

LSE RUPS

PLANNING AT AN INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED INSTITUTION



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Planning@LSE



Director's Update

After a brief interruption from publication the RUPS newsletter is back with the combined issue 31-32. The time since our last newsletter has been one of great excitement, adaptation and reflection.

We started off 2016 with our 50-year reunion with alumni coming from across the globe to help us celebrate the occasion (see photo above). The programme still holds to the principles of its founding departments who recognised that there were significant intellectual gains to be made in training future planners in an inter-disciplinary

The intellectual heart of the programme is to challenge urbanists from a variety of backgrounds to engage with economics, politics and space using London as a laboratory.

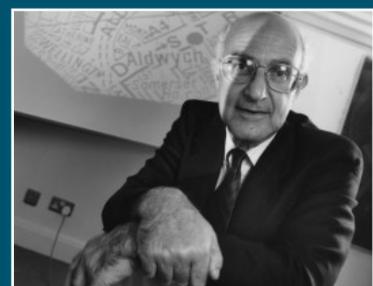
environment as no one discipline held all the answers to the complexity of urban and regional planning. Over the ensuing 50 years URPS/RUPS has educated over 1050 students, from all around the world, many of whom have gone on to make significant contributions in the fields of planning, architecture and academia.

One such graduate is **Richard Oram** (1977) who has generously supported the programme over the last three years (Photo 1 Richard and Braden Bernards our first scholarship holder. Photo 2 Gerhard Gross (1977) Alessandra Mossa, Oram Scholar, Braden, Martin, Richard and his wife Leslie Knowlton). His funding has enabled us to hire three Oram Foundation Researchers, offer scholarships via the Oram-Stott-Schlusche Scholarship and fund research support, conferences and training via the Leslie and Richard Oram Fund. His generosity has added so much to the programme and even more to the students it supports.

Also from the class of 1977 **Martin Stott** who went on to work as a sustainable development practitioner has generously given a donation to MSc RUPS (see middle photo). His gift will support students who pursue dissertation research focussing on gender issues in planning.

These past years have also been a period with a lot of change. St Clement's building has been cut in half and the East building demolished as the School makes way for the new **Centre Buildings Redevelopment** devised by Roger Stirk Harbour + Partners designed to improve LSE's facilities. We were very sad to see the old S400 go but we have now taken up residence on the sixth floor where we have a new room.

Finally, since the publication of our last newsletter we lost the second director of the MSc, then called Urban and Regional Planning Studies, **Professor Derek Diamond** (see photo). Derek's kindness and support were always there and he touched many lives over the years of his career. He will be missed by us all.





Learning from each other

Each year on RUPS we bring together students and alumni to foster networks and enhance the peer learning environment on the programme. This is done through our formal course *GY450 Planning Practice and Research*, our Meet the Employers evening and other informal networking events. We owe a great deal to the alumni who participate in these events and help our current students along the way in finding employment.

Over the last three years we have had the pleasure of welcoming back RUPS alumni like **Sara Dilmamode** (2001) (see photo left),

Director of Citiesmode who shared with us her experience plan making, developer contributions and planning process improvement projects gained in her more than 15 years of experience of working in both the public and private sectors.

Zoe Savory (2011) came to speak to us about her experiences working as a housing organiser for West Kensington and Gibbs Green Community Homes.

Clementine Traynard (2013) also spoke to us about issues surrounding housing based on her work as an Accommodation Pathway Support Worker for Safer London (see photo right). Her organisation is responsible for mapping, needs assessment and coordination projects particularly for those experiencing forms of violence against women and girls.



Roy McGowan, Director of Momentum Transport Planning, came to speak to us along with **Amelie Cosse** (2013), Principal Consultant, about their work planning transport especially around global sports stadia and major events. Momentum has been an excellent friend to the programme having employed a number of our students over the years. Also on a transport theme we were lucky to have **Stelios Rodoulis** (2006) Digital Solutions at Jacobs, come and speak to us on his work on autonomous vehicles which is always a popular topic!

Finally we have continued on with our annual *Meet the Employers* alumni networking and employment evenings. The School has an excellent employment office where students get help with CVs, interview prep and the job process but we believe that it is also important to gather together our London alumni so that they can get to know our current students. There are too many of you to thank in this short space but we sincerely appreciate your support!

