

Cambridge Centre
for Housing &
Planning Research

Annual Report 2010



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

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Advisory Group

We are very grateful for the generous commitment of our Advisory Group who meet with us regularly and help in many other ways. In 2010 they were:

Tony Crook	University of Sheffield
Ken Gibb	University of Glasgow
Katherine Knox	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Bob Pannell	Council of Mortgage Lenders
Gavin Smart	National Housing Federation
Steve Wilcox	University of York
Judith Yates	University of Sydney

Welcome

The year 2010 has been both exciting and difficult. The excitement was associated with two occasions: (i) the conference to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Centre – and thirty years since we started housing research in the Department of Land Economy; and (ii) the appointment of Peter Williams to succeed as Director of the Centre. The difficulties were associated with the long lead into the general election and the very different research environment that has followed. For a Centre that works mainly at the interface between policy and research, this presented major challenges which are now only being partially overcome.

Yet, in some ways it has been a very stable year. Funding has come from many of our traditional sources although we are also looking to new possibilities. Similarly the membership of the Centre has been stable. The only change has been in our Administrator – we were sorry to lose Shirley Stringer after five years, finding the commuting too stressful. We have been very pleased to welcome Elspeth Lindsey whose first task was to organise our conference so effectively. Jennie Spenceley went on maternity leave in November and James was born very soon thereafter. We send the whole family our very best wishes.

During the year members of the Centre were involved in a number of large projects for central government and agencies – particularly the assessment of the Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers programme on homelessness prevention and the provision of a statistical service for the Tenant Services Authority. Both of these have had to be completed early but this has had one benefit – that the current government is committed to publishing research very quickly, so the results are available earlier than might have been expected. This is particularly relevant both to implementing aspects of the localism agenda and to evaluating the effects of the new 'affordable rents' regime.

Another important strand has been on understanding local markets and the potential for investment including Typologies of Place with LSE; a guide to using the evidence base for affordable housing in local development frameworks for the South East England Partnership Board; the success of mixed communities initiatives for DCLG; and the completion of work on why people stay poor in parts of Birmingham for Barrow Cadbury.

CCHPR has also been involved directly in evaluating potential policy change in three contexts: proposals regarding the planning system to achieve affordable housing and the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies (both for JRF); and the spatial impact of changes in Housing Benefit (for Shelter). The last in particular generated a great deal of media and political interest.

Obviously the funding environment has become very much more difficult over the year as the regional layer of government and a number of agencies have been disbanded. Moreover government cutbacks have been particularly concentrated in our fields of expertise. Yet the need for research is, if anything, greater as planning and housing both enter a period of rapid policy change. In this environment we are both looking further afield and to more local and voluntary sector sources of funding. We have so far been successful in winning two international projects and are beginning to develop a portfolio of more local and practice oriented projects and partners. Up to date information can be found on our website: www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk



The celebratory conference held in September looked forward to the next twenty years from an understanding of the evidence base developed over the last two decades to support policy and evaluation. The conference attracted some 125 housing and urban researchers from four continents and fifteen countries. More than 70 papers were presented in plenaries and workshops. Most importantly everyone had time to talk and to enjoy Cambridge – and to make plans for the future.

All the details and presentations are available on the website <http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk>

Two books were launched at the conference. The first, *Making Housing More Affordable: The Role of Intermediate Tenure*, edited by Sarah Monk and myself and published by Wiley-Blackwell, included contributions from a number of researchers participating in the conference. It covers the principles and evidence base for developing intermediate market products to support the provision of affordable housing. The second; *Forty Years of Working with the Homeless in Cambridge* by Anna Clarke, documents the development of Cyrenians since the 1960s, and well reflects the Centre's continued involvement in local housing and planning issues. Details are available on the CCHPR website <http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk>

At the conference we were also able to announce that Peter Williams had accepted the position of Director and would take over on 1 January 2011. We are very lucky to have made such a good appointment, particularly at a time when policy is changing so rapidly and research funding is under threat. I wish him and the Centre another twenty successful years (and hope to continue to take some part in that success).



Finally, I would like to thank everyone with whom I have worked over the last twenty years. I hope it has been productive – it has certainly been fun.

