

CRESR Annual Report

2020/21




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
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This report has been published by the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) at Sheffield Hallam University and is designed to give an overview of the activities in the Centre between the dates of 1st August 2020 and 31st July 2021.

Published: November 2021

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Welcome

In a year of challenge, we are proud of the successes achieved.

Selecting a handful of highlights across the year is always difficult. Even in this most challenging year everyone has gone above and beyond on numerous occasions, which makes this highlights reel but a partial snapshot of everyone's accomplishments.

In March 2021 the University made its submission to the 2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF). This was the culmination of a seven-year exercise preparing for an assessment of the excellence of every aspect of our research activity, impact and environment. CRESR led SHU's submission to Unit of Assessment 13 (Architecture, Built Environment and Planning). We believe that this will be our strongest ever REF submission with significant increases in research intensity, income and outputs according to the REF definitions. This is an achievement that really is down to the excellent efforts of all CRESR staff, with 54 per cent of the 92 outputs submitted in Unit 13 attributed to CRESR academics. Particular thanks also go to Aimee Ambrose, Tina Beatty, Ian Cole, Chris Dayson, Will Eadson, Paul Hickman (Department of Psychology, Sociology and Politics), Paul Lawless, Kesia Reeve, Rob Storrar (Department of Natural and Built Environment) and Sarah Ward for writing impact case studies and being part of our REF management group overseeing our submission – thank you! We look forward to receiving our results when they are released in May 2022.

CRESR has been at the fore in supporting SHU's role in leading the Civic University Network of around 120 Higher Education institutions in the UK. In 2020-21, Julian Dobson and Ed Ferrari led the development of a [Civic Impact Framework](#) to enable universities to assess and improve their impact on their places and communities. This framework underpinned work in SHU as it established its own Civic University Agreement. Julian has also published an excellent blog off the back of this work ([How to spot a civic university](#)) and has presented

at a major international conference on [The Role of Universities in Addressing Societal Challenges and Fostering Democracy](#).

This is probably the first year that our office accommodation features in a review of our year. Provoking mixed emotions, September 2020 saw us shut the doors on our Sheffield Science Park office for the final time, with bulldozers moving in soon after to clear the site in readiness for Hallam's new [Campus Masterplan](#). Following an extended period of COVID lockdowns and guidance to work from home, we secured a new home in the AWRC building at the Olympic Legacy Park in Attercliffe. Locating at the AWRC provides opportunity for us to develop interdisciplinary collaborations and ensures we have access to high spec office, meeting and collaboration space. It also locates our Centre in an area where we can support SHU's Civic Agenda. While we will be using our time at the AWRC to cement our interdisciplinary links with wellbeing researchers – building on our colleague Chris Dayson's leadership of [AWRC's Healthy & Active 100 theme](#) – we also are excited by the approval of the planning application for our proposed new home. [This will be prominently located on the site of the Science Park](#) and designed to promote new ways of working.

[People Place and Policy](#), our in-house journal, provided two highlights as we moved into Summer 2021. First there was great news that the PPP Journal team, led by the efforts of Sarah Ward, were successful in their application to the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). This is important for enhancing the reputation and prominence of the journal and raises its profile around the world. Second was the hugely successful 2021 PPP conference – [Division and Unity](#) – which ran virtually and had a keynote presentation from University of Cambridge's [Dr Mia Gray](#). A record 70 delegates attended the conference, which had an excellent

rollcall of plenary and paper sessions - many showcasing the work of CRESR.

Last, but certainly not least, it has been a notable year for staffing. More news follows later in the Report but to pick out a few pieces. We welcomed back Nadia Bashir from maternity leave, while in April Emma Bimpson went on maternity leave. Congratulations to you both! We also welcomed three new research associates into the Centre: Joseph Chambers, Yael Arbell and Phil Northall. Finally, we said goodbye to Ian Cole and Paul Lawless-two of our founding academics-who became Emeritus Professors after their final act in supporting our REF 2021 submission. We all owe so much to Ian and Paul and hope we can continue CRESR's growth in a way that they would be proud.

In the remainder of this Annual Report you can read a snapshot of our activities, research and impact throughout the year as well as stories from each of the clusters leading our five [research themes](#). That we have managed to achieve so much at a time of great challenge is testament to our fantastic

academic staff and support team led by Gail Hallewell. Our researchers' efforts allied with Gail's careful management of the Centre was instrumental in achieving a sustainable financial outcome – recording a positive net contribution to the University of over £30,000 despite considerable cost pressures and project changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Ed Ferrari
CRESR Director

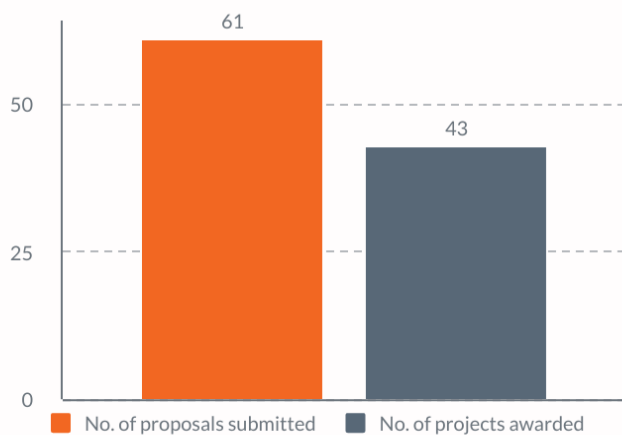


Ian Wilson
CRESR Deputy Director

2020/2021 Academic Year

1st August 2020
- 31st July 2021

Bids, Tenders & Projects



CRESR Income
20/21

£2 million



70%
win rate

36
completed projects

Staff

Staff Groups

- Professors: 6
- Principal Research Fellows: 5
- Senior Research Fellows: 5
- Research Fellows: 8
- Research Associates: 5
- Professional Services: 4