Manchester

Manchester

Manchester

Moscow

Moscow

Moscow

Athens

Athens

Athens

Lisbon

Lisbon

Lisbon

Valencia

Valencia

Valencia

RUPS on the Road!

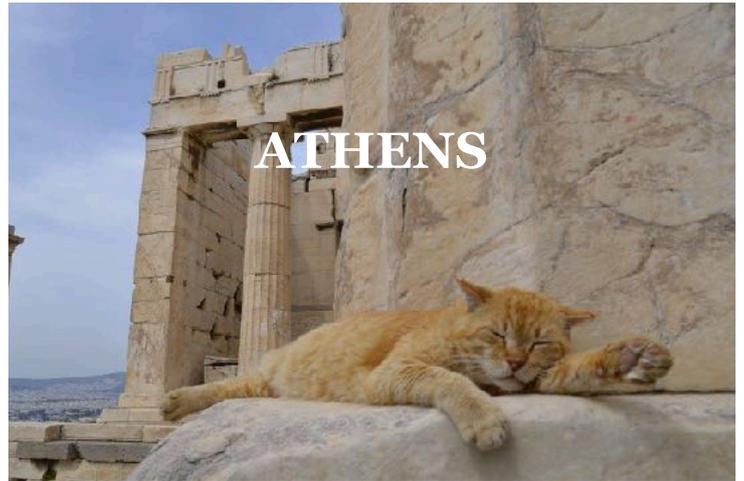
Alan Mace - *reflects on the Michaelmas Term field trip to Manchester.*

To study in London and not visit other UK cities would be to have a very narrow view of the country and of the planning issues facing city leaders. Manchester has an incredible history as the world’s first industrial city. After the Second World War both cities lost population but their destinies were very different as economic changes favoured the south of England. Since the 1980s Manchester has become the shining example of regeneration in a region not favoured in the same way as the south. The lesson starts on the journey to Manchester as the train runs through endless rolling countryside preserved by the planning system – although at what cost? In Manchester we look at the historic Roman core of the city, Castlefield, which was also at the heart of the city’s regeneration in the 1980s. We look at Spinningfields where a new office core seeks to make Manchester the first choice for regional headquarters and then the retail centre devastated by a bomb in 1996. The recovery from the bombing served to show the strength of partnerships developed through earlier regeneration schemes including in Hulme. The trendy Northern Quarter leads to Ancoats the core of the industrial city now being developed as a significant residential quarter alongside neighbouring New Islington. In the last couple of years the trip has included a talk from the Deputy Leader of the City, Cllr. Bernard Priest. His talks mix an astute summary of Manchester’s fortunes with telling humour; as he observed, in Manchester they don’t worry about which is the second city in England. Whether it’s Birmingham or London doesn’t matter to them.





MOSCOW



ATHENS



LISBON



VALENCIA



VALENCIA

Locating Social Upscaling in Suburban London and Paris



As part of the Oram Research Scholar programme we are able to hire a RUPS alumni to carry out research on a topic of their choice under our supervision. Our second Oram Scholar was **Pauline Niesseran** (2014) (photo left). She studied with **Alan Mace**, Associate Professor of Planning and **Antoine Paccoud**, (2013) LSE Regional and Urban Planning Phd and researcher at the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research. Their work was on social upscaling in suburbia. The following is an excerpt from her work.

Changes in the structure and operation of the economy, highlighted by the planetary urbanism debate, have had impacts which require our rethinking the purpose and

relevance of categories such as urban, suburban, periphery and rural. Some gentrification researchers, cognisant of this challenge, have sought to unshackle gentrification from the inner city inviting us to consider the possibility of gentrification in the suburbs (Clark 2005).

