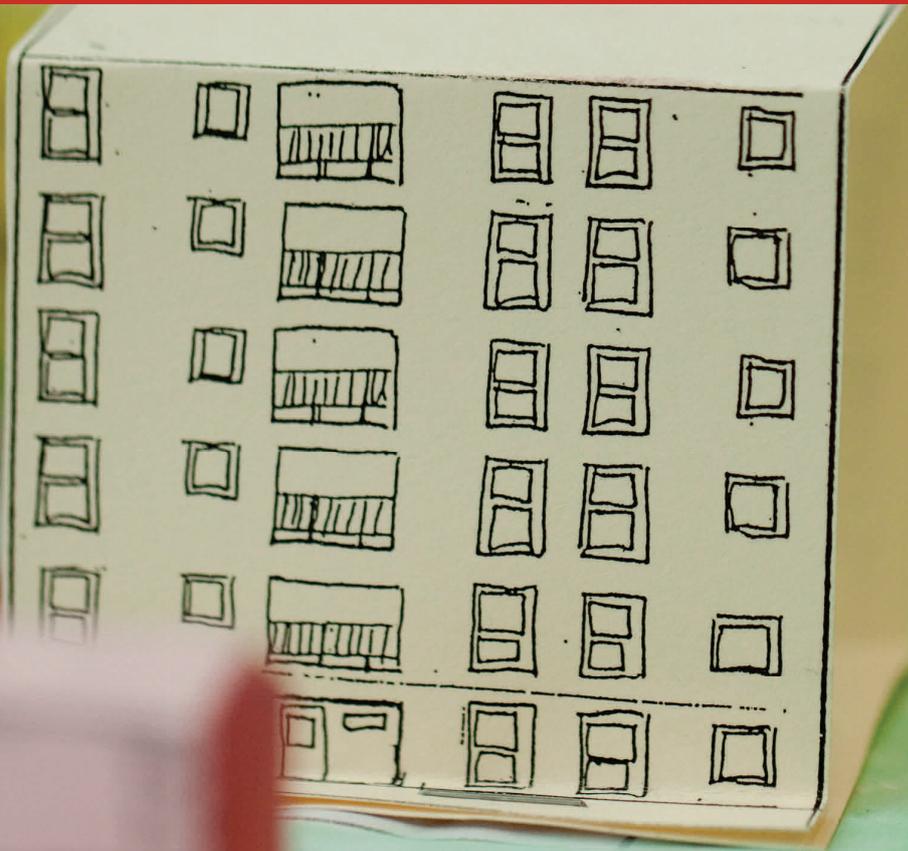
The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

Issue 02 / Spring 2015

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# insight.

the research newsletter of the Department of Town and Regional Planning



# initial insights.



This second edition of Insight will be the final research newsletter of the Department of Town and Regional Planning before we assume our new identity as the Department of Urban Studies and Planning in September this year. But don't worry! The future as 'USP' is bright and this newsletter reflects the vibrancy, breadth and relevance of our research.

We begin with a piece on a project that I have been working on in collaboration with various funders over the past few years, including Rightmove plc, the British Academy and the Bank of England. The message is that there is much to be learned from 'big data' but also that we need to remain circumspect about the grand claims people make about it.

We then move on to highlight Ed Ferrari's Sheffield-based 'Travel to School' project, which he worked on with Sue Easton. This prestigious Economic and Social Research Council grant has produced a wealth of policy-relevant insights about school catchments and travel patterns, in addition to a growing number of academic publications. Both these projects rely on computationally-demanding large datasets but they also reflect the strong policy links of the Department - a key feature of TRP since its foundation in 1965.

Our next four 'project focus' pieces illustrate nicely the diversity and relevance of our work across a wide range of subject matter. John Henneberry's EU-funded SEEDS project is a major European research project involving partners from the UK, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium and highlights the importance - and also the challenges - of making effective use of vacant sites in urban areas. Heather Campbell's ESRC/N8 funded project asks pressing questions about the co-production of knowledge at a time when the academy faces pressures of fiscal constraint. The 'Making Knowledge That Matters' programme is a critical intervention in the intellectual life of our discipline.

Finally, we have two projects which demonstrate the

centrality of TRP in setting agendas within the planning profession itself and within our home city. Craig Watkins' co-authored report for the Royal Town Planning Institute on 'The Value of Planning' offers a wide-ranging review of the relevance and importance of planning, as well as some trenchant critique of planning's critics. Closer to home, Gordon Dabinett's fourth 'State of Sheffield' report makes a nuanced assessment of the social and economic opportunities and challenges our cities face. This year's report looks at the wider context to consider how Sheffield compares with cities at a European and global scale.

Within this edition we also highlight a number of other recent and ongoing research projects, including those by Tom Goodfellow, Sarah Payne, John Flint, Paula Meth, Aidan While, Steve Connelly and Rich Dunning. The message from these is clear: TRP remains at the forefront of planning research, it takes a global view and we are funded by a wide range of national and international funders from the charity, public and private sectors.

Our publications over the last 12 months provide more evidence - if it were needed - that this is a great place to do research. The diversity of topics is striking, as is the number of staff making an impact. From Rowland Atkinson's study of urban deviance and Paula Meth's examination of violence and men in urban South Africa, to Matthew Cotton's research on environmental justice and Jamie Gough's interpretation of local and national varieties of capitalism, our research has wide appeal and a range of intellectual ancestors. It also provides for entertaining and stimulating seminar exchanges.

The final word in this introduction, however, must go to the wonderful Victoria Henshaw, our late colleague whose work inspired so many and brought to TRP her infectious enthusiasm and boundless energy for research. Her inspiration continues in a wide variety of ways, such as through the doctoral research of Jieling Xiao and Morag Rose and in the recent 24 hour Inspiration for Life event ([www.inspirationforlifeblog.wordpress.com](http://www.inspirationforlifeblog.wordpress.com)), but most of all in the knowledge of a colleague who loved her work and shared it with unbridled joy. As we move to the future as Urban Studies and Planning, we seek to follow Victoria's example and inspire others along the way.

