

Planning@LSE

An annual newsletter bringing you news and views from current students, alumni, past directors and the world of urban planning at the LSE.

Newsletter

ISSUE 29

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Wondered what your old classmates were up to? Curious about what RUPS students go on to do? This section is for you!
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Director's Update

This year's intake of students again came from all four corners of the globe with a good representation from North and South America, Asia, Europe and Africa. We had 22 students on RUPS and 6 students from our Urban Policy Double Degree with SciencesPo.

As you will see from the Planning Society news we spent the year not only in study - tucked away in S400 as many generations past have done, but also getting out into the field. This year saw our two city walks on the Southbank with Andy Thornley and through the heart of London with Alan and myself. Derek Diamond has retired from walking but given that he has now made his 80th year I suspect he has earned some rest! We also went with

RUPS alum Nick Jeffery through the Docklands.

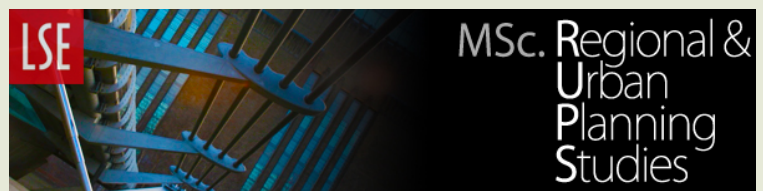
For our trips further afield, Alan took the group up to Manchester in the snow and bitter cold to learn about planning and regeneration in the north of England. For our spring trip we had the privilege to go to Torino where RUPS alumna and Director of Torino Strategica, Anna Prat and her team treated us to an amazing study visit. Please see the Planning Society news for more details!

On the research front we have also had a very successful year. Gabriel Ahlfeldt and I continue with our work on

Conservation Areas and are now focussing on London and the qualitative analysis more fully. This has been aided by a number of RUPS students who have acted as Research Assistants. Andy and I have delivered a paper on the 'Boris Effect' and planning in the suburbs and Alan and I are striding forward with our SUSPLAN research, which examines the tensions London faces when planning at higher densities.

So, all in all it has been an excellent year and we look forward to greeting the new intake of students in October!

-Dr. Nancy Holman



Offering students the opportunity to study on an internationally renowned one-year taught programme that takes an interdisciplinary approach to urban planning

Learning from each other

Learning is experience - everything else is just information

— Albert Einstein

Each year we try to bring together past alumni and leaders in planning and property with our current intake of students. We do this through special evening events and through our seminar series *GY450 Planning Practice and Research*, which runs in the Michaelmas Term. We could not do this without the kind generosity of alumni and friends of the programme who give up their time to come and be involved. We would like to give our thanks to these folks here.

GY450 Planning Practice & Research

Our seminar series that offers students the opportunity to hear from people working in planning many of whom are programme alumni - for this we would like to thank:

Jenny Holmes, Policy Manager GLA: An MSc RUPS graduate, she works in the areas of employment, skills and enterprise support for the GLA. She has over 10 years experience in economic

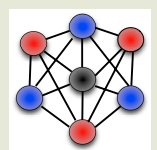
development in the public and private sectors and has worked for the LDA and SWRDA as well as in consultancy.

Robin Panrucker, Gensler : HR/ Talent Co-ordinator at Gensler. Robin deals with internships and university outreach for Gensler. Gensler is a global design, planning and strategic consulting firm networked across 43 locations and five continents. Gensler sponsors the MSc RUPS best student award.

Elizabeth Rapoport, UCL : Elizabeth is a doctoral candidate in Urban Sustainability at University College London. Her research focuses on the international movement and exchange of ideas in the design of sustainable urban settlements. She has nearly a decade of experience working on urban issues in the public, private and not for profit sectors in a number of countries around the world. She is a RUPS graduate

Veronique Turner, Croft Capital : Veronique began her career in development planning consulting at Brook Pooni + Associates in Vancouver. She now works for Croft Capital where she is involved in strategic planning and asset management of commercial property. She is a RUPS graduate

We would also like to thank **Duko Frankhuizen** and **Rachel Bramwell** who came to speak to us about getting graduate jobs!