Previous research has looked at shifts in the socio-economic configuration of Outer London where some areas are experiencing significant social ‘downscaling’ and others ‘upscaling’ (Paccoud and Mace 2017, Paccoud 2017). A shift in tenure to the private rented sector was identified as an important mechanism facilitating suburban upscaling as Buy to Let landlords identify rent gaps. While rent gap theories work for suburban gentrification it is not so easy to resolve cultural explanations where a metropolitan milieu is highly valued by those who gentrify and which is often linked to centrality. One possible explanation is that not all those upscaling are seeking to echo the gentrification aesthetic of Inner London. In understanding links between place and cultural preferences a number of writers have drawn on Bourdieu’s theories (Savage et al 2005; Duncan & Duncan 2003). However, Bourdieu has been criticised for paying insufficient attention to the role of ethnicity in determining cultural preferences (Trienekens 2002). Ethnic minority groups may, therefore, comprise a significant group of upscalers who may have different criteria for valuing the qualities of an area. Ethnicity might, therefore, give us further explanatory purchase on the geography of social upscaling and downscaling that unrolled in London between 2001 and 2011.

It has long been documented that migrants have more restricted choices both in terms of location and housing tenure (Peach 1998, Peach and Bryon 1993). In London, “part of the constraint on location facing many of the minority population relates to the spatial concentration of certain

kinds of housing tenure” (Peach 1998, p1661). In the case of Paris, it is widely recognised that housing policy has produced ethnic ghettos, through the concentration of big social-tenure blocs in the outskirts of the city; one of the causes of the 2005 riots (Preteceille 2006, 2009). In this context, we decided to look at a possible relationship between upscaling and downscaling process linked to changes in housing tenure (specifically the increase of homeownership occupant and private sector tenants) and the in-move and out-move of migrants and ethnic groups in those areas. The hypothesis to be tested in this research is whether the process of social upscaling is primarily a UK-born phenomenon or whether an influx of migrant (new and old) is also correlated with the upscaling of an areas, distinguishing between areas that upscaled via the private-rented sector or via ownership.

The Census in the UK allows for a quite detailed analysis as it has datasets on both the country of birth and ethnic background. France, however, does not collect information on ethnicity but does has the information on the nationality of its population (French / immigrant residents, defined by the country of birth). Whilst this clearly limits a direct comparison between both countries, the comparison of London with another European City, is felt useful too highlight the specificity of London’s process but also because France and the UK are in the top three countries that have received the highest immigrant inflows in Europe (Eurostat 2006-2014) and, because Paris and London do receive a disproportionate amount of immigrants and are ethnically more diverse compared to the rest of their respective countries.

Initial results show that in London, a shift in tenure to the private rented sector is identified as a mechanism facilitating suburban upscaling whereas in Paris social upscaling is still primarily linked to ownership. In France, upscaling happened disproportionately more in areas that had an increase in ownership than in the private-renting sector, something not surprising as there was not a huge increase of this tenure in Paris

Moreover, in London, upscaling through the private rented sector was a migrant phenomenon as these areas correlated with an increase of non-White British born in the UK and born in the UK population groups only. There was a greater positive net migration into upscaling linked to private rented sector areas in Outer London compared to Inner London. In both places, there is a replacement of White British by other ethnicities, whether born in the UK or not, as in fact White British Born in the UK exited massively every type of upscaling areas in London. It seems that that this group left London altogether and, perhaps, moved to more distant regions as there was a high influx of this group in upscaling-with-ownership areas in London’s surrounding local authorities but also in the wider South-East. Another possible explanation is that White British born in the UK moved to new built as in the areas that were split between the two census years (split is due to an increase of population) many had as a main tenure ownership and there was an in-move three times bigger of White British born in the UK than of the non-White British born in the UK and non-white British born overseas residents.

The initial results might therefore suggest that the real estate market strongly benefits from the strong immigration into London and the return of the private-rented sector. The return of the private-rented sector was probably only possible in London because of the high influx of non-White British born in the UK and non-White British born overseas who moved in significant numbers into these areas. The reduction in White British born in the UK residents can be interpreted in a number of ways, all of which may hold some truth. In identifying a fall in the number of white owner-occupied household in Outer London, between 1991 (the first census that included ethnic-related questions) and 2001, Butler and Hammett (2010) raised two possible explanations for this change: a process of white-flight or, more benignly, the outcome of processes

of death and replacement of ethnic groups. Another possibility is that white British residents were not driven negatively to move away from diversity (Sibley, 1998), but positively wanted to realise a preference for a suburban and country-side way of life (Watt 2006, May 1996, Mace 2018). Of course, these two motivations might not be held so neatly apart by those moving. Notwithstanding the exact motivation, the inward movement of other ethnic groups benefitted White British born in the UK homeowners by allowing them to put their homes to rent and move into other desirable areas or in bigger or new houses.

