



Spatial Planning and Housing Studies Centre

Report for July 2009 to January 2010

1. Introduction

In this report we cover our first six months as a Research Centre and present progress on:

- course development
- research and consultancy
- policy influence
- future plans

Underlying all of this activity we continue to raise the profile of the Centre.

Background

The Centre was established in July 2009 as the base for the development of both teaching and research: the postgraduate degree courses and a portfolio of research and consultancy in spatial planning and housing studies. It is a cross-departmental initiative between the University's Department of Applied Social Sciences (DASS) and the Department of Architecture and Spatial Design (ASD).

The Centre's long-term aim is to be a 'hub' for the University on urban issues embracing planning, housing, design, infrastructure, architecture and communities, with London as the focus of study. Its seven main objectives are to:

- i). be a 'centre of excellence' for teaching and research in spatial planning acknowledged externally and by our students;
- ii). enhance the reputation of the University;
- iii). submit proposals and to tender for research on spatial planning and urban issues to generate income;
- iv). relate research in the areas of the evolving masters degree courses in spatial planning and housing strategy, planning and sustainable communities and planning and urban design;
- v). develop professional training short courses on a planning, housing and urban design, which will enhance the role of practising professionals in public and private sectors;

- vi). host events and initiatives for practising professionals in public, private and third sectors to facilitate expert contributions into new governance and policy; and, in the longer term, and,
- vii). to provide opportunities for doctoral studentships.

Centre Staff

The core staff of the Centre are Duncan Bowie, Reader in Urban Planning and Regeneration and Julia Atkins, Senior Research fellow.

External Advisory Group

The Centre is pleased to have a distinguished group of people who agreed to be members of the Group to help us achieve our objectives. They include:

- * Richard Simmons, Chief Executive, CABE
- * Peter Bishop, Group Director, Design, Development and Environment, London Development Agency
- * John Lett, Strategic Planning Manager, GLA,
- * Andy von Bradsky, Chairman, PRP Architects
- * Ben Derbyshire, Director, HTA Architects
- * Marc Dorfman, Assistant Director Planning and Regeneration, L B Haringey
- * Brian Waters, Chair of London Planning and Development Forum (and President ACA)
- * Kieran Long, Editor in Chief, Architects Journal
- * Graeme Geddes, Planning Manager, Homes and Communities Agency
- * Martin Cheeseman, Director of Housing and Community Care, L B Brent
- * Joanna Chambers, Director of Regeneration, Broadway Malyan (and London RTPI)
- * Roger Chapman, Planning Delivery and Performance, CLG
- * June Barnes, Chief Executive East Thames Housing Group
- * Catriona Riddell, Chief Planner, South East England Partnership Board
- * Andrew Melville, Head of Planning and Housing, Government Office for London

1.1 Course development

The Centre has developed two new postgraduate degree courses: MSc Spatial Planning and Housing Strategy and MA Spatial Planning and Urban Design. Both of these courses have been validated by the University and will run from September 2010. The two courses will be taught primarily by the Centre's core staff drawing on their policy, practice and research experience. Course details and leaflets are available on the University's website.

During the period of developing the new postgraduate courses Duncan has also taught an undergraduate third year module on Planning Principles and Practice for BA Architecture and BA Social Policy in the Spring semester of both 2008/9 and 2009/10.

Duncan Bowie and Julia Atkins contribute to a number of other courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, including BA Architecture; Diploma in Architecture; RIBA part 3; MA City Regeneration; MA Housing and Social Inclusion; MA Public Health; MA Cities, Design and Culture and from February 2010 the new

HCA Foundation degree on Sustainable Communities.

CPD Provision

The Centre has run a series of specialist courses on Housing and Affordable Housing, including residential development viability appraisal. In addition, Duncan Bowie gave a series of eight public lectures on planning and housing in the winter of 2008/9. A further series of CPD sessions is planned for March to June 2010. The Centre will also be contributing to Urban Design London's CPD programme.