If you would like to get involved in one of these events please let us know!

IN SUPPORT OF URBAN FARMING

---Ms Alexandra Payne

In recent years urban agriculture has become more popular across the western

world¹, with increasing numbers of city farms, allotments and urban gardens being used as planning tools in large cities.



There has been controversy surrounding the benefit of urban farms; suggestions that these spaces only serve an urban elite, complaints about the snobbery of foodies, and claims that these spaces are little more than gentrification and land-grabbing tools. Alongside these complaints it has been suggested that these spaces will never be able to feed the cities where they are being established – so why bother?

At the same time there has been a parallel focus on programs that 'green the ghetto' - trying to make environmental fixes in deprived areas. While these projects should be applauded for trying to beautify public space and for their desire to create more inhabitable neighborhoods, they often come up short as a comprehensive response to poverty.

Many new food-growing projects are trying to take on multiple goals, with more nuanced plans to attack the various problems presented by the 'ghetto'. We now see urban agriculture projects that try to address the economic disparities that lead to the environmental problems, as well as a multiplicity of social problems - Bad health, joblessness, poor education, and a basic lack of opportunities. In this way these projects stop being hobbies, and become tools for creating urban resilience.

For the last 4 years I have been working on urban food issues and food justice projects across the Tri-state area. The largest of these projects is an urban farm and food justice project in the South Ward of Newark. I would like to use my

experience with this project to introduce some information about the potential benefits that urban farms can provide, and why we should value these spaces.

SWAG Project (www.facebook.com/SWAGProject) started in 2010 when Planting Seeds of Hope, a NJ based NPO partnered with my planning consultancy Amplify to build an urban farm and educational space on the property of a local Hebrew Israelite Tabernacle. SWAG Project serves it's surrounding neighborhood by supplying fresh organic produce, offering hands-on education in agriculture and nutrition, piloting entrepreneurial activities, and building stronger community ties among neighbors.

First, some quick background on the area surrounding the farm. Newark is the 2nd poorest city in New Jersey, with 30% of its residents living below the poverty line². Since the 1960's, it has experienced urban decline similar to other northern industrial cities; a shrinking job market, followed by a shrinking population and white flight, deterioration of housing stock, and crime and joblessness rates well above the state and national average. Food poverty is also rampant, with high numbers of the population receiving SNAP/WIC assistance (food stamps), and a high incidence of residents dipping in and out of food insecurity. Much of Newark can also be considered a food desert or swamp³.

Our specific neighborhood, Weequahic has a high poverty rate, underfunded and understaffed local schools and lack of quality jobs and activities for young adults. It's residents also face unhealthy food choices and inadequate nutrition knowledge. There are few restaurants, corner stores, or groceries and most sell high calorie and/or fast foods. Furthermore, few of them are within walking distance (less than a mile). Our neighborhood also lacks a local community center or emergency food center within a 2-mile radius.

Enter SWAG Project. In our 4 years in the community, with a shoe-string budget, but an excellent volunteer base, we have: built a ¼ acre farm growing a combined 3,400 lbs of food (1,500 last year alone) begun renovations on our

building to act as a community center, hosted over 150 group education visits, engaged over 200 non-Newark visitors and volunteers, brought our community together for farm dinners and harvest celebrations, beautified our local neighborhood, and completed planning for a commercial greenhouse that will make us more financially self-sustaining by 2016. In this way able to address some of the problems facing our community. The goal of the following sections is to give you a brief overview of how my farm, and really, any urban farm, can be valuable to the community. I will talk about the benefits across 4 areas: healthy food production and provision, Educational opportunities, community building, and



community beautification.