Christine Whitehead

Our Team



Daniel Banks joined the Centre in January 2000. His main responsibilities involve the management of IT within the Centre. This includes the development and maintenance of the Dataspring and CCHPR websites; expansion of online interactive data features; database management; CamTools administration; system automation, and work on internal and external requests for rents and socio-economic statistics and analysis. He also contributes to academic publication,; most recently covering work on comparative affordability across tenures. He is currently working towards an MSc in Professional Computing at Staffordshire University.



Gemma Burgess joined the Centre in early 2007. She has worked on the delivery of affordable housing through the planning system, the intermediate housing market, and mixed communities. She has recently been researching the impact of new gender equality legislation on planning policy and practice and the relationship between domestic violence and homelessness. Gemma is leading an evaluation project on the provision of information and advice about housing and care to older people. Gemma lectures on the MPhil in Environment, Society and Development, Part II Political Geography: Geographies of Postcolonialism and Part 1B Culture and Society in the Department of Geography.



Anna Clarke joined the Centre in June 2004. Her research interests include housing need, homelessness, demand for social housing and low cost home ownership, worklessness and poor neighbourhoods. Her recent work includes work on homelessness legislation and domestic violence and the history of homelessness and is leading on a large evaluation project on Housing Options services. Prior to joining the Centre she worked for NACRO researching social exclusion issues relating to hostels, ex-offender housing, drug use and crime prevention. Her research skills include qualitative research, focus groups, as well as survey research and analysis. She teaches qualitative research methods on the Land Economy MPhil programme.



Alex Fenton's ongoing interests lie in the spatial concentration of poverty and deprivation. His recent research at CCHPR has looked at long-term trends in high-unemployment neighbourhoods, focussing on the interaction between urban housing systems and post-industrial regional economies. He is also involved in CCHPR's modelling and analysis of housing policy, most recently leading the assessment of the possible effects of changes to Housing Benefit on low-income tenants. He contributes to the department's postgraduate methods teaching. He joined the Centre in 2006, having worked previously at the Institute of Education and the London School of Economics.



Fiona Lyall Grant has worked at the Centre for the past eleven years. She played an important role in developing qualitative analyses in Dataspring and most recently worked on an evaluation of The National Register of Social Housing (NROSH). She also worked on a project looking at the role of Faith groups in the community in East Anglia. Over the past year Fiona has worked on the Evaluation of Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers and on Under Occupation for the National Housing Federation (NHF). She is currently working on the Evaluation of the FirstStop advice initiative.



Alan Holmans retired from his position as Research Fellow, but retains a presence in the Centre as a consultant and researcher. During the year he completed (with Sarah Monk) a study for the Welsh Assembly Government on future housing need and demand in Wales. He also used the ONS Longitudinal Study to analyse the effects of international migration on London housing and presented a paper on this subject to the British Society for Population Studies. He continues his interest in household projections and housing need and demand, housing wealth and housing supply statistics.



Michael Jones joined the Centre in 1992. He read Architecture at Cambridge, and before joining the Centre worked in local government at senior and Chief Officer levels. His main areas of interest are distributional issues in housing allocations and financial issues in social housing. Recently completed projects include developing proposals to address the housing needs of University staff in Cambridge; an evaluation of social housing in Jersey; and the impact of high density service charges. He is Chair of the Board of Homes for Haringey, the Arm's Length Management Organisation of the London Borough of Haringey.



Elspeth Lindsey joined the Centre as Administrator in February 2010. She acts as coordinator of the Centre's activities as well as the first port of call for information. Her core activities are to assist researchers, to provide a public face for the Centre and to manage the in-house finances across our many projects. In addition, she organises seminars and meetings, maintains the Centre's in-house library, and is responsible for publications. She also provides secretarial support, in particular to Alan Holmans and Christine Whitehead.



Sanna Markkanen joined the Centre in September 2007. Her main research interests include migration, deprivation, inequalities, social integration, and various issues relating to ethnic diversity and minority ethnic populations' housing needs and aspirations. She has recently worked on an Evaluation of Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers for DCLG; a project on hidden need and deprivation in Suffolk for Suffolk Foundation; an economic evaluation of Emmaus Village Carlton for Emmaus UK; evaluation of the Mixed Communities Initiative for DCLG; and a project on 'ward penalty' in Birmingham for the Barrow Cadbury Trust.