1.2 Research and consultancy

In its first six months, the Centre has focused on three main activities with the object of gaining income, raising profile and influencing policy.

a) Framework Contracts and tendering

The Centre is part of two framework agreements: for the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Planning Directorate over **three** and **four** years, respectively, and from which we expect to be invited to tender for research.

Other invitations to tender or project costed proposals have arisen on an ad hoc basis, for example:

The Centre made a successful bid to conduct research on the value of housing design commissioned by CABE in January 2010. This involves analysis of data on the relationship between housing quality and value and the production of an issues paper. This work is to be completed in February and March 2010.

The Centre made two unsuccessful bids in summer 2009, for research on the private housing sector in North London with Heriot Watt University and to conduct research for Hackney Council to evaluate a home ownership initiative.

In conjunction with Three Dragons and Urban Design London, the Centre also submitted, a proposal to the British Property Federation for a research project on training on development economics.

We have submitted separately costed proposals to both the Greater London Authority and the London Assembly in September and on 1st October 2009, respectively. These relate to financial viability testing of the findings of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and for monitoring of Mayoral development control decisions.

Currently, the Centre is developing a research proposal to submit to Leverhulme Trust to explore the responses of different world cities to the Credit Crunch and its impact on housing supply.

b) Spatial planning in London from 2000-2008.

This research focused on the relationship of spatial planning to housing strategy in the first two mayoral terms under the mayoralty of Ken Livingstone and, in particular, analysed both plan-making and plan implementation. Initial findings were presented

to the European Network for Housing Research Conference in Dublin in July 2008 in a paper entitled '*Failure of Promise? Planning for Housing under the Mayor of London 2002-2008*'.

The research also formed the basis of a series of articles, referred to elsewhere in this report, and has culminated in Duncan Bowie's book – ***Politics, Planning and Homes in a World City***, to be published by Routledge in February 2010.

1.3 Policy influence

a) ***Highbury Group on Housing and the Credit Crunch***

The Centre services the Highbury Group on Housing and the Credit Crunch, which was initially established in November 2008 as a network of experts from public, private and independent sectors. The group meets every six weeks or so at London Metropolitan University and has published a series of research and policy papers. The group has also held meetings with the Homes and Communities Agency, the Conservative Party, and the Liberal Democrat Party. Two members of the group are members of a Green Party working group on housing. In addition members of the group have contributed to related initiatives by SHELTER, COMPASS and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

The current membership of the group is as follows:

Duncan Bowie, London Metropolitan University (chair)
Kathleen Dunmore, Three Dragons (secretary)
Julia Atkins, London Metropolitan University
Tony McBrearty, Consultant
Angela Housham, Consultant
Kelvin McDonald, Consultant
Roy Hind, Bedfordshire Pilgrims HA
Peter Studdert, Cambridgeshire Horizons
Roger Humber, House Builders Association
Simon Kaplinsky, PRP Architects
Stephen Ashworth, Denton Wilde Sapte
Bob Colenutt, Northampton Institute for Urban Affairs
Janet Sutherland, JTP Cities
Stephen Hill, C20 Futureplanners
James Stephens, HomeBuilders Federation
Deborah Garvie, SHELTER
Michael Edwards, Bartlett School of Planning, UCL

The Highbury Group website contains the following papers by Duncan Bowie and other members of the Highbury Group:

<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/depts/dass/subjectareas/housing/highbury-group-on-housing-and-the-credit-crunch.cfm>

* Submission to Homes and Communities Agency: A Mechanism for Maintaining Housing Trajectories and Securing Improved Quality of Development During the Credit Crunch (November 2008)

* The Impact of the Market Downturn on London Development (July 2009)

* A Local Solution: How a Local Housing Fund Could Help Savers and Fund More House Building. (July 2009)

* Recessionary Tools for Planners (July 2009)

* Response to Caroline Spelman MP on Conservative Party Proposals on Regional Planning (October 2009)

- * Response to Government Consultation Paper on Community Infrastructure Levy (October 2009)
- * Pre-conditions for Increasing Housing Supply (November 2009)
- * Planning in an Age of Austerity (January 2010) also published in *Planning in London* January- March 2010

The Highbury Group is now finalizing its pre-election manifesto on Policy Responses to the Recession

b) Review of the London Plan

The Centre is actively engaged in the debate on the revised London Plan proposed by the new Mayor, Boris Johnson. Duncan has participated in a number of seminars and working groups and contributed to responses to the consultation on the proposals by the RTPI, the TCPA, the London Assembly Planning and Housing Committee and by the JustSpace network of voluntary and campaigning organizations.