29

Academic Staff

3

New Staff

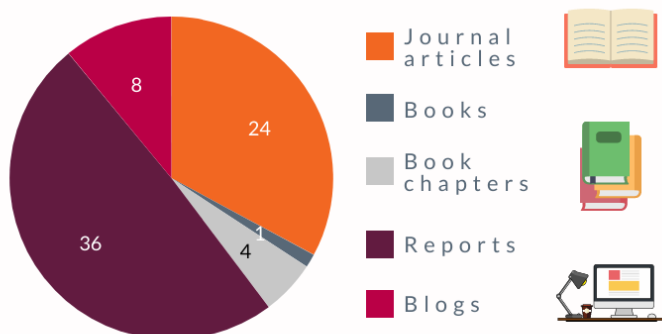
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Professional Services

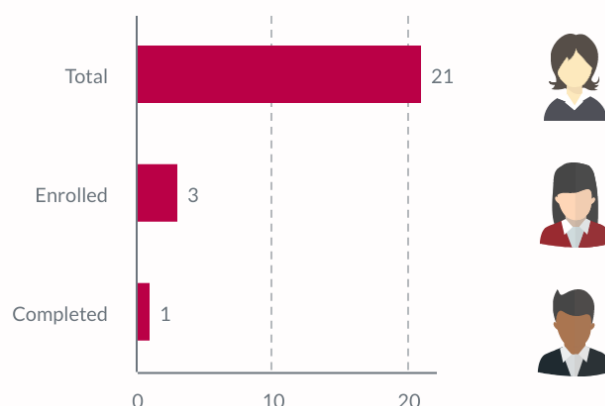
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Total Headcount

Academic Outputs



PhD Students



Click the section headings to learn more

About the Centre

As a leading UK policy research centre, CRESR seeks to understand the impact of social and economic disadvantage on places and people, and assess critically the policies and interventions targeted at these issues. Clients include government departments and agencies, local authorities, charities and foundations, international organisations, and the private sector. We offer research expertise covering a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methods, evaluation, policy advice and guidance, and consultancy.

Our Research

Here is a selection of our projects from 2020/21 organised by theme.

In 2020/21 we undertook a detailed review of our research activities and how we add value to academic and policy discourse. This resulted in the development of five new Research Themes. Across all our themes, we offer multi-disciplinary research expertise covering a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methods, evaluation, policy advice and guidance, and consultancy. We work in partnership with our funders and partners, including government departments, local authorities, charities and private sector organisations throughout the UK and internationally.

The following pages of this report provide a snapshot of the work of each of our themes, introduced by our Theme Leads.



Housing and Place

Housing; homelessness; regeneration; planning; neighbourhoods and community; COVID-19



Sustainable Futures

Energy policy; fuel poverty; environmental policy; green and blue infrastructure; transport; COVID-19



Inclusive Economy

Labour market analysis; employment initiatives; skills; welfare reform; benefits analysis; spatial inequalities and inclusive growth; industrial strategy and productivity; COVID-19



Voluntary and Community Sector

Infrastructure; funding; social finance and social investment; public services reform; social prescribing; health and social care; COVID-19



Policy Research and Evaluation

Policy devolution and implementation; systems analysis; governance; politics; evaluation and research methods; COVID-19

Housing and Place



The UK is experiencing a housing crisis. The affordability, availability, and quality of housing presents challenges for significant numbers of people across the country and is the subject of heated public debate. At the extremes of this crisis, homelessness - in all its forms - remains a pernicious characteristic of our society.

The Housing and Place Theme aims to develop and build on CRESR's outstanding record of housing-based research and evaluation by furthering an understanding of the operation of housing markets, individuals' experiences of housing precarity, and the interface between housing and other domains - including welfare, health, and social care. It aims to provide evidence and analysis to support and influence effective policy and practice that promotes social justice and fairness.

Theme members have research and evaluation experience in a broad range of housing and place issues, using qualitative and quantitative based methodologies. Their current interests include: Affordable housing; Homelessness; Housing and multiple disadvantage; Housing and welfare policy; Community-led housing; Understanding housing markets and tenures; Housing and health; Housing policy and practice development.



Dr Steve Green
Theme Lead

UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE)

Funder: Economic and Social Research Council, Arts and Humanities Research Council, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Project Lead: Ed Ferrari (SHU) / Ken Gibb (Glasgow University)
Budget: £134,083
Project Duration: 2017-2022

CRESR Team Members

- Kesia Reeve
- Ben Pattison

About the Project

The Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CaCHE) is an independent, multi-disciplinary and multi-sector consortium of academic and non-academic stakeholders. CaCHE is UK-wide in coverage (across all four nations and at different spatial scales within), as well as UK-level in focus. It will advance knowledge and improve the evidence

base for both housing policy and practice in all parts of the U.K.

CaCHE is organised as a "hub and spoke" network with its administrative core in Glasgow and a physical presence in all five sub-national knowledge exchange hubs in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales & the South West, the North & Midlands, and London, East & South East. CRESR Director Ed Ferrari is the CaCHE Knowledge Exchange Lead for the North and Midlands of England.

CaCHE's six research themes crosscut the different geographies depending on relevancy and appropriateness. The themes are: Housing and the economy; Understanding housing markets: demand and need, supply and delivery; Housing aspirations, choices and outcomes; Housing, poverty, health, education and employment; Housing and neighbourhood design, sustainability and place-making, and multi-level governance. Following a review of themes in 2021, CaCHE will be developing work on climate change and equalities in relation to housing as part of its plans for the next five years.