Healthy Food Production and Provision

For a small farm, we are very productive. Last year was our 3rd year, and we managed to grow 1,500lbs of fruits and vegetables (that's 680 kilos) on about 800 sq ft of space. This year our space has tripled and we are hoping to grow over 4,000 lbs of food. That's almost 3,750 servings of fruit and vegetables⁴. While this is not enough to feed our entire neighborhood, we are able to supplement the local food supply. We run an onsite market for the neighborhood and donate the remainder to local emergency food providers. Last year we had over 200 visitors to our market and were also able to provide all the fresh food for our 80-person farm dinner. We do this at a fair price, charging less than most corner stores do for the produce, and well below what boutique groceries in more affluent neighborhoods charge.

An additional benefit to our being a food producer for our local residents is that the food doesn't need to travel far to reach the table. This gives people with low levels of access to food a direct source in their

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neighborhood, saving residents travel time (often upwards of 45 minutes), and providing them access to fresh, organic foods that most of the local corner stores do not carry. We are a source of chemical free and GMO free, organically grown fruits and vegetables. There is no organic market or store in our neighborhood, nor, as previously explained, a real full-scale grocery store. Furthermore, since our fruits and vegetables haven't traveled for weeks to reach their destination, they maintain their full nutritional value.

Educational Opportunities and Training

In the last 4 years our farm has partnered with the two local schools and hosted over 150 hands-on education classes (engaging with over 1,500 children from the local area alone) and run ongoing youth farmer workshop for 3 consecutive years. Our classes focus

on getting the kids to understand the importance of farms, where their food comes from, and also encourages them to work and get dirty.

(Most schools in our local area no longer have gym classes or a recess.) Over the winter we focus on cooking and nutrition workshops to get the kids excited about eating and to teach them what's healthy and how to prepare it.

Nutrition and farm education extends to adults as well. We realized that many of our residents had lost touch with cooking their own food, or, weren't sure what it really meant to eat healthy, or how to translate family recipes and cultural favorites into more nutritious meals. We spent the last few years working with one of the local chefs to set up cooking and nutrition classes for adults. We have also run a healthy living campaign extending our activities

on site to include yoga and hip-hop dance classes to get the community involved and active, and partnering with the local YMCA to talk about obesity and other local health issues.

The final part of our education piece is farmer training. Many local adults have come by to learn how to grow their own food. We have managed to create two paid (part-time) jobs on the farm - a farm manager and an education assistant. In the following years we will be building a hydroponic greenhouse and offering local adults and teens the opportunity to learn business and farming skills that will allow them to move into the green economy.

Creating Cohesion and Building Community

One of the biggest challenges we have faced is breaking down barriers in a distrustful community faced with crime and disenchanted with the idea of the friendly neighbor. When we started the farm, the residents in the surrounding neighborhood did not interact much with one another and there was a large fence that surrounded the entire property to keep residents out. It took us a year to convince the property owners to take it down. This effort proved to be more than symbolic, although it took us another 3 years to get the majority of the community involved.

In the beginning, people were wary of the religious group we work with, now they trust us and have become familiar with the Hebrew Israelites who host the farm. Now residents bring their kids in to see our vegetables grow and attend our community dinners and classes. In spring, students from a local mosque came and planted trees with our team, and the Baptist church nearby raised funds to help build our second farm. Sharing stories about food from their countries lead our Guianese and Jamaican neighbors to bring seeds for our farmer to plant; it lead the congregation to put together a cookbook with recipes from local residents. All this in a community where people didn't say hello to us or their neighbors 4 years ago. Although the police still stop by to check on me as a woman (and a white

one at that) in a 'dangerous' neighborhood, they now also stop by to get food from the market. Food did this; Farming did this. Working hard side-by-side to move dirt, build berms, plant seeds and maintain the farm allowed our neighbors to get to know each other on their terms.