An article on the proposals – ‘*Prescription for a Better London?*’ is published in the January 2010 issue of *Town and Country Planning*.

1.4 Continuing profile-raising activity

Duncan has spoken at a number of academic and professional seminars and conferences on the issue of housing and planning in the credit crunch, as well as presenting papers on the subject at two international conferences:

European Network for Housing Research Conference in Prague, July 2009 and the International Sociological Association Housing Conference in Glasgow, September 2009.

Duncan Bowie presented a paper on his research on the relationship between housing standards and density in London to RIBA’s research seminar on Space in the Home in November 2008. The paper is available on both the Centre’s and RIBA’s websites.

Duncan’s research on strategic planning in London also formed the basis of a series of articles in *Planning in London* in late 2008 and early 2009, and in a presentation on *Planning for Housing in London: Past Present and Future* at the London Housing and Construction Conference in November 2009.

Copies of these papers are on the Centre’s website:

<http://www.londonmet.ac.uk/depts/dass/subjectareas/housing/highbury-group-documents.cfm>.

Julia presented a paper on housing design and space standards at a seminar in New York in 2009 as part of the collaboration on childhood obesity between the London Metropolitan University and City University New York. She also assisted in reviewing the report of the collaboration, which was published in January 2010.

Julia also spoke at the conference on empty property organised by the North London Boroughs 25th November 2009.

Duncan Bowie was a member of the London RTPI regional activities committee until

December 2009, with the role of planning schools liaison officer and is a member of the joint RTPI/ CiH housing network. He is also on the editorial advisory group for *Planning in London* journal, on the national executive and research and publications committee of the Fabian Society and is a trustee of the Aylesbury Creation Trust in Southwark.

Julia Atkins is on the editorial board of ROOF and vice-chair of the Board of Brent Private Tenants Rights Group (BPTRG).

The Centre's outline five-year plan

Year 1 Establishment 2009/10

The Centre has established a strong base from which to go forward for the five-year plan period starting in 2009-10. Since mid-2008, the core team has developed two postgraduate courses, promoted its skills and expertise with internal and external associates, has completed some research commissions and has run short training courses for planning professionals in London, which have been successful in raising income.

To date the main time commitment of the Centre's staff has been on teaching and the development and marketing of the post-graduate degree courses. In addition, we have ensured that the Centre is on tender lists and we have responded to invitations to tender and collaborations as they have arisen.

During 2009/10 we anticipate four major developments:

- provisional accreditation by the RTPI for the planning courses
- the launch of new postgraduate degree courses on Spatial Planning and Housing Strategy, Design and Standards and Spatial Planning and Urban Design;
- obtaining research commissions as part of the two main Framework Agreements, with the Planning Directorate of the Government's Communities and Local Government department and/or the Greater London Authority.
- the publication of Duncan Bowie's book *Politics, Planning and Homes in a World City* in February 2010.

RTPI accreditation

A submission to seek provisional accreditation for three postgraduate degree courses was made to the RTPI in August 2009. The RTPI's response to this initial approach was that further work was required on presentation and that a serious review was needed of the context of the submissions and whether accreditation was being sought for combined or special courses.

A serious review of the University's offer was completed and resubmission is planned for early 2010.

2009 launch planning courses

The lack of RPTI accreditation and the current economic down turn affected student recruitment to the new courses, despite considerable marketing of two of them. It is becoming apparent that external factors might also have affected recruitment at other universities. A decision was made in the summer to defer the Planning and Urban Design course until 2010/11.

Research commissions

The Centre is part of two framework agreements: the Greater London Authority (GLA) and the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Planning Directorate for

three and **four** years, respectively, and from which we expect to be invited to tender for research. Other invitations to tender are arising on an ad hoc basis.