Sarah Monk is Deputy Director of the Centre and manages a range of research projects in the housing and planning fields. Over the last year she has completed work sponsored by the RICS on whether the government's carbon emission reduction targets can be met in the East Midlands and East of England regions and a Good Practice Guide for local authorities on making use of the evidence base to develop affordable housing policy and inform S106 negotiations. She has also been involved in several policy evaluations (Trailblazers, FirstStop) and two literature reviews for the Scottish Government (economic and social impact of housing and mixed communities).



Paul Sanderson is a Senior Research Associate and Research Programme Manager. He managed the Statistical Service contract (Dataspring) for the Tenant Services Authority and has management responsibilities within the Centre. Since gaining his PhD from the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge, his research has focused on two areas, regulation and corporate governance. In addition to working at the CCHPR, he is a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Business Research at the Judge Business School and Senior Lecturer in Regulation Studies at Anglia Ruskin University where he is also Pathway leader for the Management of Social and Affordable Housing.



Jennie Spenceley has been working in the Centre since April 2000 and is a Research Associate and Project Manager for the Tenant Services Authority Statistical Service programme (Dataspring). She coordinates the delivery and dissemination of Dataspring outputs; is the first point of contact for clients and potential clients requiring data services; and is PRINCE2 certified. Her main areas of interest are the analysis of social housing data and, in particular, the provision of social housing by housing associations. She has written a number of briefing papers and sector studies looking at various aspects of social provision.



Connie P Y Tang joined the Centre in April 2008 in the Dataspring team. She has considerable experience working on data from secondary datasets, for example, the Census, CORE (the COntinuing REcord of housing associations new lettings), FRS (Family Resources Survey), RSRs (the Regulatory and Statistical Returns), NROSH (the National Register of the Social Housing). She has been involved in projects for the Scottish Government, the Tenant Services Authority, the Homes and Communities Agency, and the Department for Communities and Local Government.



Chihiro Udagawa joined the Centre in July 2006. His main responsibilities are to provide expertise in economics, econometrics and statistical analysis. He is also responsible for analyses of rents data with Dataspring. He is currently working on the estimation of rates of return on private sector rents in England. The project focuses particularly on private sector rents for lower income households in order to examine rent structures for tenants on Housing Benefit and the extent to which social and private sectors act as substitutes in different markets. He holds an MSc in Economics from London, and has previously worked for Scottish Economic Research, University of Abertay, Dundee.



Christine Whitehead has been Director of the Centre since it was founded in 1990. Her research interests are mainly in housing and urban economics, finance and policy. Over the last few years she has concentrated on questions related to privatisation and the changing role of social housing; affordable housing through the planning system; shared equity and shared ownership; housing demand; housing finance and housing tenure, as well as inter-country comparisons of social housing and mortgage instruments. She is Professor in Housing in the Department of Economics, London School of Economics, and was until this year deputy chair of the European Network of Housing Research. She remains with the Centre as a Senior Departmental Fellow.

Associates and Departmental Colleagues

Professor Mike Berry is a leading scholar of urban studies and public policy at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University. His research role at the AHURI/NATSEM Research Centre has focussed on urban development processes, urban social theory, economics and policy and housing markets and policy. He has been carrying out work of national significance and international reach into alternative financing approaches for affordable housing. This year he has been assisting us with writing proposals and has commented on our papers as well as chairing the JRF debate at our September conference.

Dr Youngha Cho is a senior lecturer in real estate management at Oxford Brookes University. She was formerly a post-doctoral researcher at CCHPR, where she worked from 2001-2004. She gained her PhD from London School of Economics in 2000. Her research interests are mainly in the fields of housing economics, housing policy and more general issues of residential property. She has been involved in a wide range of housing related research, including affordability in social housing and intermediate housing tenures, residential mobility and micro analysis of the housebuilding industry. This year she has been working with us on intermediate housing.

Dr Nicola Morrison is a lecturer in housing and the built environment in the Department of Land Economy. She is an Associate of CCHPR and has collaborated with colleagues on a number of affordable housing projects, specialising in particular on the key worker housing issue. She has collaborated with European researchers, undertaking comparative housing research for the European Commission as well as for the Nordic countries and German governments. She has recently been invited to share her research findings on planning for affordable housing in China. She is also a board member of a Housing Association and a Director of City Centre Partnership Ltd both in Cambridge.