Returning to the geography of change in Outer London, alongside the significance of the preferences of minority groups we also expect that the role of real estate agents in this process is crucial as they have a key role to play in the marketing of areas in London to migrants.

Alumni News

Alison Post (1999)

I recently received tenure at U.C. Berkeley, where I have appointments in Political Science and Global Metropolitan Studies. I also now co-direct the Global Metropolitan Studies program on campus. This program sponsors a Ph.D. minor in international urban students designed to bring together engineers, social scientists, and students of environmental design. We also facilitate interdisciplinary research on urban issues on campus. Please let me know if you're coming through the Bay Area; our students would love to meet LSE planning alumni!

Anna Edwards (2009)



I became a permanent resident of Canada last year and I work as a portrait painter with a studio in Toronto, Canada. You can see what I do on my website www.annaedwards.art

Benjamin W. Grinnell (2009)

Living in North Carolina, USA. Working in private equity real estate investment. Have two small boys with my wife who I met in London. We miss London and always looking for an excuse to make it back.

Beverley Mullins (1989)

I have become an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography and Planning, Cross-Appointed to the Department of Gender Studies at Queen's University.

Anne Koeman (2006)



The update from me is that I have been on maternity leave from my job at LaSalle as I gave birth to twin girls, Elvira & Vivienne Sharapova on 23 July 2017. I'll be back in my job in May 2018.

Caitlin Allan (2012)

I am currently an Associate at Bousfields Inc., a Planning and Urban Design consulting firm located in Toronto, and am also the Director of the Toronto Bicycle Music Festival.

Crispin Fuller (1997)

I'm now a Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at Cardiff University, specialising in urban governance, and the geographies of corporations. At the moment all my time is spent examining how UK cities are mediating austerity, and preparing to extend this to the consequences of Brexit!

Darinka Czischke (2002)

I have been working since 2015 as assistant professor at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, Delft University of Technology (the Netherlands) I am also co-founder and joint-coordinator of the working group "Collaborative Housing" at the European Network for Housing Research (ENHR). I live in The Hague with my husband

Henry (also an LSE alumnus) and 8-year old daughter Madeleine.

Camille Rabineau (2008)



As far as I'm concerned, I am about to resume to working after being on maternity leave to welcome my second child, Théophile! A big sister had joined our home earlier, in 2015, Eléonore (who more casually goes by « Ellie ») My husband, Sébastien, works for the French Ministry of Finance, developing huge IT projects related to public accounting. As for myself, after working for the Foreign Affairs Minister, I now work on future of work issues (HR innovation), as a consultant. Hard work, but really interesting.

Caroline de Francqueville and Teis Hansen (2008)



I guess a picture of Louise (as the latest double-RUPS-baby) is needed... attached! We've found one with Solvej in as well.

Hala El Akl (2009)

I was appointed Chair of the Urban Art Forum for the Urban Land Institute.

Iftikhar Shallwani (2005)

I took over the role of Law Secretary for Sindh, Pakistan. We work at bridging the gaps between the law department and various segments of the civil society to fill the void and create awareness about various enactments and legislation undertaken by the Sindh Government.

Daniel Shotton (1998)



I work as a free-lance consultant in the real estate and hospitality sector, and am Milan (Italy) based. Prior to this, I worked several years in property consulting and banking in London and Milan. I left the corporate sector with the demise of Lehman Brothers, where I spent 5 years. Would gladly meet any fellow alumni passing through, even without babies or bicycles.

Diana Ramirez-Daza (2015)

Since I came back to Colombia I've been working in Colombia's National Planning Department, first as the advisor for territorial planning to the Deputy of Regional Development and since last October I coordinate a small group of people at the

Department who aims to work with the six metropolitan areas in Colombia and all the associations of municipalities and states among the country. My goal is to help the associations and metropolitan areas to plan based on a regional approach, identifying the urban rural linkages, functional relations and formulating their Regional Visions and planning instruments based on that regional approach.

Internationally I have participated in Habitat III, some European Union initiatives in South America, like a Network of Countries for Development Public Policies, sponsored by the European Commission and some GIZ projects on Planning for development after Conflict Context .