Alasdair Rae

Acting Director of Research

## project focus.

### 'Big data' can help us to forecast future housing market pressures, but we need to remain cautious

**Funded by the British Academy and with access to a large and unique dataset from a key partner (Rightmove), Alasdair Rae has sought to challenge and extend our understandings of housing market search data in particular, and 'big data' in general.**

As most people know, the housing market plays a hugely significant role in the national and global economy. In addition, it also has a very significant role to play in the field of planning, since the issue of where to build housing is one of the most contested policy issues we currently face.

One of the key planning policy challenges in relation to housing is understanding how people search for housing and what shape housing markets take in a spatial sense. The problem here is that the traditional data sources for this (migration and commuting statistics from the Census) only tell us about where people actually moved to and from and not where they wanted to move to in the first place, if housing were available.

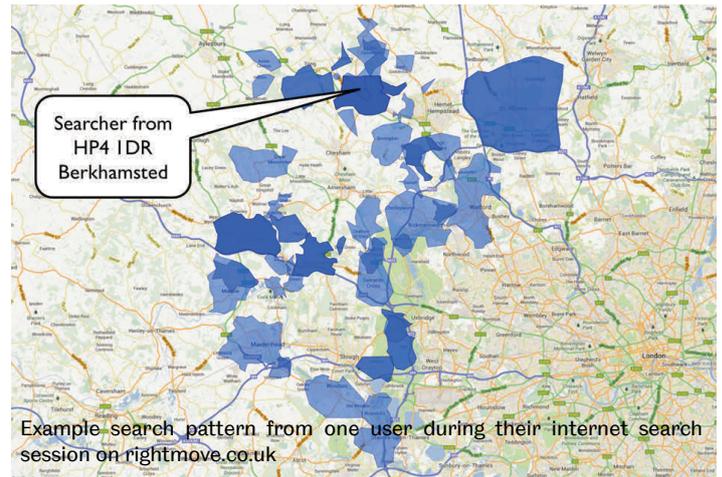
The Rightmove data I've been using offers us a new way of looking at a longstanding policy problem. One set of data relates to how people draw their search areas onto a Google map in Rightmove's website, whereas the other dataset I've been working with relates to how people search using geographical terms, such as 'Kensington', 'SW11', 'Chorlton' or 'Sheffield'. For each kind of data I've been working with samples which are in the region of 800,000 to 3.4 million records. An example of this data is shown in the map opposite, where a user from HP4 IDR (to the west of London) searches 70 different areas during a single internet search session on rightmove.co.uk.

The data I'm looking at, as with any large dataset, contain a lot of 'noise', so it has been necessary for me to find some way of filtering it. It is also important to say here that, despite notions to the contrary emerging from more enthusiastic big data advocates, this kind of work does not replace the need for theory or analysis but probably increases it.

#### Key findings

There are three main findings which have emerged from the project and which external partners are most interested in. The first is that there are significant spatial differences between housing search pressure and the

available housing stock. This is a rather obvious finding in some respects but it has never before been possible to illustrate this at a fine-grained geographical scale for the whole country.



Secondly, it seems that it is increasingly possible with such data to identify problems before they become fatal and that predicting what will happen in the housing market using real search data seems equally feasible.

Finally, it is clear that the well-known differences between the London housing market and the rest of England are particularly prominent in relation to the geographical scale at which people search for housing. This has allowed me to develop highly localised housing search areas across the capital - and the rest of England - which provide new information on the shape, scale and intensity of housing search.

#### The road to Threadneedle Street

This project has sought to challenge the status quo by drawing upon a new dataset and developing new research methods. It has also fed into projects locally and has led to the definition of new housing market areas which could be used by local and national government to improve planning for housing. More widely, it has captured the interest of the Bank of England, who are particularly interested in the approach in relation to the ways in which it could help forecast what will happen in the housing market at a very local level and – potentially – help them prepare better for future shocks.

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# project focus.

## Secondary data helps to reveal a complex web of travel to school decisions

Using travel to school as a means of opening up the debate about school choice, Ed Ferrari discovers a complex web of travel patterns across Sheffield.

Ed Ferrari and Sue Easton have recently completed a project looking at the interrelationships between local schools and local housing markets by examining the journeys that children make to school. The project was one of the first to be funded by the Economic and Social Research Council's Secondary Data Analysis Initiative, which aims to exploit past investments in survey and administrative data collections as well as enhance capacity in advanced methods in quantitative analysis. The project involved close collaboration with Sheffield City Council.