Community beautification

One of the nicest benefits to our direct community has been the addition of a safe, open space for people to visit. At the farm we have been able to create a space where the local school children can visit, and a place where neighbors feel comfortable stopping by to chat with members of the project. We have also managed to get a number of the young men who had previously been



hanging around the block, smoking and drinking, to come in an volunteer, as well as keeping an eye on the property while our team members cannot be there. The kids who we worked with the last few years at school now feel ownership in their community. Two years ago we painted a mural with the help of a local artist, and the farm now stands as a place in the community that people are proud to talk about. Moreover, our work on the property has encouraged the congregants to raise money to fix the deteriorating building, and other homeowners have come to us for advice on planting their own gardens and how to improve their yards. In this way we have had an effect on the larger community, encouraging others to begin caring more for the neighborhood as well.

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Our end goal is to build a community development corporation and launch a combination of green economy and food-based commercial initiatives to ensure a financially sustainable future of community development activities. By creating a local food and health oriented CDC, we will ultimately be able to continue to support the projects broader objectives; improving health, economic activity, education, and strengthening community ties.

I am not giving our organization as an example of what every community should do, nor am I purporting that our project has solved all the problems within our community. Rather, I would suggest that community run urban farming projects can be, and grow into, institutions that take on the myriad of problems facing many impoverished inner cities. I suggest that these spaces have value to cities in their ability to improve health, provide educational and economic opportunities, and also to beautify and bring together communities.

NOTES

1. People in the global south have long grown their own food in urban areas and continue to do so, the new media and social phenomena of the urban garden or farm is only novel or 'new' the western and northern hemispheres
2. According to 2010 ACS data (U.S. Census American Community Survey)
3. Food Deserts are areas with little to no access to food (aka restaurants, grocery stores, etc. Food Swamps were are areas where people have high levels of access to unhealthy, calorie dense foods.
4. The USDA recommends that youths eat 2 cups of fresh fruits and vegetables a day, and adults between 2-3 cups.





Looking back I realised that nearly every single activity of the LSE Planning Society was in one way or the other connected to food. This gives me the wonderful chance to reassure future students that the pursuit of the Good Life will still be possible during this intense one-year programme. But rhetorically this food theme also gives me the great opportunity to quote a ridiculous Austrian proverb, about everything having an end, apart from sausages which have two. As this unique end is coming closer at an incomprehensible pace, it is high time to take a teary-eyed look back at the past year.

Surely, the highlights of the society's activities were the two trips we undertook. We ventured up North to Manchester for two days in January despite the inclement weather conditions which held the country in an icy grip, nearly grounding us all in London due to half a centimetre of snow. Alan, who accompanied us through the city, showed us decaying steel mills, glitzy regeneration schemes, a post box that survived a bomb attack and the once poverty ridden streets Friedrich Engels walked down more than a century ago.

A few months later we were again wandering through a city together but we swapped freezing hands for freezing Gelato: We were lucky enough to be invited to Turin by a RUPS alumna, Anna Pratt, who is head of the city's strategic planning department. In this one week we learned about Turin's Olympic legacy, the struggle to keep the economy growing and about large scale



urban developments. Apart from that we savoured every single ray of sunshine, although to our horror we realised that it also rains in Italy, we engaged in slightly competitive pasta making and were delighted to find out that in Turin you get unlimited free food when buying a drink.

Over the past year we got together with past-years graduates a few times for drinks, who after emphasising that the Good life will be possible during the year, had much to tell about life during and after the programme. The last time we met was end of June on Primrose Hill for a wonderful picnic.

This year's students are on the verge of becoming alumni and will be dispersed around the globe quicker than you can say Bratwurst. But despite being a formal connection to the university, the programme and its alumni it gave us students a wonderful opportunity to get together, to organise all the things we did over the past year ranging from the silly to the serious: From celebrating Chinese New Year, watching movies, spending hilarious and horrific hours in RUPS room to discovering pubs, parks and dodgy parts of town - throughout the past year a group of people grew together that will not be separated again easily. I'm happy and proud to have been in company of such wonderful people over the last year and I'm looking forward to keep on seeing them again all over the world in the near future.