Another news from my side are that I'm moving to Germany in August this year. The change of plans its based on the fact that Felix Volgmann and I are together and after several trips from one side of the Atlantic to the other, we realized moving together was the best option. I will be then looking for work opportunities in Germany from August.

Felix Volgmann (2015)

After graduating from LSE in 2015 I became partner at a planning office in Leipzig, Germany. We specialize in accompanying informal planning processes, i.e. elaborating integrated urban development strategies, initiating participatory processes as well as moderating and strengthening networks on neighbourhood level. Beside our work in Germany, we are also involved in international development assistance projects in urban planning, e.g. in cities in Ukraine, Chile, South Africa, and Georgia.

I believe Diana has already told you that she is moving to Germany this summer. As much as I love the frequent trips to Colombia, I am very happy to start a new life together. For the moment we plan on staying in Leipzig, but who knows what will happen.

Florence Engasser (2013)



I tied the knot not once, but twice, with partner Gokul Selvaraj. In India on January 19th 2017 and in France on March 25th 2017.

Guenter Schlusche (1977)



Until 1987 I was project manager for the International Building Exhibition (IBA 1987) in West-Berlin. After managing the Stadtforum Berlin between 1991 and 1995, I was the head planner for the Memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. Since 2005 I am responsible for the Berlin Wall Memorial which remembers the division of Berlin, Germany and Europe. Since 25 years I am an active member of the Association for Research on the Lives and Works of German-speaking Jewish architects.

Tony Zeilinger (1980)

I am getting a tech start-up innovation accelerator consultancy off the ground. Working often in City regenerated offices we are beginning to help small businesses to grow

putting them in touch with new corporate customers and more generally through mentoring and assisting these young enterprises to further improve their skills, such as with their preparations to secure further funding be it grants or venture capital.

Ingrid Sletten (2010)



The only really interesting news from over here is the birth of Thor, our first son, May 1st last year. I am enjoying a whole year off in maternity leave.

Isabel Carreras Baquer (2010)

After LSE, I moved back to Spain for a year, then Nigeria for a quarter of a year and finally spent 5 years in Mexico and became a Mexican citizen. There I worked on urban development and public transport schemes for local NGOs, private consultancies and for the Inter-American Development Bank. I spent my last year and a half working for Uber in Mexico City. I am now living in a gorgeous place called San Francisco (USA) and working in Product Operations at Uber HQ to help build the best features for the Uber App globally.

Jairo Ernesto Castillo Varela (2014)

Since I got back home I've been working for Colombia's National Planning Department. Since May of 2017 I've been working in the Decentralisation and Regional Development Office helping with the technical support for a national programme aimed to provide technical assistance to municipalities and

departments, in order to update and improve their land organisation plans. Actually, we are working on the definition of guidelines for metropolitan areas to develop their own land organisation instruments. Luckily I have the chance to work with Diana Ramirez, a fellow RUPS graduate too!

Jonathan Martins (2010)

I now work at Arcadis in London in the Advisory department, trying to help the English local public sector work better and make the most of their property assets. But I have decided to "brexit myself" and will be back in Paris in March this year doing some Corporate Real Estate consultancy (still at Arcadis!).

Jutta Jungwirth (2016)



A photo of our son and little brother August Felix. We are very happy and look forward to the exciting life of four!

Katharine Burgess (2010)

I recently returned to Washington, D.C. from Berlin, where I lived for a year and a half through the Robert Bosch Foundation fellowship. It's been an eventful year as I both started a new job, as Director for Urban Resilience at the Urban Land Institute, and welcomed my daughter to the world! Tessa Lilian Pavey was born on September 18 2015, and already met several RUPSies, including Ed Clarke and Gesine Kippenberg, on a trip through London.

Nadim Abdo (1994)

I am currently working in a major Lebanese social enterprise, arcenciel, that runs activities in diverse development sectors, from agriculture, health, environment, employment, youth, empowerment to responsible tourism. I am currently the Director of programs, previously stated.

Pedro Herrera Catalán (2014)

I am now the General Director at the General Office of International Economy, Competition and Productivity Affairs (GOIECPA) and Executive Director of the National Competitiveness Council and Formalisation at the Ministry of Economy and Finance of Peru.

Richard Oram (1977)

I live in Englewood, NJ, just outside New York. Happily retired yet very occupied with various urban and planning-related activities, 41 years later. I continue to interact with LSE and be close with friends from way back then. Go URPS.