CRESR led one of CaCHE's early high profile exemplar projects aimed at understanding the impact of welfare reforms on the housing association sector. More recently, CRESR collaborated with Strata Homes through a secondment funded by the National Productivity

Investment Fund (NPIF). As part of the secondment CRESR PhD student Elle Butterworth completed a rapid study of the barriers facing new zero carbon housing construction in the private sector.

Homes In Community Hands Evaluation

Funder: Power to Change

Project Lead: Tom Archer

Budget: £124,074

Project Duration: 2019-2023

CRESR Team Members

- Chris Damm
- Steve Parkes
- Ian Wilson

About the Project

This evaluation seeks to understand the impact of Power to Change's funding on the community-led housing sector (CLH), and specifically on those organisations receiving grants to support and develop housing schemes. It will focus principally on the five urban areas where Power to Change is concentrating its Homes in Community Hands grant funding.

Through five inter-linked work packages we will assess impacts at different geographical scales and on a range of groups, beneficiaries and stakeholders. In the first work package we will review the evolving landscape of support for CLH. The second and third work packages will comprise local evaluation in the five areas, focusing on the work of enabling hubs and CLH groups themselves. In addition we will be contributing to a programme of continuous learning. This will result in a series of 'learning briefs' which will be published at various points throughout the evaluation. We will also contribute to discussions about the role and impact of community business generally, and work with Power to Change's other evaluators to test key hypotheses.

In summary, the research will provide unique insights into the enabling support for CLH, how this translates to a range of outcomes and impacts, and the extent to which CLH validates Power to Change's existing hypotheses.

Research into local authority enforcement in the private rented sector and property guardianship

Funder: MHCLG

Project Lead: Kesia Reeve

Budget: £98,655

Project Duration: 2020-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Aimee Ambrose
- Ian Wilson
- Emma Bimpson
- Stephen Green
- Lindsey McCarthy
- Elizabeth Sanderson
- Elaine Batty
- Barry Goodchild

About the Project

This study is focused on two key issues. Firstly, it explores how local authorities (LAs) in England are using their enforcement powers in the private rented sector.

Secondly, it explores the extent and characteristics of property guardianship in England including attention to issues such as conditions, fees, geography and the profile and experiences of property guardians. It draws on a bespoke survey of local authorities in England, case study work and qualitative interviews with property guardians.

Inclusive Economy



The Inclusive Economy theme focusses on understanding how social and spatial inequalities are shaped through economic life. This is critical to addressing the defining challenges of our times such as the rise of in-work poverty or how to 'level up' UK regional imbalances.

Two key questions inform our work within this theme:

- What are the processes contributing to labour market vulnerability and economic insecurity?
- And how we might create more inclusive economies that provide greater economic wellbeing?

The theme combines expertise in applied policy research with interdisciplinary interests across sociology, geography, economics and urban studies. We engage with leading research on a range of themes around inclusive economies including welfare reform, worklessness, labour market precarity, the governance of spatial inequalities, regional and industrial policy, inclusive growth and alternative economic development.



Dr Richard Crisp
Theme Lead

Just in Time Health Evaluation

Funder: Derbyshire Law Centre
Project Lead: Elizabeth Sanderson
Budget: £25,100
Project Duration: 2019-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Jan Gilbertson
- Richard Crisp

About the Project

The 'Just in Time' project is a pilot designed to support those who are either on long-term health related absence from work or at risk of long-term absence in Chesterfield. The pilot provides employment-related legal advice to service users with the aim of helping them to maintain or return to employment, or, if that is not possible, to end employment in a managed way.

The overarching objective of the evaluation is to measure the impact of the 'Just in Time' project on employment and health and wellbeing outcomes for service users.

The impact of the Coronavirus Crisis on Older Industrial Britain

Funder: Coalfields Regeneration Trust and Industrial Communities Alliance
Project Lead: Christina Beatty
Budget: £43,000
Project Duration: 2020-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Steve Fothergill

About the Project

This study looks at the impact of the coronavirus crisis on the health, economy and labour market of older industrial Britain. It brings together a wide range of official statistics to plug a key gap in the evidence base.

The evidence is arranged in three parts. The first is a review of the situation just prior to the start of the pandemic. This is important because much of older industrial Britain started off lagging behind

and the UK government had made a commitment to 'levelling up' the regions. The second part of the evidence examines the impact of the coronavirus on public health. The third part of the evidence covers the impact on the economy and labour market of older industrial Britain.

[The report](#) concludes that on a wide range of social and economic indicators, older industrial Britain entered the crisis lagging behind. In older industrial Britain the economic and labour market damage from the downturn has been substantial and as the crisis finally recedes older industrial Britain will still lag behind the rest of the country.

Evaluation of the Working Well Early Help programme

Funder: Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Project Lead: Richard Crisp

Budget: £ 394,341

Project Duration: 2018-2022

CRESR Team Members

- Elaine Batty
- Jan Gilbertson
- Ian Wilson
- Steve Parkes
- Elizabeth Sanderson

About the Project

Working Well Early Help is a flagship early intervention programme available to Greater Manchester residents in work who either become ill and risk falling out of the labour market or who are newly unemployed due to health issues. This evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the programme in preventing long term sickness and disengagement from the labour market, especially amongst those employed by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) where human resources, occupational health and employee wellbeing services are more limited. It will inform future investment decisions in similar programmes and services both in Greater Manchester and nationally.