### Policy goals pulling in different directions

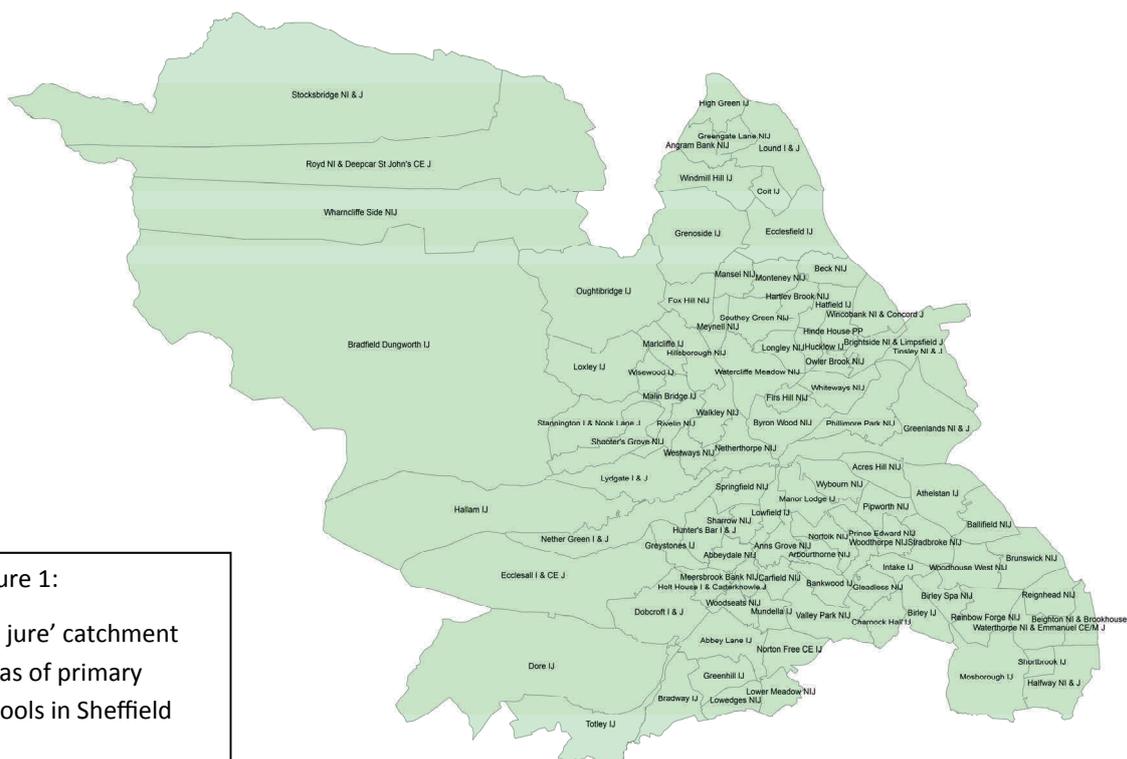
The motivation for the project lay in a simple concern: as more parents exercise choice over their children's schooling and more children attend schools other than their nearest schools, policy goals to encourage active transport (walking or cycling) and to reduce the demand for travel are pulling in a different direction to current education policy. The picture is likely to be highly geographically uneven. In cities where the 'best' schools



raise local house-prices, more affluent householders may be able to in effect 'buy' a shorter (and potentially more healthy) commute for their children. Although there have been studies on the effects of school quality on house prices and of school choice on commuting behaviour, few studies have sought to integrate these.

### Working with the data

At its heart the project involved the secondary analysis of existing quantitative datasets. The researchers had access to an anonymous data set that allows the linking of children's home postcodes to the locations of the schools they attend. This data set contains an indication of the usual mode of travel (which schools collected from 2009-2011) and some socioeconomic indicators (such as whether the child is eligible for free school meals).



## project focus.

Using a Geographic Information System (GIS) the home and school locations can be mapped for all pupils. A network analysis model, using Ordnance Survey's Mastermap Integrated Transport Layer (ITN) with Urban Paths, allows for an accurate estimation of the 'real world' travel route, distance and approximate time to be computed for each pupil. Finally, a set of multilevel models are specified to assess the determinants of travel behaviour drawing on characteristics of the pupil, their neighbourhood and their school.

### Catchment areas and travel patterns

One thing that is clear from the study is that the 'real' catchment areas, taking into account travel to school, are very different from the official school catchment areas. The latter are shown in Figure 1 (below opposite). In contrast, Figure 2 (below) shows a complex arrangement of overlapping catchment areas, which are based on the 65% of pupils who live closest to their school (in terms of distance). The 'real' life catchment areas of schools overlap considerably, and some neighbourhoods benefit from proximity to several schools, with a complex web of travel patterns.

It would appear that commuting patterns for school-children depend more on their socioeconomic characteristics than the 'urban form' characteristics of their neighbourhood (such as residential density and road layouts). Children in some neighbourhoods have much less in the way of choice. Previous research has shown that less than half of all schoolchildren attend their nearest school, instead travelling to more distant schools for a range of different reasons. These patterns vary considerably according to the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the individual pupil and their neighbourhood.

One of the more surprising results is the extent of 'excess commuting' taking place across Sheffield. The evidence here will hopefully lead to a more effective debate about the wider environmental and health implications that result from current education policy and how these go beyond matters related to the classroom.

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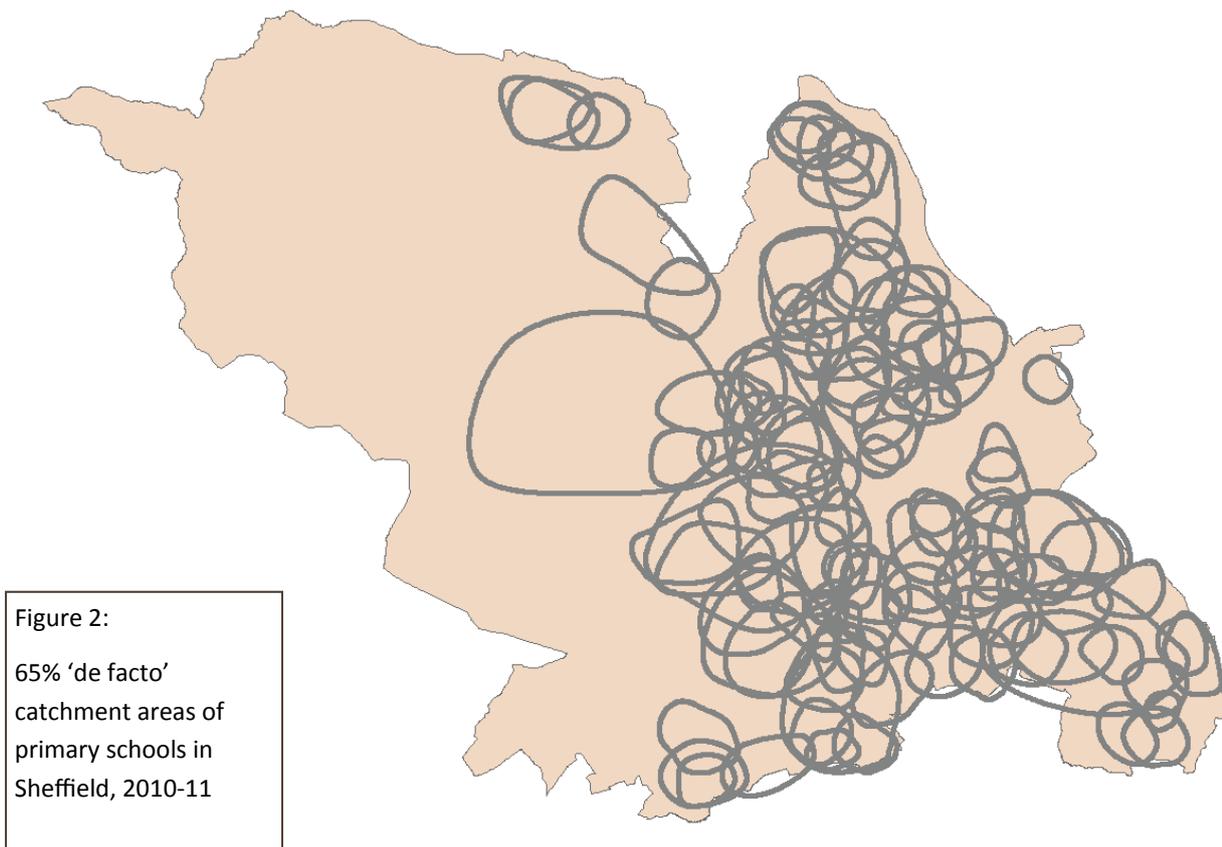


