CCHPR 2015-2016

Introduction

This report outlines the wide range of research and dissemination activities that CCHPR has engaged in over the last year. Staff changes are summarised and the report gives examples of new and on-going projects. The impact of completed research and our ambitions for the future are highlighted. This is an illustrative, rather than a comprehensive, account of everything that CCHPR has done. More information on all our work is available at

http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk

Staff changes

As reported before, in March 2015 after doing some great work for CCHPR, our research assistant Sam Morris decided to move on to a new post. In his place, we were pleased to appoint Charlotte Hamilton who has recently completed a PhD in Social Policy at the University of York.

Dr Connie Tang, who had worked for CCHPR for several years, decided to leave in June 2015 to take up another research post in the University.

Sanna Markannen resigned in February 2016 and we are appointing a new research associate. We are also in the process of appointing a new temporary research assistant, who will provide additional capacity on several of our current projects.

New projects

The new projects started since January 2015 are again diverse in terms of their size, funders, topics and methodologies. The common theme running through them all is the potential for significant impacts on policy and practice. Some examples are given below:

We have been funded by the National House Building Council (NHBC) to explore why older households move in later life and why they choose either new build housing or existing stock. The project considers what the house building sector can learn from their experience. NHBC has also funded a project which is investigating the scale and nature of multi-generational living in England and exploring the opportunities this presents to the house building sector.

We have commenced a large research project, funded by the National Institute for Health Research, which is analysing the public health outcomes of the Cambridgeshire Time Credits Project in Wisbech. It is a collaboration between the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research (CCHPR) and the Cambridge Institute for Public Health (CIPH).
A project for Shelter, commissioned before the General Election, has explored the possible effects of different rent control scenarios on the operation of the Private Rented Sector in England. Six different rent control options were considered, proposing different limits to rents and changes to security of tenure. As a follow up to this, the London Assembly’s Housing Committee asked CCHPR to explore the likely impact of a range of rent stabilisation measures on London’s housing market.

Research identifying housing need in the horseracing industry was commissioned by Racing Welfare, a national charity that provides support for the workforce of British horseracing. The study made a number of recommendations for changes in provision which are now being implemented.

Work for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has investigated the likely poverty impacts of the extension of Right to Buy to housing associations and the associated sale of higher value local authority stock.

A further project commissioned by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and supported by Shelter, seeks to understand the causes of landlord evictions and of forced moves, where tenants feel compelled to move home for reasons such as affordability, security or the need for a new location.

Community Housing Cymru and the Welsh Local Government Association have commissioned CCHPR to undertake a study into viable housing models for single people who are only entitled to housing benefit at the shared accommodation rate.

We have again in the last year been the recipients of Cambridge University ESRC impact awards that support the dissemination and impact of policy and practice research. Through this route, we are working to estimate household income distributions at the very local level. This will aid social housing providers’ decisions on affordable rents, “pay to stay” and other market-based policies. Impact awards have also supported work on refining ONS Travel-To-Work Areas, to make them more appropriate for housing planning purposes, and another project, with government’s Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO), on compliance and regulatory codes.

Details of all our projects started in 2015 and 2016 can be found on our website:

http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Projects/Start-Year/2015

and

http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Projects/Start-Year/2016

Some other on-going projects

Amongst our other on-going projects is our ESRC-funded project on the role of housing and housing providers in tackling poverty experienced by young people in the UK. The funding from the ESRC, with the support of the Public Policy Institute for Wales, is part of their ‘What Works’ in Tackling Poverty programme. Our partners in this work are Centrepoint, the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust, Community Housing Cymru and Housing Europe. The mixture of quantitative and qualitative work includes literature reviews, data analysis using
the longitudinal Understanding Society Study (USS) and case studies of projects across the UK which explore the different ways in which housing providers work with young people at risk of poverty.

We have continued our engagement with the ESRC Seminar Series on Marketplace Exclusion (with the Universities of Liverpool, Keele, Coventry and Leicester). The seminars are designed to create links between academics, early career researchers, business leaders, community groups, activists and policy makers interested in the dynamics of marketplace exclusion and means of countering it.

More information about current projects is available from our website http://www.cchpr.lincoln.cam.ac.uk/Projects/CurrentProjects and a full list of reports on completed projects is available: http://www.cchpr.lincoln.cam.ac.uk/Publications/Reports

Impact and engaging with policy makers

Many CCHPR projects have significant policy impacts. The CCHPR evaluation of the removal of the spare room subsidy, which was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions, is a major example of high impact research. It has evaluated the impact of the measure that is often referred to as the ‘bedroom tax’. The report explores the effects of the cuts to Housing Benefit for working age social housing tenants who are deemed to be under-occupying their home. The final report was published in December 2015 and received widespread interest, for example:


www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/tories-shocking-bedroom-tax-report-7220930

A news article on the University’s website was published:

www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/areas-of-britain-most-affected-by-bedroom-tax-are-hardest-to-downsize-in-research-finds

The findings were also used extensively in a House of Commons Briefing paper published in February 2016:

http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06896#fullreport

The research was furthermore cited as evidence in decisions over the allocation of funding to mitigate the consequences of the Benefit Cap:

http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06899

We have many examples of direct engagement with policy makers. For example, CCHPR provided evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on National Policy for the Built Environment (October 2015). This informed their Report ‘Building Better Places’.

Anna Clarke gave evidence to the Communities & Local Government Select Committee inquiry into Right to Buy (December, 2015). This was based on research for the Joseph
Rowntree Foundation on the likely poverty impacts of the policy.

CCHPR submitted evidence, based on recent research, to the House of Lords Select Committee on Economic Affairs’ Inquiry into the Economics of the United Kingdom Housing Market (December, 2015).