Civic University Network

Funder: UPP Foundation, Department for Education, Arts Council England, Carnegie UK Trust

Project Lead: Greg Burke (Civic University Network)

Budget: £10,000

Project Duration: 2020-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Ed Ferrari
- Julian Dobson
- Peter Wells

About the Project

The Civic University Network (CUN) was established in 2020 to build on the momentum generated by the 2018 UPP Foundation's Civic University Commission, which challenged universities to re-shape their role and responsibility to their communities to realise their potential as drivers of a new civic agenda.

Sheffield Hallam University runs the national Civic University Network on behalf of members of the higher education sector and their civic partners within the localities and communities they serve. The Network supports universities to develop and embed civic aspirations at an institutional level, as well as working with government and strategic partners to ensure that a university's geographic role and responsibility is used more effectively as an agent to drive positive societal change.

CRESR is leading a workstream for the CUN aimed at understanding and capturing universities' civic impacts and establishing an approach to peer learning between civic universities. In 2021 we published our Civic University Framework, a tool designed to map out the key dimensions of impact that universities can have on their local areas and how they can work to embed and enhance that impact. The framework is available on the [CRESR website](#).

In 2021-22 we are working with the CUN and its partners to further develop how we think about and measure the impacts that universities have for people and places throughout the country. For more information contact [Ed Ferrari](#) or [Julian Dobson](#).

Policy Research & Evaluation



In an ever more complex, differentiated yet intertwined world the wide range of economic, social and environmental issues faced by communities, nations and humanity at large call forth varied policy interventions by the state and civil society at many different scales. The impact and effectiveness of such interventions – and their subsequent improvement – relies on critical but constructive research and evaluation. Such applied policy research lies at the core of all that CRESR does, and the mission of our Policy Research and Evaluation Theme is to contribute to the development and application of relevant concepts, theoretical frameworks, research methods and analytical approaches through all our research activity. Our frame of reference is a broad one, seeking to set policy in its wider social, political and cultural milieu, and as well as appropriate evidence-gathering methods and evaluation techniques our interests encompass political considerations such as forms of government, modes of governance, distribution of powers and resources and mechanisms of engagement and representation. The domains covered are not only of interest in themselves but essentially cut across CRESR's four other research themes too. We also aim to readjust our focus according to changing circumstances, hence our current work on local government and civil society responses to COVID-19.



Dr Tony Gore
Theme Lead

Room to Move – Impacts of road- space reallocation (REMODEL)

*Funder: Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council (DecarboN8 Network)*

Project Lead: Stephen Parkes

Budget: £11,205

Project Duration: 2020-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Tony Gore

About the Project

Sheffield City Council (SCC) and Lancashire County Council (LCC) are currently implementing road-space reallocation measures to facilitate social distancing and increase levels of active travel in the post-lockdown landscape. The adaptations address road-space capacity issues for non-vehicle users along key commuter routes. These measures are an important element of the creation of a 'climate-

smart' recovery and support the longer-term goal of de-carbonising transport.

This study – funded by the DecarboN8 Network – is a collaboration between Sheffield Hallam University, the University of Central Lancashire, and the respective local authorities to evaluate the impacts of the road-space reallocation programmes. The study will offer a critical evaluation of diverse urban areas in varying states of preparedness for a rapid uptake in active travel. For example, Sheffield – as part of the wider city region – has already undertaken considerable work prior to the Coronavirus pandemic to encourage higher levels of active travel and in Lancashire it has been almost a decade since the introduction of 20mph zones in residential areas across the county.

The study will use a combination of online data collection techniques over a 12-month period to gather longitudinal data on travel behaviour, attitudes to active travel and the use of the temporary road-space reallocation measures.

A short presentation providing an overview of the project is now available. This was prepared for a Symposium on Transport Decarbonisation (September 2020) organised by the Cut Carbon Network.

Evaluation of Ask and Act

Funder: Welsh Government

Project Lead: Cathy Harris

Budget: £48,643

Project Duration: 2020-2022

CRESR Team Members

- Lindsey McCarthy
- Kesia Reeve

About the Project

Ask and Act aims to equip professionals with the skills and knowledge to identify potential victims of domestic violence and provide appropriate support through referrals and interventions.

The evaluation will explore the effectiveness of the implementation of Ask and Act training to date and assess how successful it is in meeting the aims of Ask and Act.

We will be conducting interviews with individuals from a range of organisations who are at different stages of the rollout of Ask and Act using survey and interview methods.

This-Ability

Funder: The Humber Learning Consortium

Project Lead: Nadia Bashir

Budget: £98,098

Project Duration: 2018-2023

CRESR Team Members

- Elizabeth Sanderson
- Ian Wilson

About the Project

The This-Ability programme is for young people with a disability/learning disability or difficulty or a long term health condition, who require additional support in accessing and gaining employment and may need support within the workplace to ensure sustainability.

A research team from CRESR are evaluating the This-Ability programme using quantitative research, including analysis of monitoring data and SROI and qualitative research involving peer research training and interviews.