Figure 2:  
65% 'de facto'  
catchment areas of  
primary schools in  
Sheffield, 2010-11

# project focus.

## Short term use can lead to positive long term outcomes

**Creating a supportive environment for temporary use of vacant sites should be a priority for planning policy-makers across Europe, John Henneberry finds.**

Since January 2012, John Henneberry has been leading a team on TRP's contribution to SEEDS, a major European research project involving academic and practice partners from across the North Sea Region (UK, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium). The project is an interdisciplinary, applied research programme that explores the temporary re-use of vacant urban land and buildings, and aims to promote such schemes through innovative spatial planning policy.

A series of pilot projects, hosted by five of the SEEDS partner countries, were used as test-beds for new temporary re-use and regeneration ideas. These pilots have also been used to highlight how current legislation, policy and strategies are no longer fit for purpose. The work is drawing to a close this summer, and was marked by the final conference that was held in Sheffield in April 2015, and subsequently, the publication of a final report.



Urban food gardening Linnéstaden, Gothenburg — Sweden

### Paradigms and Best Practice

Sheffield's part of the research – titled 'Paradigms' – explored and evaluated existing planning policies and case studies in order to develop shared innovation frameworks and evidence for transnationally transferable land use strategies. The work was initiated through the development of a conceptual framework, which defined temporary and vacant land uses, examined drivers of urban change, and set out the institutional structures and policies that shape the development of such uses. This conceptual



framework provided seven broad site descriptors through which SEEDS case studies could be evaluated, including the urban context and development trajectory; economic circumstances; governance and policy; the social and cultural setting; physical characteristics; the legal structure and the stakeholder interests. This analysis was framed by an approach to evaluation that identified how short-term use can shape the transition to desirable long-term outcomes.

The SEEDS partners reviewed case studies from across Europe and North America to identify 'good' and 'bad' temporary use practice, and both opportunities and constraints for transnational transfer. Relevant planning policies in each of the partner nations were also reviewed and assessed against the seven cross-cutting drivers of policy performance developed at the start of the project.

### Findings and recommendations

Two overarching questions shaped our research – how do the extant policy environments in SEEDS partner countries contribute to the enterprising and sustainable use of vacant, derelict and stalled sites? And, are these policy environments capable of stimulating the use of such sites in an enterprising and sustainable way?

The research found that increased intra-national and transnational sharing of best practice with respect to fostering temporary use would encourage a more consistent policy approach at all geographical scales, which is critical in enabling temporary users who often have limited resources, time, and expertise in land and property development. Currently, public policy and legislation related to land and property development in the SEEDS partner countries by and large focuses on long-term development objectives and pays scant attention to temporary use. The recommendations set out in our findings addressed this bias, and harness the power of temporary use, addressing both policy and practice.

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# project focus.

## Making Knowledge That Matters: Realising the potential of co-production

Asking big questions about the role of universities and the purpose of social sciences are at the heart of Heather Campbell's current research project, which is funded by the N8 and the Economic and Social Research Council.



The co-production of knowledge, when academics and non-academics work together, has the potential to generate research that achieves both intellectual excellence and public benefit.

Such collaboration is not new, but in the past has tended to take a back seat to more conventional forms of research. Now, with enormous changes taking place because of austerity measures, particularly in the public sector, there is scope for universities to become more involved with the outside world and to ask more pertinent research questions.

### Making knowledge that matters

The focus of the Making Knowledge That Matters programme is on helping academics and non-academics to work well together on research questions.

As part of the programme, we will ask how academic ways of operating can be modified to aid co-production. For instance, there are issues in how research is commissioned, funded and started. For academics working with external partners, is enough attention paid at the outset to sharing and understanding the problem to be tackled, and ensuring that the question is meaningful for all involved?

### The programme

There are four components to the programme: scoping interviews with non-academics, a workshop, pilot projects and a final report. At the workshop a range of institutional and practice changes were identified that may lead to better (co-produced) research.

Institutional changes included increased recognition of the value of co-produced research; more support for untried research approaches; greater commitment to partnership building, reciprocity and reflective learning.

The main changes in practice highlighted as being important included: more effort to learn from the process of research; more funding to sustain partnerships between

projects; greater understanding of the difference between partnership and co-option.

### Pilot projects

In February 2015, five pilot projects started at northern universities.

The University of Manchester is working with local authorities, businesses, training providers and colleges to look at the need for training and skills in the local economy, in the context of devolution.

The University of York is working with the NHS and police on street triage, with a particular focus on responding to incidents that involve people with mental health issues.