Kathleen Scanlon is a researcher at LSE. She recently edited a book about issues affecting London entitled *London: Coping with Austerity*, and previously edited two books about European social housing. She has recently been working on mortgage market developments across Europe and has contributed to our edited book on intermediate housing.

Professor Judith Yates is currently an Honorary Associate at the University of Sydney. She is widely acknowledged as one of Australia's leading specialists in housing and housing policy. She has an extensive publications record, and has contributed to many federal and state government inquiries, ministerial committees and reports on housing, housing policy and housing finance in Australia. She has been a member of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council and a board member of the Commonwealth Banking Corporation, the Housing Loans Insurance Corporation, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and the Home Purchase Assistance Authority. She was appointed to Australia's National Housing Supply Council in 2008 and in the same year was recognised for her contribution to housing research at the Australian Housing Research Conference.

Collaboration with Other Bodies

This year we have collaborated with the following organisations on research projects:

Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics and the University of Bristol on a research project looking at the creation and use of typologies of place for policy purposes.

Shared Intelligence – a consultancy specialising in public sector consultancy and local government, working with CCHPR on the two year evaluation of the Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers.

Three Dragons – a niche consultancy, working with CCHPR on a good practice guide for Local Authorities on using the evidence base to develop affordable housing policy and to inform S106 negotiations.

University of Birmingham – also working on the Trailblazer evaluation.

University of Sheffield Town and Regional Planning Department – who led the project for the HCA on what, for whom and where have housing associations been building new affordable homes.

University of York Centre for Housing Policy – CCHPR contributed to the DCLG Housing Analysis and Surveys Expert Panel which York runs, working on Attitudes to Social Housing

University of Reading – CCHPR contributed to the Housing Markets, Planning and Analysis Expert Panel which is organised by Reading, working on under-occupation.

Research Projects

An Assessment of Current and Future Housing Needs and Demands in Wales

The Welsh Assembly Government commissioned a 'top down' assessment of the future demand and need for additional housing together with current unmet need for affordable housing. This will underpin more detailed work to help local authorities and registered social landlords to assess conditions within their local housing markets.

Researchers Alan Holmans and Sarah Monk
Funding £11,850
Funder Welsh Assembly Government
Contact Sarah Monk
Dates November 2009 – March 2010

Analysis of Available Data on Affordable Housing Investment

This project was commissioned by the Homes and Communities Agency and subcontracted to CCHPR from the University of Sheffield. Using existing data sources, the purpose of this project is to provide a strong evidence base to show the current provision of new affordable homes.

Researchers Sarah Monk and Connie Tang
Funding £29,200
Funder Homes and Communities Agency
Contact Sarah Monk
Dates February 2010 – September 2010

Call-off Contract with Scottish Government

CCHPR has a framework agreement with the devolved Scottish Government by which the Scottish Government's analysts are able to call upon methodological or topic expertise within CCHPR. This provides the Scottish Government with access to expert support at short notice for a wide range of housing and planning research. In 2010 the days under this contract were drawn upon for three pieces of work, two around mixed communities, and a third on the economic and social impacts of new housing.

Researchers Anna Clarke, Alex Fenton, Sarah Monk, Sanna Markkanen and
Connie Tang
Funding £20,000
Funder Scottish Government
Contact Alex Fenton
Dates January 2009 – December 2010

Contributing to the Political Debate on Planning and Affordable Housing Round Table

A range of organisations, including the Conservative Party and the Local Government Association, had called for radical changes to the current planning system to make it more positive in its approach to development in general and in ensuring an adequate supply of housing in particular. The objectives of this project for the JRF were to understand in more detail the range of instruments that are proposed as means of achieving both local empowerment and higher levels of market and affordable housing and to clarify the potential benefits and costs of moving to a more incentives based system, and particularly to assess the likely barriers to success.

A paper was developed setting out the issues and questions as a starting point for a discussion with political advisers and commentators. A round table was held with academics and housing and planning professionals. The final paper reflected this round table and further discussion with political advisors and decision makers.