Evaluation of the Community Investment Enterprise Facility

Funder: Big Society Capital

Project Lead: Chris Dayson

Budget: £99,400

Project Duration: 2018-2025

CRESR Team Members

- Chris Damm

About the Project

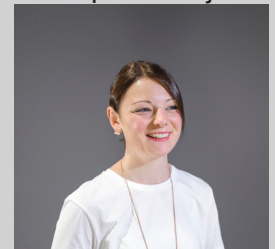
An evaluation of a major investment by Big Society Capital in Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFIs) that aims to promote the growth and development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Further information about the project can be found on the evaluation and learning website: <http://www.communityinvestment.co.uk/>

Sustainable Futures



The climate emergency is the greatest challenge facing humanity. Transitions to a low carbon society and the restoration of the natural world are urgent and overdue. The Sustainable Futures theme explores the implications and experiences of these transitions from social, economic and policy perspectives and from the perspectives of citizens and other stakeholders. We are particularly concerned with how transitions play out in the energy, housing and transport sectors and we use robust research evidence to promote just transitions and a focus on hard-to-reach groups across these domains. We contribute to these agendas nationally and internationally and are currently engaged in the delivery of qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation funded by regulated funders (e.g. the Property Research Trust, The Swedish Energy Agency, Regional Studies Association) and contract research commissions for governmental (e.g. the Welsh Government) and non-governmental policy and practice organisations (e.g. The International Energy Agency, The Consumer Council for Water, Citizens Advice). Current project focus on sustainable consumption, green jobs, digital inclusion, nature recovery, just transitions and participation, active travel and sustainable transport, fuel poverty, housing and health, air quality, hard to reach energy users and hard to decarbonise homes.



Prof. Aimee Ambrose
Theme Lead

Understanding and engaging with high consuming households: energy, transport, food

Funder: Sheffield Hallam University
Project Lead: Aimee Ambrose
Budget: £59, 281
Project Duration: 2020-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Álvaro Castaño García
- Stephen Parkes

About the Project

The High Consumers project is focused on a poorly understood and under researched group of households - those households that consume energy, food and transport in large quantities relative to average households. The project aims are to consider the existing evidence in relation to high consumers and to plan an international research collaboration seeking to explore, through qualitative

and quantitative methods, the extent and nature of this group.

The project has drawn on funding from Sheffield Hallam University to:

- Produce a rapid review of the academic literature.
- Hold a professionally facilitated workshop that brings together leading researchers in the broad field of sustainable consumption, including those with specialisms related to energy, food and transport consumption dynamics.

The outcomes of the literature review and workshop will act as the building blocks for a multi-institution grant application, led by researchers from Sheffield Hallam.

The [literature review](#) is now available alongside a [recorded presentation](#) by the review's author, Álvaro Castaño García, made to the workshop in September 2020.

Walking with Energy: overcoming energy invisibility through research participation

Funder: Swedish Energy Agency

Project Lead: Aimee Ambrose

Budget: £108,400

Project Duration: 2019-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Will Eadson
- Tony Gore
- Stephen Parkes

About the Project

The Walking with Energy project brings together oral history techniques, walking interviews and novel psychological tests to offer a highly innovative, creative and low cost method of engaging the public in debates and decisions regarding energy production and consumption.

The contemporary relationship we have with energy is one that is characterised by complete dependency yet coupled with an 'energy invisibility' that distances us from our consumption and the associated environmental consequences. We are disengaged from decisions about how energy is generated in terms of modes of generation and types of fuel.

The method deployed in this project offers the potential to overcome energy invisibility and foster greater environmental citizenship amongst participants. Following a successful pilot in the UK, this project – funded by the Swedish Energy Agency - will apply and develop the method in Sweden using the cities of Lund and Malmö as case studies.

For further information and updates on this project, please see the [project website](#).

The project involves a collaboration between colleagues from Sheffield Hallam, Lund (Sweden), and Nottingham Trent Universities.

Understanding supply chain, employment and skills implications of energy infrastructure investment

Funder: Sheffield City Region and Higher Education Innovation Fund

Project Lead: Will Eadson

Budget: £30,324

Project Duration: 2020-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Stephen Parkes
- Peter Wells

About the Project

Not enough is known about the detailed supply chain, employment and skills implications of investing in urban low carbon energy infrastructure. In particular, there is a need to better understand the nature and geography of jobs in low carbon energy sectors, and how employment and skills support can ensure that those who most need work can access new opportunities.

Using a case study of Sheffield City Region this study is carrying out detailed studies of six energy sectors seen as important to the area's energy and economic future: district heating, air source heat pumps, domestic insulation, hydrogen fuel, modular nuclear and carbon capture and storage.

Voluntary & Community Sector



CRESR, and Sheffield Hallam more widely, is one of the most important centres of expertise on the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in the UK. As well as conducting prominent research projects in partnership with both VCS organisations and funders, we are at the forefront of academic research on the sector. We publish and present academically on topics including VCS public service delivery, infrastructure, policy, funding, data, social value, volunteering, and social investment.

Our staff working on this theme are actively engaged with the VCS itself, contributing to national debates through advisory boards, steering groups, and other public forums. Several members also help to run both the UK-wide Voluntary Sector Studies Network and the Voluntary Sector Review journal and are involved as editors for an upcoming book on the VCS response to COVID-19.

The theme also includes several active PhD students, helping to provide a vibrant and stimulating environment for VCS studies within CRESR.



Chris Damm
Theme Lead

National Evaluation of the Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health through Green Social Prescribing Programme

Funder: Defra

Project Lead: Chris Dayson

Budget: £289,000

Project Duration: 2021-2023

CRESR Team Members

- Julian Dobson
- Cathy Harris
- Phil Northall
- Ian Wilson

About the Project

The Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health through Green Social Prescribing Project (Green Social Prescribing Project) is part of a £5.77m cross

governmental initiative looking at how connecting people with nature can help well-being and improve mental health.

The evaluation will inform wider rollout of green social prescribing (GSP) following the test and learn (T&L) initiative. It will improve understanding of what works, for whom, in what circumstances and why. We are also interested in impact, mental health and other relevant outcomes and value-for-money of GSP, as well as how these data are collected, costs in different parts of the system and challenges to data collection.

CRESR is also involved in the implementation and evaluation of South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Test and Learn Site that has been funded as part of the national programme. We will support local partners capture and share learning as the project progresses.