For my part, as the President of the LSE Planning Society, I want to say a big Thank you to:

Nancy Holman, for not only supporting the Planning Society's activities and guiding us all through the year, but also for making us laugh all along the way.

Alan Mace for joining us on our trip to Manchester despite the freezing cold and **Andy Thornley** for showing us London and coming to Turin with us. But also **Nick Jeffery** for taking us on a tour of the wild, wild east of London.

And a huge thank you to **Lucie**, for acting as the Society's secretary and **Toby** for being our treasurer.



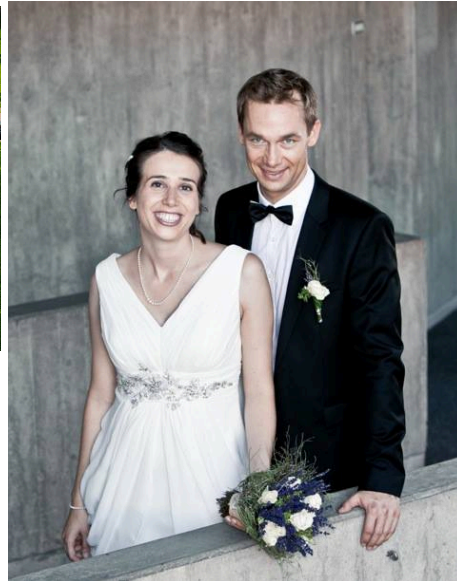


First a quick word on LinkedIn – for those of you who have not yet joined please do consider linking to our bespoke LinkedIn Group. We have 266 members and I think the group is proving useful to members!

Iftikhar Ali Shallwani (RUPS) Is working in Buenos Aires in the Embassy of Pakistan as a Commercial Counsellor. He has two sons, Hassan and Hamza.

Ingrid Sletten (RUPS) is still working for Enerhaugen architects. Her firm recently won a competition to build a new primary school in Kongsberg (just south of Oslo). She is now working with area plans/ regulations, and hoping to get to apply some more of all the great knowledge she attained at the LSE in the coming year. Thanks Ingrid!

Anne Gombert (RUPS & SciencesPo) It is a big year for RUPS weddings! See the first photo of Anne's wedding to David earlier this year. She is leaving her consultant job in August and looking for a part-time job in London. The plan is to become a secondary teacher in France (History/ geography of economics). Congratulations!!



Johannes Devik Brekke (RUPS) Is the speech writer for Mr. Trond Giske, Minister of Trade and Industry.

Charles Savary (RUPS) Worked from Feb-2008 to Dec-2012 for Goldman Sachs Realty Management (Archon Group) as an Associate, Real Estate Portfolio Manager. He is now developing his own company in the wine business, People and Wine, organising wine tasting events for corporate and individual clients in Paris, Istanbul and London, and setting up a wine investment club in Geneva (www.peopleandwine.com) He is also proud to be the father of Alexandre, a dynamic boy of 22 months old! Congratulations!!

Sarah Zouheir (RUPS & SciencesPo) Is working in the Cabinet of the French minister for Urban Affairs (who is in charge of the urban cohesion in the banlieues and in inner cities). It's a very



intense but also very interesting job !
100 % RUPS !

Justen Harcourt Has been promoted to Senior Consultant at Colliers, Vancouver. He and his wife are also expecting their first child. Congratulations!!

Andrea Roberts (RUPS) Is happy to be home in Toronto, Canada working as a policy analyst for the provincial-local finance division of the Ontario Ministry of Finance.

John Rock (RUPS) Was recently promoted to Vice President of US Real Estate at The Carlyle Group.

Moritz Schneider and Sara Hamai (RUPS & SciencesPo) Also got married this year! Please see the second photo above. Congratulations!!