Researchers	Gemma Burgess, Sarah Monk and Christine Whitehead
Funding	£23,000
Funder	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Contact	Gemma Burgess
Dates	October 2009 – February 2010

Cyrenians Book on the History of Homelessness in Cambridge

Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research have been working on a project commissioned by the Cambridge Cyrenians to research and write a book on the history of homelessness in Cambridge. The project is funded by the Heritage Fund. The research involved oral history interviews with staff and residents and archive research. The Cambridge Folk Museum has been displaying some of the findings during autumn 2010.

Researchers	Anna Clarke, Michael Jones and Christine Whitehead
Funding	£19,536
Funder	Cambridge Cyrenians
Contact	Anna Clarke
Dates	May 2009 – October 2010

Delivering Insight through Typologies of Place

Alex Fenton is working with a team led by Ruth Lupton and drawn from the LSE and the University of Bristol on research looking at the use of the spatial typologies in policy. The research starts from the recognition that there are a number of classifications of neighbourhoods widely available (e.g. ACORN, MOSAIC and the ONS's Census-based ward typology), and that typologies have potentially wide application in policy design, allocation and evaluation. The project will look at what use is currently made of typologies and what inhibits their wider use. CCHPR will be particularly involved in the latter part of the project which will demonstrate and document a number of innovative and replicable techniques for the derivation of policy-relevant typologies from spatial data sources.

Researcher	Alex Fenton
Funding	£26,775
Funder	Department of Communities and Local Government
Contact	Alex Fenton
Dates	October 2009 – March 2010

Developing a Local Development Framework Affordable Housing Evidence Base

This project set out practice guidance on how to make the most of Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments to inform the process of preparing affordable housing policy. It included sections on using the evidence base to develop policy and also to inform S106 negotiations.

Researcher Sarah Monk
Funding £4,992
Funder South East England Partnership Board
Contact Sarah Monk
Dates January 2010 - April 2010

Domestic Violence - Assistance for Adults without Dependant Children

The main purpose of this study was to provide DCLG with firm evidence of the extent to which adults, who are neither pregnant nor have any dependant children, fleeing domestic violence are getting the help they need from local authorities to ensure they do not have to return to accommodation where they would be at risk of violence.

Researchers Gemma Burgess, Anna Clarke, Fiona Lyall Grant, Michael Jones and Christine Whitehead
Funding £65,375
Funder Department for Communities and Local Government
Contact Anna Clarke
Dates October 2008 – January 2011

Evaluating the FirstStop Advice and Information Initiative: Phase 1 and Phase 2

This research project is evaluating the FirstStop information and advice service for older people, their families and carers, which is funded partly by DCLG and the Big Lottery Fund (BLF). FirstStop is an initiative intended to explore ways and means of expanding the accessibility and reach of good quality information and advice (I&A) for older people, their families and carers, around housing and care issues. Its value framework is about empowering older people to make informed decisions in the full knowledge of the options available to them and with support to appraise these options for themselves. The evaluation will assess the value for money of the initiative and analyse how well it is meeting its objectives. Phase 1 began in late November 2009; Phase 2 began in April 2010.

Researchers Gemma Burgess, Daniel Banks, Alex Fenton, Fiona Lyall Grant, Sarah Monk, Connie Tang and Christine Whitehead
Funding £49,925 (Phase 1)
£78,025 (Phase 2)
Funder Elderly Accommodation Counsel
Contact Gemma Burgess
Dates November 2009 – June 2011

Evaluation of Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers

This project evaluates the implementation, operation and success of the Enhanced Housing Options Trailblazers programmes. These aim to develop innovative approaches to delivering housing services, extending to wider client groups and linking housing advice to wider advice about a range of issues. The work is led by CCHPR in collaboration with Birmingham University (Centre for Urban and Regional Analysis) and Shared Intelligence.

Researchers Anna Clarke, Fiona Lyall Grant, Sanna Markkanen, Sarah Monk, Peter Tyler and Christine Whitehead
Funding £388,856
Funders Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department for Work and Pensions
Contact Anna Clarke
Dates March 2009 – January 2011

Hidden Need and Deprivation in Suffolk

The research draws on established expertise in the analysis of small-area data to identify hidden deprivation and unmet need in communities in Suffolk. It looks at the extent to which this need is being met by existing voluntary sector provision, and considers the implications of changes to the voluntary sector and local government.