Our Bigger Story: the Longitudinal Multi Media Evaluation of Big Local

Funder: Local Trust

Project Lead: Angus McCabe (University of Birmingham / Rob Macmillan (CRESR)

Budget: £14,000

Project Duration: 2020-2022

About the Project

Big Local is a long-term resident-led programme established in 2010 which provides resources and support to 150 communities across England. It works with an underpinning ethos expressed in the hypothesis that 'long term funding and support to build capacity gives residents in 'hyperlocal' areas agency to take decisions and to act to create positive and lasting change.' 'Our Bigger Story' is the longitudinal multi-media evaluation that runs alongside Big Local, charting the stories of change in 15 different Big Local areas, covering urban, rural and seaside communities.

Evaluation of Leeds Neighbourhood Networks

Funder: Centre for Ageing Better

Project Lead: Chris Dayson

Budget: £149,535

Project Duration: 2019-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Jan Gilbertson
- Chris Damm
- Emma Bimpson

About the Project

CRESR has been commissioned to undertake a wide ranging evaluation of the Leeds Neighbourhood Networks (LNNs). There are 35 NNs working across 37 geographical areas in Leeds. Each NN run by an independent organisation and

receives funding from Leeds City Council to provide activities and support that enable older people to live independently in their homes and communities for as long and as well as possible.

Volunteering in Community Business: meaning, practice and management

Funder: Power to Change

Project Lead: Rob Macmillan

Budget: £49,632

Project Duration: 2020-2021

CRESR Team Members

- Jan Gilbertson
- Chris Damm
- Emma Bimpson

About the Project

This project aims to explore how volunteering is understood and enacted in different ways in community business, and to identify the implications of this for volunteering experiences and outcomes. Qualitative research with eight case study community business research partners will address this and three supplementary questions:

- **Organisation:** How is volunteering conceptualised and managed within community business, and how does this affect the experience and outcomes of volunteering?
- **Influence:** What influence do volunteers have in the formation, strategic direction and operation of community businesses?
- **Commercial context:** What is the relationship between volunteering and the commercial orientation of community business?

Staff updates

Details of new staff members and promotions.



Yael Arbelle

[Yael Arbelle](#) joined CRESR as a Research Associate in March 2021.

She's currently working on projects evaluating support for people facing multiple disadvantage (particularly those sleeping rough), the Black Thrive project in Lambeth, Homes in Community Hands, High Consumers and just energy transitions. Her research interests include housing, communities, sustainability and social justice. Her PhD focused on community-led housing in a neoliberal society, looking at the potential of commoning practices and their shortfall in terms of inclusion and diversity. Yael is a member of the UK Cohousing Network working group developing a toolkit for greater inclusion and diversity, and sits on Housing 21's advisory group for cohousing. Prior to academia Yael's background is in journalism and alternative education.



Joseph Chambers

[Joseph Chambers](#) joined CRESR as a Research

Associate in March 2021. He works across various projects including Leeds Neighbourhood Network evaluation, Hard to Reach Energy Users and Urban Digital Strategies. His research is primarily concerned with the consequences of digitalisation on societies in the Global North and South. His research comprises of three main components: the smartening of infrastructural networks, the changing nature and consequences of exclusion and technology's role within sustainable transitions. Prior to joining CRESR, Joe worked at Good Things Foundation, a digital and social inclusion charity based in Sheffield. Joseph's PhD research focussed on smart urbanism and urban informality, exploring the consequences of ICT's integration within the infrastructural networks of Nairobi's informal settlement.



Phil Northall

[Phil Northall](#) joined CRESR in March 2021, initially working as

a casual Research Associate before taking a part-time role in May. He is working primarily on energy supply chains, in particular looking at the role of hydrogen in delivering a just transition to low carbon economies. Phil completed his PhD at University of Nottingham last year looking at the local governance of innovations for sustainability, and is also employed there part-time, working on an EPSRC funded project exploring the socio-economic barriers to the decarbonisation of heat networks. Prior to his recent return to academia Phil worked as Regional Development Manager for the national active and sustainable travel charity, Sustrans. His earlier roles also include local government policy research and capacity building of community organisations, working at the Centre for Local Economic Strategies and the Manchester Council for Community Relations respectively.