Teis & Caroline DeFranqueville Hansen (RUPS) they met on the MSc in 2007/08 and married this year!! See photo above. Congratulations!!

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Isabel Carreras Baquer (RUPS) Since graduation, has worked as a freelance in a number of fascinating urban and regional development projects. She has now joined the team of Centro Mario Molina (a Mexican think tank led by the Nobel Prize Dr. Mario Molina) developing proposals for the sustainable development of housing, employment, environment and transport for the Megalopolis of the Central Region of Mexico.

Caitlin Allan (RUPS) Caitlin joined Bousfields in 2012 as a Planner. She is involved in a wide range of projects throughout the GTA, writing planning rationale reports and associated studies, preparing development applications, and assisting with the preparation of planning evidence to be presented before the Ontario Municipal Board.

Rachel Bramwell (RUPS) is working as a Planner at Deloitte Real Estate. She qualified in June 2013 as a Chartered member of the RTPI.

Camilo Prats (RUPS) is currently developing a Green Start-Up which aims to develop the first large scale afforestation project without irrigation in the Atacama Desert. Atacama, is the world driest desert so the "Green Atacama Project" is an initiative that could add a new perspective for our regional economy. They are working with "Tal-Ya Water Technologies". You can find out more via the link: www.greenatacama.cl

Darinka Czischke (RUPS) is back in the UK as the new Director of the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF).

Sam Nair (RUPS) has had a very good year! The project he works on at Sustrans was a joint winner of the Ashden/Eurostar sustainable transport award 2013: http://www.ashden.org/travel_awards AND to top it off he is getting married in October this year. Not a RUPS wedding, but his fiancée Laura did impress Teis and Caro with some pub quiz knowledge when they had a pint together Copenhagen! Congratulations Sam and Laura!!

Thanos Pagonis (RUPS) Is a Lecturer in the Faculty of Urban Planning at the School of Architecture in National Technical University of Athens. He is also married and has a two year old son.

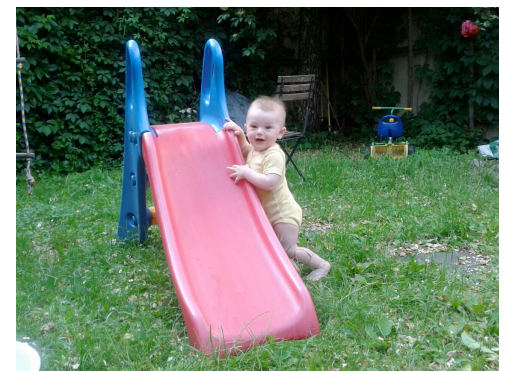
Suzanne King (RUPS) is now freelancing, which is going fairly well. Her partner (Richard) retired at the end of last month after 34 years in the civil service. They will be getting married after 27 years, at the end of October. Congratulations to Suzanne and Richard!

Savannah Kuchera (RUPS) is currently a regional planning intern with the Canadian Urban Institute, working on watershed planning with the Provincial Government in Metro Iloilo-Guimaras, Philippines.

Kamill Wipyewski (RUPS) After completing his RUPS degree in 2007, Kamill worked for two and half years at DTZ International Property Advisors in London in the investment and valuation departments. In 2010, he became a Senior Appraiser at VR Wert, the valuation arm of a large German real estate bank, based in Hamburg, Germany. In March this year, Kamill assumed the position of Head of International Valuation and his responsibilities include the management and coordination of property valuation and appraisal work across Europe and the U.S. Real estate developments and planning considerations also form part of his appraisal work. Kamill is an accredited member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS), a Chamber of Commerce certified real estate development professional (Immobilien-Projektentwickler IHK) and a member of the Urban Land Institute Young Leaders Group. He also enjoys staying involved in the LSE and UC Berkeley alumni organisations.