Researchers Alex Fenton and Sanna Markkanen
Funding £15,000
Funder The Suffolk Foundation
Contact Alex Fenton
Dates August 2010 – January 2011

Housing Consultancy for the States of Jersey

Following the project *A Review of Social Housing for the States of Jersey*, completed in 2009, Christine Whitehead and Michael Jones have subsequently been commissioned to provide consultancy advice to the States of Jersey Housing Transformation Programme.

Researchers Christine Whitehead and Michael Jones
Funding £94,750
Funder States of Jersey Housing Department
Contact Michael Jones
Dates November 2010 – December 2013

Input into the Consultation on the Abolition of the Regional Spatial Strategies for JRF

CCHPR was commissioned by the JRF to assist them in submitting their consultation response for the inquiry into the abolition of regional spatial strategies. The consultation focussed particularly on the implications for house building.

Researchers Gemma Burgess, Sarah Monk, Christine Whitehead and Alison Bailey
Funding £3,400
Funder Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Contact Gemma Burgess
Dates August 2010 – September 2010

Mixed Communities Policy Review

The Minister for Housing & Communities requested a review of whether and how a broad range of Scottish Government policies were contributing to mixed communities. The short study looks at the outcomes of general housing investment, regeneration and planning policies and assesses their effect on creating mixed-income and mixed-tenure neighbourhoods in Scotland.

Researcher Alex Fenton
Funding £8,694
Funder Scottish Government
Contact Alex Fenton
Dates October 2009 – February 2010

Private Rented Sector Services Review

Hammersmith and Fulham commissioned Organisational Development to carry out a review of their Private Rented Sector. CCHPR had a consultancy role on this work offering advice into the use of the private rented sector within Housing Options.

Researcher Anna Clarke
Funding £2,100
Funder Organisational Development
Contact Anna Clarke
Dates March 2010 – June 2010

RICS S106 Project

The impact of the recent financial crisis on planning for affordable housing in England – local authority responses and future pathways.

Researcher Gemma Burgess
Funding £7,500
Funder Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Contact Gemma Burgess
Dates October 2010 – March 2011

Under-used Housing Stock – Eight Local Case Studies

Shelter has commissioned CCHPR to undertake eight local authority case studies into under-utilisation of the existing housing stock. The research will look at empty properties, second homes and under-occupation. The findings will contribute to Shelter's review, which will identify the extent to which housing need may be met through the more effective use of the current housing stock as well as providing policy solutions that will help achieve this.

Researchers Anna Clarke, Daniel Banks, Fiona Lyall Grant, Sarah Monk and
 Connie Tang
Funding £9,940
Funder Shelter
Contact Anna Clarke
Dates December 2010 – February 2011

The Green Agenda in Housing: Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions from the Existing Housing Stock

A briefing paper, commissioned by the Building Societies Association, setting out the issues involved in the improvement of the existing UK housing stock, in order to meet the challenge of the climate change agenda.

Researchers Michael Jones and Katherine Martindale
Funding £13,500
Funder Building Societies Association
Contact Michael Jones
Dates July 2009 – November 2010

The Impact of Proposed Changes to Housing Benefit for Private Tenants

Phase 1 of this project is a detailed analysis of the possible effects of the coalition governments proposed cuts to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) payments to private tenants who cannot afford their rent. Phase 2 looks specifically at the implications for low-income private tenants in London and where in the capital they will and will not be able to afford to live in the future as the measures take effect.

Researchers Alex Fenton, Christine Whitehead, Michael Jones and Anna Clarke
Funding £22,000
Funder Shelter
Contact Alex Fenton
Dates August 2010 – December 2010

The Private Rented Sector in the New Century: A Comparative Approach

This research examines the extent to which different regulatory regimes across Europe have generated different incentives to provide private rented housing. This is seen as an important issue by national governments and international agencies such as the OECD as well as by the private stakeholders and consumers involved in the sector. The research will clarify how far Denmark has come in liberalising the private rented sector in comparison to other countries. A key question is what determines the scale and use of private renting across Northern Europe and particularly what role regulation has played both historically since 1980 and looking forward. The findings will contribute to a better understanding of the main regulatory factors limiting the development of more sustainable private rented sectors which meet the needs of the housing system across Europe. This project is being undertaken jointly with LSE London.