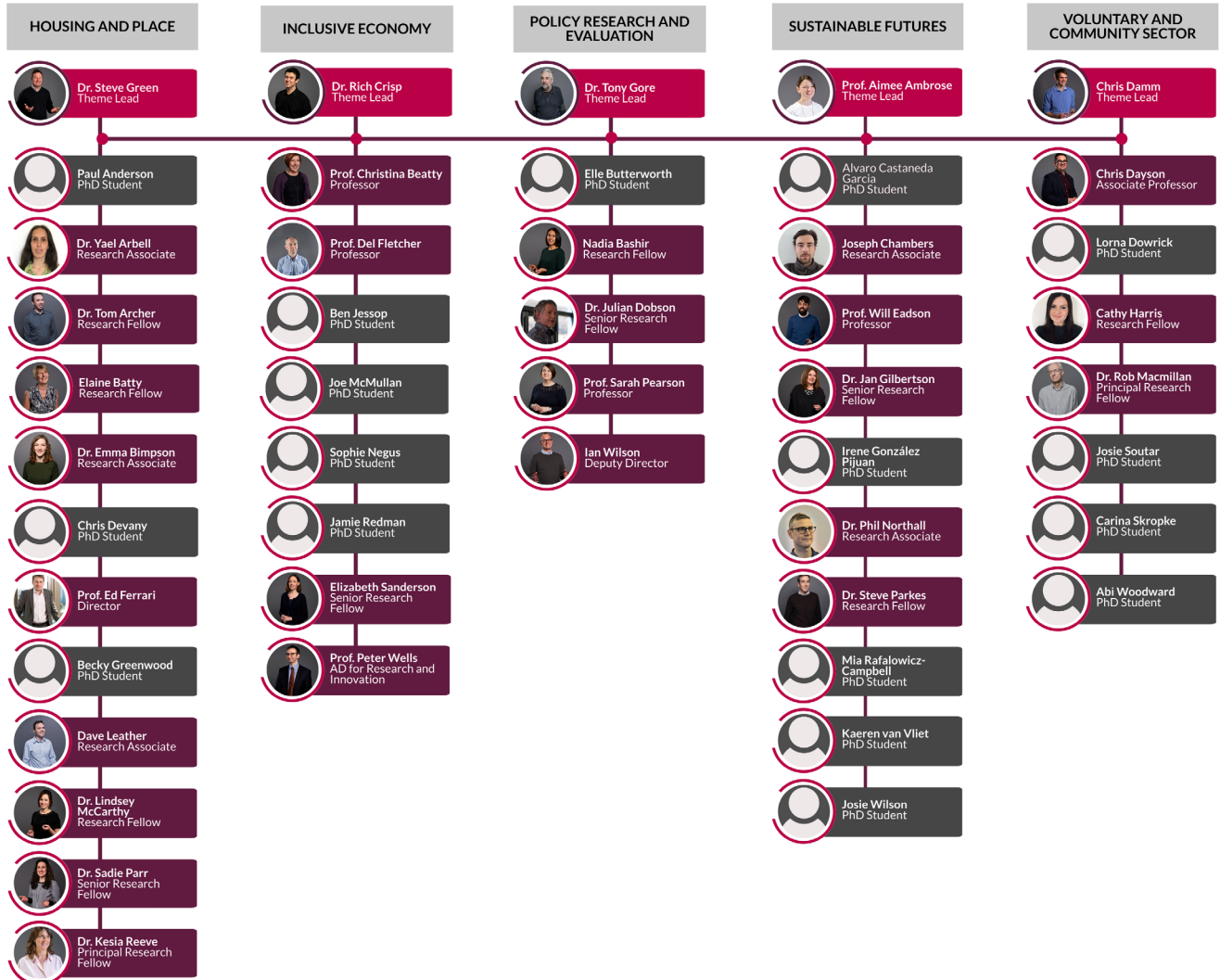
Promotions



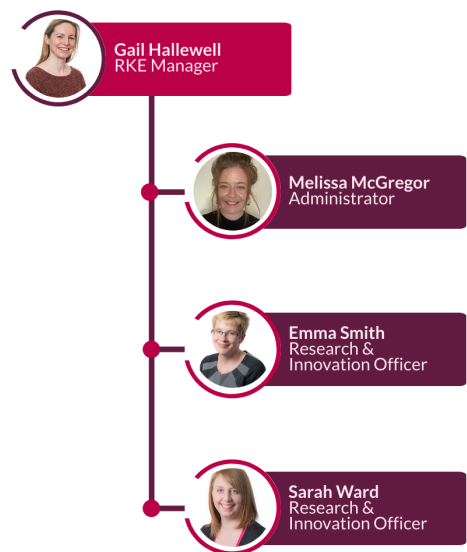
[Will Eadson](#) - appointed to Professor of Urban and Regional Studies