Michael Oxley addressed, in the House of Commons, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Social Science and Policy at their March 2016 meeting on Housing Supply and Young People. The invitation related to our ESRC project on youth poverty and housing. He also took part, by invitation, in the December 2015 King's Think Tank's panel discussion on the London Housing Crisis.

CCHPR staff have, furthermore, met with several senior civil servants, local leaders and policy strategists through our engagement with the Cambridge Centre for Science and Policy Fellows programme: http://www.csap.cam.ac.uk/

CCHPR staff also act in a number of advisory roles. For example, Michael Oxley is a member of the Valuation Office Agency’s Domestic Statistics Advisory Panel and Anna Clarke is working with Cambridge Policy Consultants as an advisor on their evaluation of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s Housing and Poverty Programme.

Both Anna Clarke and Gemma Burgess are being considered for the Cambridge Vice Chancellor’s impact awards. These awards have been established to recognise and reward those whose research has led to excellent impact which reaches beyond academia and has positive effects on society and public policy.

Publications

We continued to publish research findings in academic and practice journals including Journal of Housing and the Built Environment, International Journal of Housing Policy, Housing Finance International, Housing Theory and Society, Social Policy and Society, Survey Review and Tijdschrift voor de Volkshuisvesting. See: http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/Publications

Conferences, Presentations and the media

CCHPR staff gave presentations at several national and international conferences including the Housing Studies Association, York (Charlotte Hamilton and Anna Clarke), the European Network for Housing Research, Lisbon (Michael Oxley and Anna Clarke). Gemma Burgess delivered a key note speech at the EU Shadow Summit Urban Agenda conference in Amsterdam, and presented papers at the Association of American Geographers and International Society of Urban Health Conference in San Francisco, the East Asian Social Policy Conference in Singapore and the Asia Pacific Network for Housing Research Conference in Gwangju, Korea.

Anna Clarke was an invited speaker on The impact of welfare reforms on housing associations at Inside Government’s Delivering Effective Services in the Housing Sector Forum (October 2015) and at Understanding the likely poverty impacts of the extension of Right to Buy on housing association tenants organized by the Highbury Group on Housing Delivery (December 2015).
Additional impact for CCHPR work has been achieved through significant engagement with the media. For example, Anna Clarke has been interviewed by the BBC, *Inside Housing*, *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, Radio Sputnik and *Fortune* about a series of policy issues including shared ownership and welfare reform. Anna has also made an appearance on Cambridge TV in relation to her Centrepoint research on youth homelessness [http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/news/Estimating-scale-youth-homelessness-UK](http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/news/Estimating-scale-youth-homelessness-UK) and in March 2016 she was interviewed by Cambridge TV about the local impact of the Right to Buy for HA tenants and sale of higher value council homes.

**International collaboration**

Michael Oxley continues to work on joint publications with colleagues from the OTB Research Institute at Delft University of Technology. A book co-authored with Dutch colleagues was published in Russian: ‘Bridging the gap between social and market rented housing in six European countries’, by Marietta Haffner Joris Hoekstra, Michael Oxley and Harry van der Heijden, was originally published by IOS Press in the Netherlands. OTB researchers are also working collaboratively on journal outputs which are in the pipeline, from work on institutional investment in social housing, funded by the Investment Property Forum.

We are working cooperatively with Dr Pengun Zhao, a research professor in Urban and Regional Planning and Director of the Centre for Urban Planning and Transport Studies at Peking University. We are together reviewing the prospects for a joint European and China bid to the European Union Horizon 2020 funding programme.

In June and July 2016 we will host a visit by Sónia Alves, Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at the Instituto de Ciências Sociais da Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal. She will work with us on preparing a Marie Curie Fellowship application on internationally comparative aspects of planning, affordable housing and segregation. If successful, European Union funding would support a joint research project.

Our PhD supervisions also have international dimensions:

Dr Gemma Burgess and Professor Michael Oxley: Mohammad Usman - The processes by which undocumented and documented Ghanaian immigrants in the Bronx access housing.

Dr Gemma Burgess and Professor Doug Crawford-Brown: Jose Vallejo - Sustainable housing for all: alternative credit risk evaluations with carbon finance as a risk mitigation subsidy for the low-income people of Quito, Ecuador.

**The future**

We will continue to engage in a mix of reactive bidding for research contracts and proactive applications to research councils and other bodies for large scale funding. We have ambitions to shift the emphasis to more proactive bidding and have indeed already had some success in this regard with, for example, our ESRC housing and youth poverty project.

The ESRC has signalled its intention to fund a UK Housing Evidence Centre. [http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/our-research/urban-transformations/housing](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/research/our-research/urban-transformations/housing) We have been gathering intelligence on what this will involve. It is potentially a major development for housing research in the UK and we expect to respond to the invitation to make a competitive
bid for the funding when this is announced in the near future.

Historically, most of our projects above have been won through competitive tender and such bids are likely to continue. They provide essential contact with the reality of current housing and planning policies and procedures and they have been the means through which important impacts have been achieved. However, we will build on an exceptional research record to take an increasingly proactive approach to funding proposals. This is likely to involve collaboration on large scale projects with both external partners and with others within the University. This means that we will need to develop plans for specific projects which engage widely with others in the Department of Land Economy, other departments within the University and the broad spectrum of housing and planning professionals with whom CCHPR has worked over several decades.

A major challenge is having sufficient resources to meet our obligations to produce high quality academic outputs whilst at the same time engaging in the diversity of policy and practice research which leads to publications focussed on different audiences. We will continue to seek ways of securing the capacity to achieve the goals set by the multiplicity of agendas which guide our work.

Michael Oxley, Director CCHPR, April 2016