Durham University is working on two projects. One is looking at diverse ethnic communities in Leeds and the role of intermediaries in building safe spaces for interaction. The other is considering alternative models and understandings of impact.

The University of Leeds is exploring city-wide public, private and academic collaboration to develop a 'co-production lab', with a focus on how to build relationships before deciding on research questions.

### Looking beyond the academy

Overall, Making Knowledge That Matters is crucial to the broader question of what the role of universities should be, what their purpose is, and whether the social sciences are fit for purpose. For a long time, universities didn't have to concern themselves much with the outside world. But these questions are becoming increasingly pertinent, and it will be interesting to see what we find during the remainder of the programme.

Note: This is an edited version of an article that first appeared in Funding Insight on March 5, 2015. For more articles like this visit: [www.researchprofessional.com](http://www.researchprofessional.com)

🌐: [www.n8research.org.uk](http://www.n8research.org.uk) 🌐: [www.esrc.ac.uk](http://www.esrc.ac.uk)

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# project focus.

## Setting the agenda within the profession and within the city

### The Value of Planning

Craig Watkins is co-author (with David Adams, University of Glasgow) on a key RTPI report on the economic value of planning. Together they argue for a broader understanding of 'planning' and its role in economic growth.

Published in June 2014, 'The Value of Planning' offers a wide-ranging review of research regarding the economic value of planning. Planning is about improving places by helping them to function better economically as well as socially and environmentally. It therefore has a key role in supporting growth.

Planning is played out in the deployment of a range of policy instruments intended to shape, regulate and stimulate the behaviour of market actors and to build their capacity to do so. To maximize the value of planning and its role in helping to create places where people want to live, work, relax and invest, we need to:

- recognise the full breadth of planning including the range of 'policy instruments' that contribute to successful places;
- generate and share evidence relating to this range of instruments that is useful to policy-makers and practitioners; and,
- develop the policy and practice that helps to deliver the greatest value from planning.

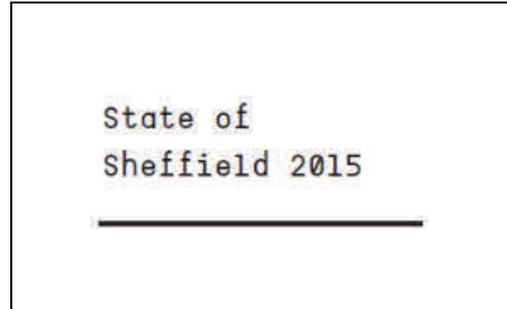
'The Value of Planning' makes a call to policy-makers and practitioners to respond to the challenges of operating in a complex environment where the demands of the market narrow the focus and vision of a variety of stakeholders.

There is also a role for research. The relationship between planning and economic growth is necessarily complex. More research is required to fully understand the value of planning. This sets the agenda for a future RTPI-sponsored research programme.



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### State of Sheffield 2015

For the past 4 years, Gordon Dabinett has co-authored an annual report on the city of Sheffield, which attempts to make a balanced assessment of how the city is doing and what challenges and opportunities it faces. The 'State of Sheffield' report is written for Sheffield Executive Board and is jointly authored by Gordon and Andi Walshaw (Sheffield City Council).

The 2015 report looks at Sheffield in a range of ways—backwards, outwards, inwards and forwards. Key themes in the report are global city comparisons, financial vulnerability and climate change.

"This year we looked at Sheffield in the wider context," Gordon notes, "making data comparisons on a European and global scale. Businesses in Sheffield trade throughout the world and people educated in the city go elsewhere in the world."

"A global city is defined by its power and influence and such cities tend to hold seats of government, media, and finance and to have more of a connection with one another, rather than other cities in the same country. Sheffield is a secondary city, but this does not mean it is second best. Secondary cities contribute to growth. And Sheffield is a very 'livable' city, perhaps more likely to provide 'quality of life' outcomes than a more economically successful city that will be more expensive to live in."

"Prior to the economic crisis in 2007, Sheffield's economic performance was strong, like other European cities. Post-crisis Sheffield has been affected by government austerity but has still performed well around the labour market. Economic productivity is however a challenge."

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# research projects.

In this section we highlight a number of our current (and recently awarded) research projects.

## Strategic Housing Market Assessment in Rotherham

This project follows on from an SHMA carried out in Sheffield in 2013. In Rotherham the primary objective has been to develop a comprehensive and reliable assessment of Rotherham's housing market, including identified sub-markets. The project seeks to support the Metropolitan Borough Council's neighbourhood planning framework by establishing general satisfaction with neighbourhoods, and also deliver recommendations relating to the development of housing policy and strategy.

Our work in Sheffield and Rotherham, which has been led by Ed Ferrari, has offered the opportunity to develop a wider understanding of housing markets across the Sheffield City Region and builds on our strong relationship with local government and associated bodies.

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## The political economy of property taxation

Funded by the International Centre for Tax and Development (ICTD) at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, this project seeks to generate new insights in relation to the uses and impacts of urban property taxation in Africa. Carried out by Tom Goodfellow, the research seeks to engage with two related development issues in tandem—ineffectual property taxation, and real estate development and speculation that serves to benefit elites, diaspora or international investors. In contrast to much existing research in this field, Tom argues that the problem of property taxation cannot be adequately understood without attention to the real estate sector and how it is affected (or potentially affected) by property tax reform. The project has involved intensive periods of fieldwork in Kigali and Addis Ababa and the research findings will be shared on the ICTD website soon.

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## Green Shoots, green homes?

Sarah Payne is currently examining UK housebuilding's 'capacity to act' on zero carbon housing policy within the constraints of ongoing housing market instability. Standardised design techniques and efficient construction methods remain a favoured strategy of UK housebuilders in

securing competitive returns. However, this approach often operates in tension with the environmental concerns of local and national Governments. Zero Carbon Housing is emerging as a key policy priority around the globe, with many Governments developing policies to intervene in conventional market-driven housebuilding practices. Sarah's research will shed light on the factors that are driving changes in behaviour in the housebuilding industry on this issue. This project is funded by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) Research Trust.