Researchers Sarah Monk, Sanna Markkanen, Christine Whitehead and Kathleen Scanlon (LSE)
Funding £152,000
Funder Realdania Denmark
Contact Sarah Monk
Dates December 2010 – November 2011

Under-Occupation in North Hertfordshire

CCHPR have been commissioned to carry out a study of under-occupation amongst social housing tenants in North Hertfordshire. The study will include a survey of tenants as well as analysis of other data sources. It will involve an assessment of the extent of under-occupation, identification of the aspirations of under-occupying tenants and identification of housing options for these tenants. The outputs will assist North Hertfordshire with the development of a systematic process for the ongoing identification of households who are under-occupying their accommodation.

Researchers	Anna Clarke, Fiona Lyall Grant and Sarah Monk
Funding	£19,875
Funder	North Hertfordshire Housing Partnership
Contact	Anna Clarke
Dates	December 2010 – March 2011

Dataspring

In October 2006, the Centre won a three-year research contract with the Housing Corporation (now the Tenant Services Authority or TSA) for the 'Provision of Statistical Services.' This contract was extended for a further twelve months ending in September 2010. There have been two new components to the programme: (i) a set of core annual projects analysing the data housing associations supply to the TSA in their Regulatory Statistical Returns (RSR) and (ii) a series of related one-off projects reflecting changes in their priorities and government policy. The latter were agreed annually with the TSA. All outputs are branded under the name 'Dataspring,' which has been used to identify similar work over the past decade. Most outputs are available on the dedicated Dataspring website: <http://www.dataspring.org.uk>. The programme for 2009-2010 supported the TSA's data requirements as it prepared for a single regulatory regime covering both housing associations and local authorities.

Programme Director	Christine Whitehead
Programme Manager	Paul Sanderson
Project Manager	Jennie Spenceley
Funding	£300,000
Funder	Tenant Services Authority
Dates	1 October 2009 – 30 September 2010

Dataspring Databases

CCHPR developed and continues to maintain two large databases:

- Local housing markets database contains information on cross-tenure rents, population, incomes and earnings, house prices, housing, households and employment variables.
- RSR Time Series database is constructed from key variables extracted from the annual RSR data. The data are presented in three discrete databases covering the periods 1989–2001, 2002–2006 and 2007-2010, based on period changes in data definitions.

Core Annual Research

Rents Fact File

This annual paper compares actual net rents (i.e. excluding service charges) with target net rents (using the current year's data, comparing it with the previous year) and examines the extent to which actual net rents have moved towards target net rents. It also describes the annual change in gross rents (i.e. including service charges) for the period.

It is a particularly useful tool for the TSA in examining how far housing associations are from meeting their target rents, a policy aimed at bringing greater rent coherence between similar properties in the same area from different social landlords.

Researchers Daniel Banks and Chihiro Udagawa

Guide to Local Rents

The Guide to Local Rents consists of three separate projects drawing on the rents sections of the RSR. Together they provide the data to enable the TSA, housing associations (HAs) and others to analyse trends in rents at different spatial resolutions and to undertake comparisons of the rents charged by HAs, local authorities and private landlords. Part I reports rents charged by HAs, rents charged by local authorities, rents in the private rented sector, dwellings let to tenants on Housing Benefit, and costs of owner occupation for first-time buyers. Part II provides data on rents and the service charges for general needs housing of individual HAs, local authority area, regional and national levels. Part III provides similar data for supported housing and/or housing for older people. The outputs are published as sets of tables with accompanying notes.

Researchers Daniel Banks and Chihiro Udagawa

Profile of the Housing Association Sector

Each year, Dataspring produces a 'Profile of the Housing Association Sector' based on the information reported by HAs in their RSRs. The report comprises a summary outlining current stock levels and a briefing paper identifying key trends in the sector focusing on total stock including stock managed on behalf of others, lettings and staffing.