Research proposals

We have submitted separately costed proposals to both the Greater London Authority and the London Assembly in September and on 1st October respectively. The most recent submission is for residential development monitoring work.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses

We are developing ideas for a programme of CPD sessions for 2010 based on the material developed for the postgraduate planning courses.

Quantitative summary:

Staffing	1.4FTE	2 FTE by 2010
Income	£50K	From commissioned research, consultancy, and CPD courses
Publications	'Politics, Planning and Homes in a World City' . Papers and articles for professional and academic journals	To be published by Routledge early 2010. There will also be published work arising from commissioned work.
Postgraduate students		10 –15 per course
Conferences/seminars	Papers for at least 10 events	In-house, regional, national and inter-national

Qualitative summary:

We will continue to raise awareness of and develop the Centre's profile, which is facilitated by having the name and status of a research centre and potentially a growing portfolio of work. The Centre has a marketing strategy.

We expect to support the quantitative measures of progress with qualitative indications that might include number of approaches for work from both internal and external collaborators; studentship enquiries; publicity gained through press coverage and requests to serve on external committees and steering groups.

We will actively accept students to supervise on relevant topics, initially dissertations for postgraduate degrees.

Year 2 Development 2010/11

In this second year, we aim to have accreditation for at least one postgraduate planning course and to attract students for October 2010. We will maintain a teaching and research programme that builds on the development during the first year. Our intention is to focus on submitting research proposals to start to engage student(s) for doctoral research.

Quantitative summary:

Staffing	2 FTE	3 FTE by 2011
Students		15 –20 per course
Income	£75K	From commissioned research, consultancy, short

		courses and research application
Publications	Papers and articles for professional and academic journals	Published work arising from commissioned work.
Conferences/seminars	Papers for at least 10 events	In-house, regional, national and inter-national

Qualitative summary:

By year 2, we would expect to be growing and the basis for further development would build on obtaining qualitative feedback on the courses and research, client and student numbers attracted and satisfaction. We would like to gauge how well the Centre is functioning within the University community by, for example, demonstrating joint projects, inter course/departmental lecturing and so on.

Other plans include:

- creating a professorship for the Centre;
- attracting students for doctoral study; and,
- rationalising degree courses for planning, regeneration and housing within the Centre.

Year 3 Consolidation 2011/12

Quantitative summary:

Staffing	3FTE	4 FTE by 2012
Students		20 per course
Income	£100K	From commissioned research & consultancy, short courses and research applications
Publications	Papers and articles for professional and academic journals	Published work arising from commissioned work.
Conferences/seminars	Papers for at least 10 events	In-house, regional, national and inter-national
Doctorates	1 or 2	

Qualitative summary:

At the end of this three year development plan our expectation is that the Centre would have established itself within the University and be fulfilling its stated objectives, especially to be a 'centre of excellence' for teaching and research in spatial planning acknowledged externally and by our students; contributing to and enhancing the reputation of the University in the field of spatial planning, regeneration, housing and urban issues and generating income.

Year 4 Growth 2012/13

Evolving ideas:

- established premises for Centre;
- developing new courses e.g. international planning, sustainable communities, etc.; and,
- consolidating the number of doctoral students

Quantitative summary:

Staffing	3FTE	4 FTE by 2012
Students		25 per course
Income	£100K	From commissioned research & consultancy, short courses and research applications
Publications	Papers and articles for professional and academic journals	Published work arising from commissioned work.
Conferences/seminars	Papers for at least 10 events	In-house, regional, national and inter-national
Doctorates	3 or 4	

Year 5 Continuing Growth 2013/14

Quantitative summary:

Staffing	3FTE	4 FTE by 2012
Students		25 – 30 per course
Income	£100K	From commissioned research & consultancy, short courses and research applications
Publications	Papers and articles for professional and academic journals	Published work arising from commissioned work.
Conferences/seminars	Papers for at least 10 events	In-house, regional, national and inter-national
Doctorates	6	