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## Welfare conditionality: Sanctions, support and behaviour change

Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, this five-year project is investigating the growing use of conditionality, through support and sanctions, across the welfare system in England and Scotland, and the impact of this on behaviour change and policy outcomes. The research team is drawn from six universities and includes John Flint and Jenny McNeill from TRP. The project includes interviews with key informants, focus groups and welfare practitioners and three waves of interviews with 480 welfare recipients across 10 case study cities.

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## Experiences of domestic violence within 'decent' settlements: comparative insights

Funded by the British Academy, this project examines how power relations between men and women shift as they move from slum settlements into formal state provided housing, comparing the new housing settlement of Hammonds Farm, Durban, South Africa with the slum colony upgrade at Karimadom, in Trivandrum, India. Empirical work is ongoing, including focus groups and interviews. The project is examining a raft of changes including economic, political, social and spatial, produced through housing formalisation. Early evidence points to positive changes for women (and men) in accessing housing that is legal, durable, safe, and private. Yet violence and gendered tensions have persisted, and in some cases become less visible as housing and everyday living has become less communal and more private. Poverty persists despite housing formalisation.

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# research projects.

## Infrastructure and planning

This project is part of a wider growth initiative, funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, to explore ways of Connecting Growth and Poverty within the Leeds City Region. Aidan While is leading a research team with colleagues at Sheffield Hallam University to maximise community benefits from the major infrastructure development scheduled for Leeds City Region over the next decade. The project involves close working with local stakeholders and major contractors to develop effective frameworks for procurement, planning obligations and employment and skills support. The project team intend to develop an action plan for future policy development and a good practice report for local authorities in the UK.

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## Connecting urban labour markets and deprived neighbourhoods

Also funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, this project seeks to explore the issue of 'deprived neighbourhoods' in relation to urban labour markets across the UK. The aim of the project is to develop a suite of policy proposals which can help local and national policymakers overcome the traditional disconnect between deprived neighbourhoods and city regional economic growth. The project team is lead by Alasdair Rae and is supported by collaboration with colleagues at Sheffield Hallam University.

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## Translation across borders

Lead by Steve Connelly, and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), this project aims to enhance the legacy of the AHRC's Connected Communities programme by exploring the translation of university-led research into governmental policy processes. At the heart of the project is a close observation of the use and translation of research outputs generated by Connected Communities projects as they move in to central government and local government processes. This involves the interaction of the academic team, research analysts and policy teams in Whitehall and local practitioners responsible for the implementation of policy initiatives.

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## The English experience of 'soft' densification

Densification policies have been implemented in England since 1947 and, in strengthened form, since 1992. Significant levels of all forms of 'soft' densification have occurred over a sufficiently long period to permit the analysis of their processes and effects, and of the impact of policies on them. This project, which is funded by PUCA (a research agency of the French Government and attached to the General Directorate of Urban Housing and Nature) seeks to analyse the English experience of 'soft' densification in order to inform the development of French policy in this area.

The initial focus of the project is a quantitative overview of the varying incidence and nature of soft densification across England between 1992 and 2010, based on a range of spatially referenced data.

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## Examining housebuilder behaviour in a recovering housing market

Despite signals that the UK housing market is in a recovery phase, new housing output remains historically low and the affordability crisis is worsening. Lead by Sarah Payne, this project uses behavioural analysis to examine what changes speculative housebuilders have made to their core business functions since the onset of the recovery phase and considers what new policy measures might be needed to achieve the UK Government's housebuilding ambitions. The project is funded by the British Academy.

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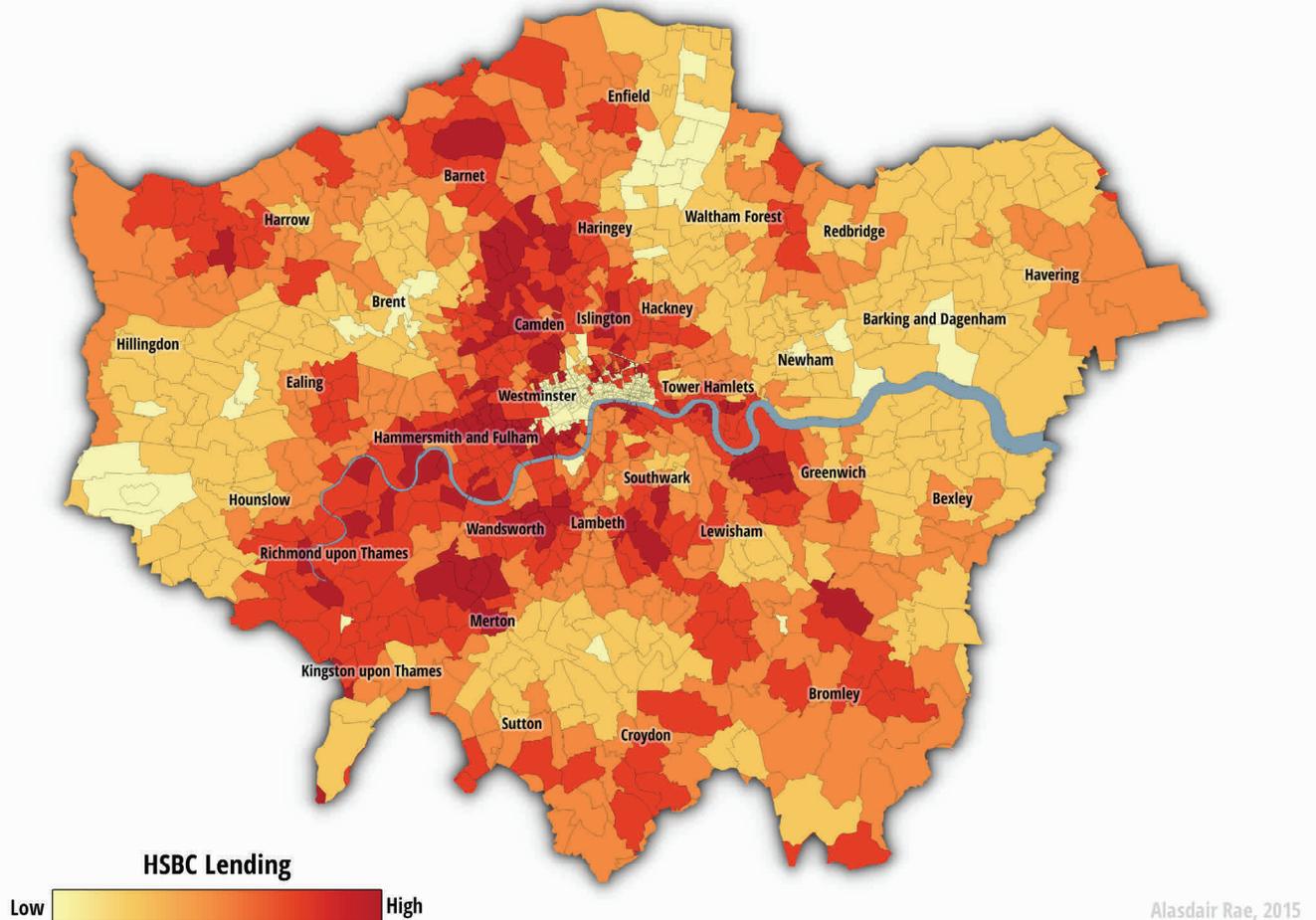
## Agent interactions in the housing market

