

## **1. A brief introduction to the topic you have been researching**

Throughout the UGRA programme, I located potential interviewees and collected academic papers, government reports and statistical data to contribute to two research projects. I primarily worked on a project discussing the politics of housing tenure. Secondary to this I worked on research exploring the role of viability assessments in housing development.

Firstly, the project surrounding the politics of housing tenure seeks to reconceptualise the meaning of housing tenure as the dynamic relationship between homeowners and the occupants by exploring such relationships across various comparative country contexts, including the US, UK, Canada, and Australia, among others. The project aims to politicise and contest the changing nature of housing tenure through exploring the exclusivity and financialization of homeownership, the expansion of private renting, the complicated resurgence of interest in social housing, and the role of counter-movements, including those organised by tenant unions, as well as the formation of alternative housing structures such as community land trusts, in politicising and contesting the often unquestioned dominance of tenure in economic and social life. Overall, the project seeks to find new, specifically politicised, ways of diagnosing and addressing the mounting housing crisis evident in the US and across the world at large.

Secondly, I contributed to a research project exploring the role of viability assessments in determining the feasibility for urban developers in delivering required contributions of affordable housing. The project specifically explores the range of actors involved in viability assessment processes, including local authority officers and policy makers, legal officers, viability professionals, architects, planners, and developers. The project seeks to discover different perspectives toward viability assessment among actors across multiple intersecting fields, and their role in producing the balance between public and private obligation in urban development.

## **2. A description of the research you have been doing**

When researching housing tenure, I focused on 3 specific areas within housing and interdisciplinary literature across the US, UK, Australia, and Canada. Firstly, I collected publicly accessible materials analysing housing tenure as a complex set of social relationships integrated, but dynamic, within broader political economy. Here, I explored literature from fields of housing studies, political economy, critical legal studies, and sociology to determine the meaning of housing tenure, its function within societies and systems, and ways in which it can be changed. Secondly, I researched the function of homeownership as an instrument of class power, its rising financialisation, and its role in broader recent political developments such as the increasing power of the far-right. Thirdly, my research focused on the potential of counter-movements to hinder the dominant role of homeownership and housing tenure in social and economic life through contesting existing systems on the one hand, and on the other; forming alternative, non-hierarchical, housing structures.

When researching viability in housing development and the actors involved in conducting such assessments, I collected and assessed literature surrounding the changing nature of viability assessments across the UK, specifically focusing on London. Throughout the project,

I focused on locating potential interviewees working across different sectors contributing to viability assessments for the purpose of helping the research lead contribute primary data to viability literature.

### **3. A description on the methods you have been using**

When locating academic papers, government reports and publicly accessible statistical data, I searched for key words on various search engines, including LSE Digital Library, Google Scholar, and Google, then assessed and collected relevant materials accordingly. Following this, I used the snowballing method to find relevant literature within the citations of previously collected materials. When locating potential interviewees, I searched for various relevant organisations, and sorted through organisational staff lists and descriptions. I later presented the collected data on multiple Excel spreadsheets.

### **4. A brief summary of the data you have collected and how this fits in with the overall project**

When working on the project exploring the politics of housing tenure, I collected academic papers determining various conceptions of housing tenure and emphasising its political nature, the dominance of homeownership and tenure in social and economic life, and strategies for counter-movements to the domination of such structures. Alongside this, I collected government reports and statistical data demonstrating changes in access to homeownership, tenure and social housing overtime, and located potential interviewees with expertise in 4 different sectors; tenant unions, people creating alternatives to homeownership through involvement in housing structures including community land trusts and cooperatives, homeowner activist groups and property owner groups such as landlord lobbies. This research provided secondary data, and potential direction for primary data collection, for in-depth analysis of the politics of housing tenure, homeownership, and counter-movements to the dominance of these structures across several comparative countries.

Throughout my research on viability assessment, alongside collecting academic papers, I located potential interviewees from three fields: representatives of housing developers, council viability officers, and viability industry workers. This data provides the project lead with potential interviewees from whom to gain primary insight into different actors' attitudes toward the conduct of viability assessment, and overall perspectives toward the role of such processes in ensuring balance between private and public responsibility in affordable housing provision.

### **5. A brief summary of how the project fits within the wider discourses/literature of its subject area or recommendations for policy (if applicable)**

Whilst both projects are ongoing, I feel grateful to have been given the opportunity to help Dr David Madden contribute to wider housing and sociological literature. Firstly, the project exploring housing tenure provides nuance to broader housing and sociological literature by emphasising the importance of the relationship between homeowners and occupiers, and adds unique analyses of strategies to dissolve existing power imbalances in such

relationships into broader literature surrounding counter-movements to the domination of homeownership and tenancy as the dominant form of housing. Secondly, the project discussing viability contributes to the wider literature exploring the role of viability assessments in urban development by providing greater emphasis on the roles and attitudes of various actors working within the viability industry and taking part in processes of viability assessment.