Jutta Jungwirth nee Schaber (RUPS) and her husband Jörg had a little baby boy called Valentin born on the 8th of September last year. She continues to work for the same planning and Engineering company. Congratulations Jutta and Jörg and welcome Valentin! See the photo below!

Elivas Simatupang (RUPS) has just been promoted for an echelon position in the Development Planning Board of Cimahi City of West Java – Indonesia. His position is the Head of Cooperation, SMEs and Agricultural Development Planning sub-division. He is no doubt, that the knowledge and skills that he learned at LSE helped him significantly in understanding the social process of the development process of his city and province. He notes that being able to comprehend "the causes of things" of the social aspect of the development planning has enabled him to become more engaged with public policy formulations.



Berenice Jung (RUPS & SciencesPo) was working as an Adviser for the Public sector department of KPMG in Luxembourg. From September she will begin her PhD at the university of Luxembourg, dealing with the role of city regions in sustainability transitions especially with regards to innovation in green building.

Arthur Acoca (RUPS & SciencesPo) Will be joining USC as a PhD student to work on international housing finance issues (the impact of tenure on spatial, social and economic mobility).

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News from the Directors

Derek Diamond had a great year - my family gave me a great 80th birthday party and then Richard George (RUPS 1971) came to lunch with his wife while attending the LSE Reunion for the 70's. The trip down memory lane gets longer but not (so far) fainter!

Andy Thornley was invited to attend a workshop held on Feb 4th and 5th at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss, with senior politicians, journalists, academics and business leaders, the finding of a report produced by the Centre for Policy Research (New Delhi). The report is called 'How to Govern India's Mega Cities: towards needed transformation' and the research was funded by the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India. Andy's photo and comments were reported in the local press, not because of his talks on the governance of London and Tokyo, but because he was one of only two supporters of the England's women's cricket team at their match with Australia in the ICC Women's World Cup held in Mumbai's historic Brabourne stadium!

Nancy Holman My year has gone well. The Conservation Area research has progressed and we have a bit more money to continue this on into next year with more research assistants and data gathering!

Andy and I took a paper forward to a conference in Amsterdam on the urban periphery and the politics of planning in suburbia under Boris Johnson. If all goes to plan this will form an article in a special issue of *Environment & Planning C*.

Finally, Alan and I are continuing our research into conflicts, density and planning in London. We were helped this year by three PhD planning students/ graduates. A big thank you to Jayaraj Sundaresan for his excellent interviewing skills, Sabina Uffer for her fabulous GIS skills and Antoine Paccoud for his thoughtful literature review!

IN MEMORIAM

It is with great sadness that we announce the deaths of two former graduates of the MSc.

Robert Kenneth Reis completed the MSc in 1974 and passed away in 2011. After graduating from the LSE he went on to read Law at the Vermont Law School and was a formidable litigator in the state.

Dilia Eugenia Montes Richardson graduated from the MSc in 1981 and also completed a PhD in Planning with the School. She worked with Professor David Blake and Lord Meghnad Desai in the Economics Documentation Research Centre (EDARC), which was the research centre for the Department of Economics at the LSE.

Whilst I did not have the privilege of meeting Dilia her classmates describe her as a courageous, talented and thoughtful woman who was the super glue for a strong LSE family still together after 30 years. She will be greatly missed.

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For information about fees, funding and application deadlines, visit the LSE graduate admissions [pages](#)

A final word...



Doing these newsletters are always a bit intense, as I sit here finalising all the details and adding photos, I am really reminded of how much I love my job. Each year I get to meet 25-30 fantastically interesting people and we go through a journey together learning about cities and urban planning. Moreover, I get the opportunity to stay in contact with lots of you as you go across the globe doing great things - thank heavens for Facebook and LinkedIn! Please do be sure to link up if you have not already!

Keeping the programme successful also relies on our terrific network of contacts from past alumni and friends who are often willing to lend a few hours to give a lecture or network with students over what is often only mediocre wine! So again, thanks to all of you!