Estate agents have been crucial in shaping owner-occupier housing search and bidding strategies; but this is changing. Recent research shows that UK house purchasers have only very limited exposure to agents, with purchasing decisions now influenced by internet listing services as well as a range of formal and informal contacts. This project explores agents' understanding of contemporary institutional arrangements and their role in shaping housing search behaviour in the UK and New Zealand. The project is lead by Richard Dunning and includes collaboration with colleagues at the University of Auckland.

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# featured graphic.

## The geography of mortgage lending in London



Newly released mortgage data at the postcode level in Great Britain allow researchers to explore in more detail than ever before the kinds of lending and rationing practices undertaken by major banks. We now have access to complete postcode-level lending data for seven major lenders: Barclays, Clydesdale, HSBC, Lloyds, Nationwide, RBS, and Santander. The total amount of outstanding mortgage debt covered in this first data release is £898.1 billion, with £18.7 billion of that in London (Council of Mortgage Lenders, 2013). The data for the seven separate lenders accounts for around 73% of the national mortgage market and cover the period up to the end of June 2013.

This featured graphic shows which London postcodes HSBC lends a lot in and which it doesn't. One conclusion we might draw from this is that HSBC has relatively low exposure in

poor areas and appears to lend disproportionately high amounts in more affluent areas.

Even when we take account of the wide spectrum of underlying house prices, the variable geography of bank lending practices revealed in the graphic is worthy of further scrutiny. With subsequent quarterly data releases and the use of additional datasets on socioeconomic status, it ought to be possible to explore issues of socio-spatial inequalities in mortgage finance in more detail.

**Alasdair Rae, The geography of mortgage lending in London, *Environment and Planning A*, 46 (8), 1778-1780.**

# publications.

In this section, we highlight some of our recent publications (TRP staff are listed in bold).

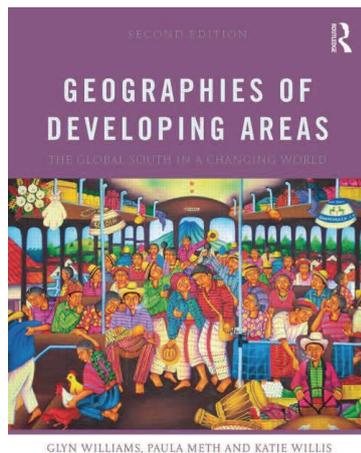
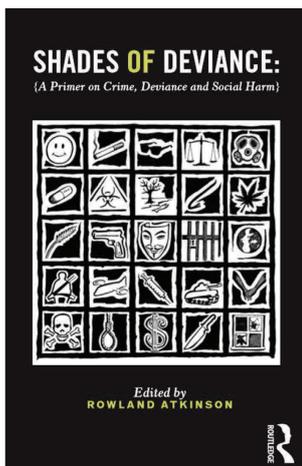
## Books