Sam Nair (2008)

I work for Urban Foresight. I am currently leading on a project for Peabody delivering a Smart City Toolkit, and a Smart City Concept Plan for Thamesmead, and I am managing our work delivering quarterly City Innovation Briefs for the Future Cities Catapult which this quarter has a focus on what cities around the UK are doing in respect to managing and enhancing the public realm. So I really feel like I am making the most of the different aspects of the RUPS programme in range of projects

Sara Louisa Hamai (2010) + Moritz Schneider (2009)

Obviously our biggest news was the arrival of our son Hugo (another double RUPS baby). Moritz, Hugo and myself are currently traveling in Australia with a campervan for 6 weeks. We are traveling up the East Coast and have now arrived at Hamilton Island for our holiday of the holidays. We will be finishing up our trip in Sydney and Singapore in two weeks.

Segolene Pruvot (2006)

I am happy to announce the birth of my daughter Albane in December 2014 (already a while ago). I met her father - my husband - Nicholas Milanese when I lived in London actually, just after finishing the few months working as research assistant at LSE London (in 2007). One of our witnesses at the wedding was one of the RUPS student and a few more ex-RUPS travelled from Canada, the US, Egypt, and of course London to our wedding back in July 2013 in Paris.

I am also happy to share that I started as a PhD candidate in the URBEUR (Urban and Local European Studies) at Milano Bicocca on November 2015, an academic activity that I combine with a continued work at European Alternatives, in which I have developed TRANSEUROPA Festival and am now working on activities on new form of governance in European cities.

Stelios Rodoulis (2006)

I currently work in the Digital Solutions Development Hub, tasked with developing a portfolio of emerging technologies and solutions. I am responsible with identifying clients' needs and problems and proposing appropriate solutions, drawing expertise from both inside and outside of Jacobs. The role also involves promoting and selling solutions internally, and the transfer of technology between the various Jacobs' lines of business.

Steve Chambers (2009)

I am Policy and Research Coordinator at Living Streets, the UK charity for every day walking. Since leaving LSE I have been working in built environment policy teaching and campaigning.

Syd Wayman (2012)

After graduation from LSE, I interned with the Cities of San Francisco (Planning Dept.) and Berkeley (Office of Economic Development), before accepting a position as a project administrator for Architectural

Dimensions in Oakland and, later, a construction project management consultant with Hill International and based at San Francisco International Airport. In 2017, I began working as a Planner 1 specializing in Current Planning for Contra Costa County in Northern California. I am engaged and am looking forward to marrying my longtime boyfriend, Majid Sotoodeh, in August.

Theadora Trindle (2015)

I have recently transitioned from working as a land use consultant in the private sector to the public sector where I work as a Planning and Development Specialist for the Office of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti. In my current position, I serve as the Mayor's Office liaison to the LA Department of City Planning and the LA Department of Building and Safety for the purpose of advocating for critical, citywide policy initiatives and prioritizing mayoral directives. In addition, I work on resolving project specific issues encountered by individual applicants and developers engaged in the land use entitlement and building permit application process. Outside of my work I recently summited Mt. Whitney in California, the tallest peak in the contiguous United States. If I'm not at the Downtown LA City Hall you can usually find me exploring the hiking trails of the nearby San Gabriel mountains or investigating what's new at home in Downtown LA's Fashion District.

Tomaso Pompili (1984)

In August 2011 I was elected to the European Organising Committee of the European Regional Science Association (ERSA) and I was reelected for a second 5-year term in August 2016. In October 2015 I was appointed vice-director of my Department for 3 years, and the Director assigned me the task of coordinating the organisation of all teaching activities. In September 2016 I was happy to host for one day Susan Abs (RUPS 83-84), who was on a trip to Italy.



Staff News - Past and Present

Nancy Holman, Director of Planning Studies - Over the last few years I have been working on planning deregulation in London looking at office to residential permitted development and the loosening of regulation on short-term letting. With colleagues Dr Romola Sanyal (LSE), Dr. Mara Ferreri (UAB) Dr. Erica Pani (Newcastle) and Alessandra Moss (LSE Oram Scholar) we examined deregulation in four inner London boroughs. You can see some of the outputs of this work [here](#).