Researchers Daniel Banks, Jennie Spenceley and Connie Tang

Interactive Data Access and Database Maintenance

A key part of the programme is to make the data available, both as tables and interactively, via our award-winning user-friendly website. The Rents Guides are available both dynamically and in tabular form on the Dataspring website. Data from the RSR, some of which are used in the Profile of the Sector publication, are added into the time series database constructed from key variables to enable researchers to examine key trends in the housing association sector since 1989. Some of the elements of this database are made available for analysis online. The Dataspring website also contains all Dataspring publications and news items. It is run in parallel with the Centre's own website. The IT staff also maintain a local housing markets database for internal and external use. This contains socioeconomic data covering cross-tenure rents, population, income and earnings, house price, housing, households and employment.

Researcher Daniel Banks

2010 Research Topics

Annual Analysis of the Current Pattern of Registered Social Landlord Rents

Since 2006, Dataspring has undertaken a detailed analysis of the spatial pattern of RSL rents. This paper both updates the series of analysis to 2008/09 and examines the pattern of change since 2001/02 at national, regional and local levels. It concentrates not only on the analysis of average rents but also the relationship between average rents and target rents; how rents vary with property size; and rent relativities at the local level. It also includes some analysis of service charges and the proportion of stock given over to the Choice Bases Lettings (CBL) in each locality.

Researchers Chihiro Udagawa, Christine Whitehead and Jennie Spenceley

Cross Tenure Rents and Affordability

This paper provides an update to the analyses carried out in the previous year. It looks at the regional pattern of rents and housing costs over the period 2002/03 to 2008/09 in the local authority (LA), housing association (HA), private rented and owner occupier (OO) sectors. It also provides an update on the local pattern of these rents for the latest year. It then examines the regional distribution of affordability measured by rent/income and rent/earnings ratios across the four rent tenures for the same time frame.

Researchers Daniel Banks, Jennie Spenceley, Connie Tang, Chihiro Udagawa and Christine Whitehead

Target Rents in Relation to Market Levels

This project evaluated target rents in terms of the restructuring regime objectives by examining to what extent target rents employed market logic in their formation to reflect the policy objectives, with a main emphasis on a comparative approach. On the assumption that market rents are currently close to equilibrium, this paper compares target rents to private rents in an attempt to capture the extent to which fairness and affordability are delivered by the target rents.

Researchers Chihiro Udagawa, Christine Whitehead, Paul Sanderson and Jennie Spenceley

Detailed Analysis of Stock, Rents and Service Charges among Different Types of Social Landlords

The findings of this study suggest that at least three mechanisms are functioning to bring coherence to the social rent structure. These include the LSVT process, the rent restructuring framework and, at least potentially, consumer discipline. While the first two depend on a top-down approach from the government (although early LSVTs were often led by local initiatives), the last is principally bottom-up. The LSVT programme in its current form has passed its peak, suggesting that its impact will be less prominent in the future except to the extent that ALMOs are transferred. The rent restructuring framework will be complete within two years and it is not yet clear what will replace it. Consumer pressure on rent setting, on the other hand, may well increase as greater emphasis is placed on giving tenants the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns.

Researchers Chihiro Udagawa and Christine Whitehead

Housing Association Service Charges: RSR, NROSH and CORE

Service charges are more usual on flats, where services like care-taking and lift maintenance are more common, but can be applied to any tenants in receipt of services such as concierge, communal lighting, estate cleaning, grounds maintenance, neighbourhood warden service, etc. This study uses three main sources of data supplied by housing associations (Regulatory and Statistical Return, National Register of Social Housing and COntinuous REcording of lettings) together to identify the distributional pattern of service charges for HA general needs self-contained dwellings and how service charges vary between different property sizes and types, and between areas; and assess how far these three datasets can improve our understanding about the existing pattern of service charge that is eligible for Housing Benefit (HB).

Researchers Connie Tang and Christine Whitehead

NROSH Statistical Evaluation

This work was completed before the results of the UK government's Comprehensive Spending Review were known – and the implications for social housing regulatory data collection. The original intention was to examine the efficacy of replacing the stock elements of the RSR by NROSH. Key variables within the two datasets were compared using the RSR as a benchmark. The results showed marked discrepancies between the two data sets, suggesting further improvements would be needed if NROSH is to replace the RSR.

Researchers Daniel Banks, Fiona Lyall Grant, Paul Sanderson, Jennie Spenceley and Chihiro Udagawa

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