**Atkinson, R.** (ed.) (2014) *Shades of Deviance: A Primer on Crime, Deviance and Social Harm* (London: Routledge)

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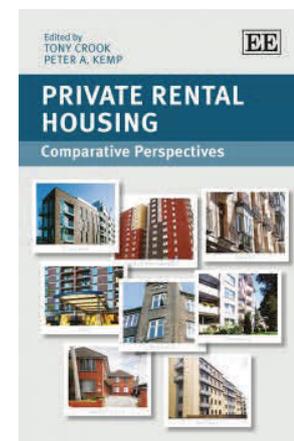
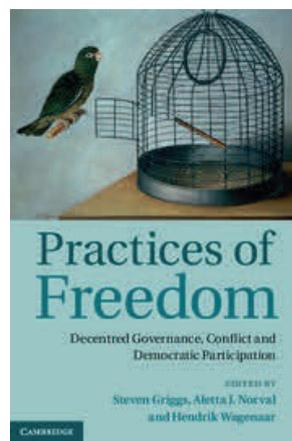
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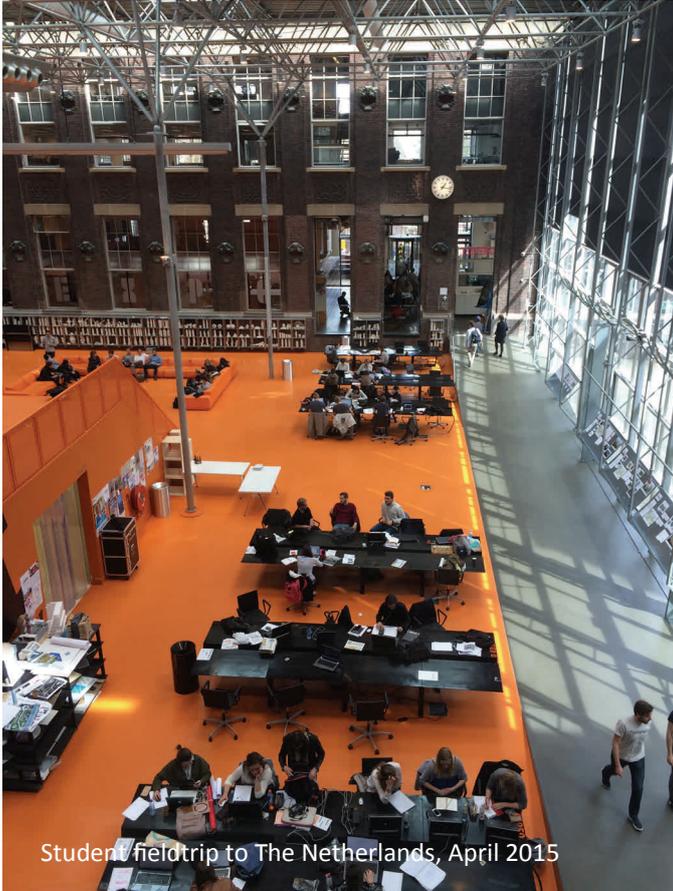


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# workshop report.

## Transience and Permanence in Urban Development Workshop, 14 -15 January 2015

Post-industrial cities have experienced a dramatic growth in vacant/derelict land and buildings, raising questions about how such sites may be used temporarily for social, economic or environmental benefit, and how these transient uses may affect the long-run trajectory of urban development. A burgeoning literature on temporary uses has evolved. However, this field is in need of consolidation and development.

John Henneberry, Simon Parris, Kerry Bennett and Claire Jamieson organised a research workshop for critical reflection on transience and permanence in urban development. It was supported by Interreg North Sea Region through the SEEDS project and by the Urban Institute. The workshop attracted a diverse set of papers from both academics and practitioners, and a number of key themes emerged as common preoccupations and areas requiring further exploration.

A prominent theme was valorisation – modes, models and strategies for measuring the value of inherently complex and unique sites and situations. Related to this were discussions on the context provided by law and policy, and the disjunction between contextual change and established frameworks.



Groningen Sugar Factory—The Netherlands

Time also emerged as a significant area of interest – conceptualisations of time, the experience of time, and notions of transience. More broadly, the workshop illustrated the way that transience, the temporary and the interim, is often considered to be apart or unhinged from the orthodox or mainstream. Underlying these discussions is the question of why some cities and localities embrace temporariness, while others resist it.

📄: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/research/tpudworkshop](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/research/tpudworkshop)

✉: [j.henneberry@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:j.henneberry@sheffield.ac.uk)

## new staff.



### Rowland Atkinson

Rowland joined the University in September 2014 as Research Chair in Inclusive Society. He has a remit to develop inclusive society research across the Faculty of Social Sciences and specifically to encourage and stimulate funding proposals in that area.

Rowland's research interests focus upon gentrification and displacement; cities and crime; wealth, poverty and exclusion; segregation and urban security; and gated communities and fortress homes.

Most recently, he has been investigating the world of the super-rich in London and Hong Kong.

📄: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/staff/rowlandatkinson](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/staff/rowlandatkinson)

### Gwilym Pryce

Gwilym joined us at Sheffield in Autumn 2014 to lead the Sheffield Methods Institute, which aims to promote innovation in research methods across the social sciences. Gwilym's core research interests are in urban economics, with a particular emphasis on housing and mortgage markets.

📄: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/smi/about-us/gwilympryce](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/smi/about-us/gwilympryce)

During the past 12 months we have also been joined by **Tom Moore**, **Claire Jamieson** and **Ruth Hamilton** in Research Associate positions, each of whom is working on an externally funded research project.

**Staff contact details:** [www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/staff](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/staff)

# research school.

## FOR<sup>e</sup>THOUGHT

MAKING SPACE FOR PLANNING



In October 2014, a group of our PhD students launched a new research blog—**FOR<sup>e</sup>THOUGHT**—to provide a forum for online discussion about planning and planning research.

An opening series of blogs was commissioned around the theme of - 'what does planning mean today?'. Since then regular posts have ranged over topics such as the meaning of home and place; life without a car; affordable housing in the Global South; social exclusion in Tarlabasi, Istanbul; and what it means to be recognised as a 'planner'.

The aim of the blog is to create a place for intervention and debate over the purpose and application of the theory and practice of 'planning'; a site for forward thinking; a space for thought. The Editorial Team want to hear from you if you have an idea for a future post and want to contribute to the blog.

🌐: [www.sheffield-planning.org](http://www.sheffield-planning.org)

✉: [editor@sheffield-planning.org](mailto:editor@sheffield-planning.org)

## and finally ...



### 50th Anniversary Seminar Series

2015 is the 50th Anniversary of the Department of Town and Regional Planning. In recognition of this, throughout the year we are hosting a series of public Anniversary seminars from leading academics and policy-makers.

So far we have enjoyed talks from Dr Hugh Ellis (Town and Country Planning Association), Professor Gert de Roo (University of Groningen) and Professor Hal Pawson (University of New South Wales).

We look forward to talks from Clive Betts MP (Member of Parliament for Sheffield South East), Professor Vanessa Watson (University of Cape Town), Professor He Baogang (Nanyang Technological University), Professor Ian Cole (Sheffield Hallam University), Professor Ananya Roy (University of California, Berkeley) and Professor Robin Hambleton (University of the West of England).

🌐: [www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/seminarevents](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp/seminarevents)

### The Department of Town and Regional Planning, University of Sheffield

[www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/trp)

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