Alan Mace, Associate Professor of Planning - My recent research interest has been focused on green belt policy and on ethnicity in the suburbs. My research on green belt has sought to understand better the politics of the policy in order to propose ways of rethinking the institution of green belt. One key argument is that rather than focusing on the costs of green belt, we need to focus on the positive benefits of revising the policy in order to nudge politicians towards change. Related to this, working with urban designers Levitt Bernstein, Alessandra Mossa and I have sought to show the advantages of reform at the regional scale. My most recent work on the suburbs draws on case studies in two predominantly white neighbourhoods in outer London and is focused on the interaction of place, class and ethnic identity.

Felipe Carozzi, Assistant Professor – A substantial part of my research is focused on urban economics and the economic analysis of urban problems such as housing affordability or air pollution. In recent work I have studied the role of housing demand as a driver of land re-development in England, as well as the links between credit conditions and first-time buyer's ability to jump on to the housing ladder. You can access some of this work [here](#).

Jayaraj Sundaresan, LSE Fellow in Human Geography –is interested in making a comparative understanding of planning; currently I am working on my book on Planning Violations in India. For a few years I have been working on two projects - planning activism in Bangalore and London, Urban commons and the political geography of wetlands and urbanisation in India. My current research interest is developing around questions of decoloniality, vernacular and urban planning,

Romola Sanyal, Assistant Professor - In the last year I've been developing my work on urban planning and humanitarian crises. I am in the process of expanding the work beyond Lebanon to looking at global urban policies developed by INGOs, international financial institutions and the UN.

Gabriel Ahlfeldt, Associate Professor - I recently began working as the Editor of Regional Science and Urban Economics. In terms of research, I spent much of the recent years working with my colleagues Steve Redding, Daniel Sturm, and Nikolaus Wolf on estimating the strength and the spatial scope of agglomeration economies. Our paper recently won the Frisch Medal. You can find more details [here](#).

Michael Hebbert, Emeritus Professor and past Director of URPS - In the summer of 2017 I retired from the Bartlett School at UCL and ended my term as editor-in-chief of Planning Perspectives, passing on the baton to the architectural historians and Olympic Games specialists John & Margaret Gold. I continue as Emeritus Professor both at the University of Manchester and UCL, and am currently working on the long and surprising afterlife of Sir Christopher Wren's 1666 plan to remodel the City of London after the Great Fire of 1666. In July 2018 I'll give a paper on this topic at the International Planning History Society's conference in Yokohama, and hopes to meet some well-remembered LSE alumni while in Japan. I'm also pursuing my musical career as a performer on the concertina - watch out for the dance band Limehouse Cut at Sidmouth Folk Festival and elsewhere.

Andy Thornley, Emeritus Professor and past Director of RUPS - Over the past year I have been developing my new career as an artist from my studio in the redundant Hornsey Town Hall building. A couple of weeks ago Haringey council signed over the ownership of the building to the developers and we were given notice to vacate by the end of June. However the new owners – a Hong Kong company – don't seem to be ready to start development of the luxury flats and so we are being allowed to stay until the end of the year. So the painting continues. My current theme is based on a trip last summer to the Faroe Islands and Iceland. Amazing and unique landscapes. So lots of dramatic cliffs and distorted volcanic rock formations in misty atmospheric weather. A far cry from World Cities! Over the year my work has been shown in group exhibitions in London, Swansea, Sussex and Worcestershire. You can see some of my work [here](#).

Christine Whitehead, Emeritus Professor in Housing Economics - has continued to work on housing delivery in London as well as undertaking reviews of the operation of Help to Buy, Direct Commissioning and S106/CIL for government. Her current research, mainly with other members of the LSE London team, concentrates on the changing roles of private and social renting, mortgage market developments and comparative studies of housing regulation, finance and policy. She also regularly advises Select Committees on housing matters and is currently a member of the Letwin panel on Build Out Rates.

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A final word...

This year's newsletter was aided by the sharp eyes and unrelenting proofreading of LSE London Project Coordinator, Fanny Blanc (RUPS 2014). Thank you Fanny! Also to all of you who contributed your news a big thanks. It is wonderful to hear how you are all doing. RUPS works because of all of you and we are always pleased keep our connection with you!