[Steve Green](#) - appointed to Senior Research Fellow

[Sarah Ward](#) - appointed to Research and Innovation Officer

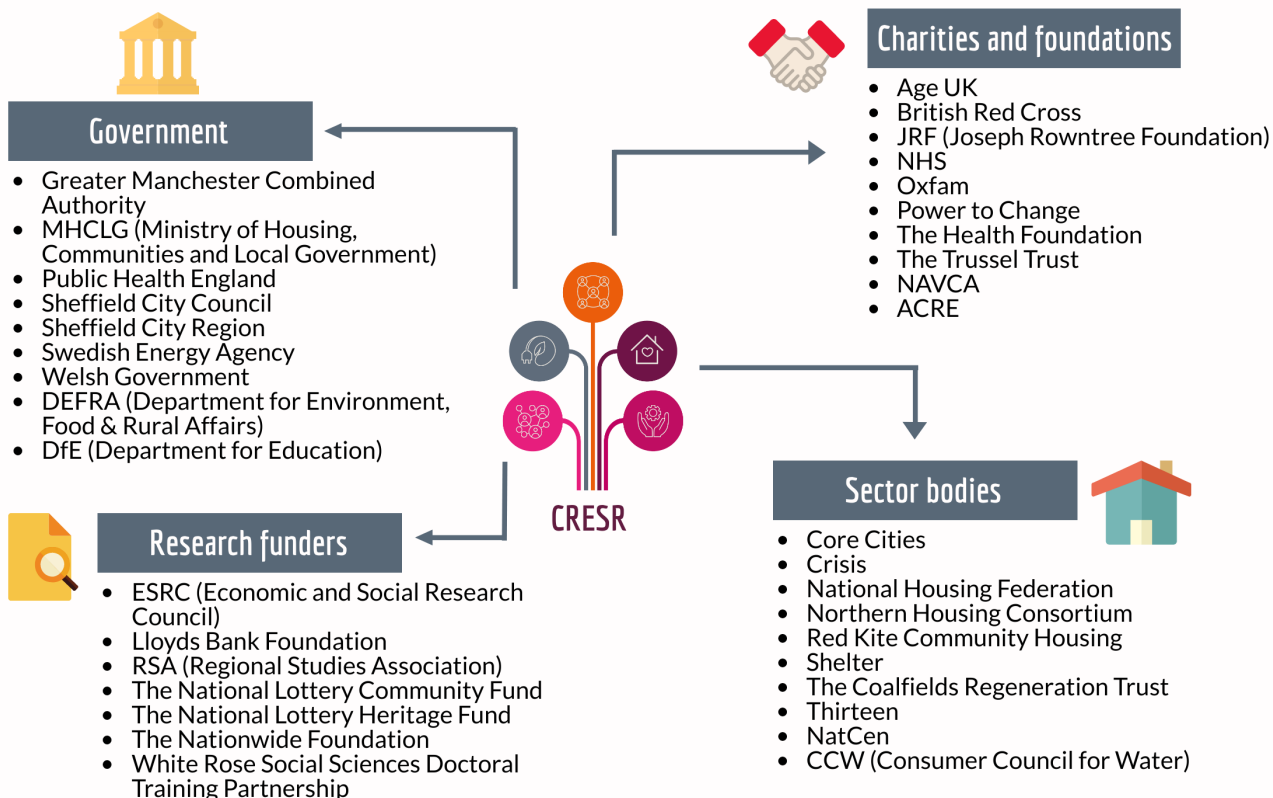


Professional Services Staff



Our Clients

An overview of some of our clients over the last year and their experience.



“

CRESR brought a spirit of collaboration to the study we commissioned from them. They took time to understand our purpose and to refine their approach to the work to align it to our needs. They communicated with us effectively throughout the study, informing us of progress, identifying issues and proposing amendments in the light of what they were finding.

Oliver Savage
Leicestershire County Council

”

“

We were extremely happy with all aspects of the work undertaken for us by CRESR and it was a pleasure to work with them again. The project was delivered in a very professional manner. It provided us with extremely valuable insights which informed the findings and recommendations of our independent review of water affordability support for the UK and Welsh governments.

Andrew White
Consumer Council for Water (CCW)

”

CRESR in the News

Here is a snapshot of CRESR research news coverage over the last year.

Homeless services and policies not meeting needs of abused women – report

Evening Standard | 29 July 2021

A recent report 'Women, homelessness and violence' was covered in the [Evening Standard](#) and also featured on the [BBC 6pm news](#) on 29 July 2021.

South Yorkshire civic leaders launch expansive 'Plan for the North'

The Star | 21 July 2021

CRESR researchers comment about their 'Plan for the North' report. [Read more in The Star.](#)

Need for more parks in urban spaces to help with pandemic recovery, says Sheffield Hallam University report

Yorkshire Post | 28 June 2021

A report by CRESR showed the major role that parks played in helping to sustain people and communities over the past year. The [Yorkshire Post](#) covered the story.

Councils' Covid response undervalued and underutilised by UK Government – new report

Sheffield Chamber of Commerce | 9 April 2021

The [Sheffield Chamber of Commerce](#) published a story about a recent CRESR report examining the effort from local government to support communities and businesses during Covid-19.

Report highlights £114m hit to Yorkshire economy caused by racing lockout

Racing Post | 17 October 2020

A report by CRESR researchers investigated the economic impact racing has across Yorkshire. [Read more in Racing Post.](#)

Post-Covid Sheffield transport survey follows controversial lane closures

The Star | 15 September 2020

CRESR researchers, Stephen Parkes, was quoted in [the article](#) speaking about the new survey for the Room to Move project.

People, Place and Policy (PPP)

Background

PPP is an open access journal and we invite researchers, policy makers and practitioners to discuss and disseminate research, reflection and ideas related to contemporary debates within all aspects of social policy. To learn more about the journal's history, read articles and see how to submit an article, please visit the [PPP official website](#).

What have we been up to?

Over the 2020/21 academic year we have published three issues covering topics such as geographies of local governance, COVID-19, the UK cladding scandal, to name a few, and we had a special issue on 'Contemporary Youth: Precarity, Resistance and (Re)imagined Futures'. You can access these issues for free by clicking the links below:

- [Volume 14/2 \(August 2020\)](#)
- [Volume 14/3 \(November 2020\)](#)
- [Volume 15/1 \(March 2021\)](#)

We have introduced a new Featured Graphic article type with the aim of communicating key themes to readers in an accessible and informative way. See recent examples of [featured graphic articles](#).

We have also worked hard to ensure our processes and policies were in line with the standards set out by the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and we are glad to report that we were recently [successful in our application for DOAJ accreditation](#).

We are passionate about continuing to improve journal administration and the success of this application is an important achievement for us.

Annual conference 2021

The PPP Annual Conference, held each year in July, was for the first time a fully online event. Taking place between 7-8 July, the conference addressed the theme of 'Division and Unity' with the opening keynote address delivered by Dr Mia Gray of the University of Cambridge.

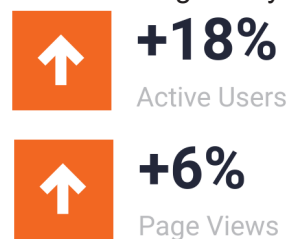
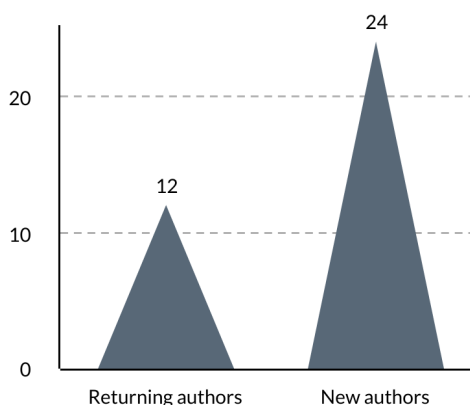


The conference attracted a diverse audience from policy, practice, and academia with two days of engaging sessions. The closing plenary panel session included contributions from Paul Chamberlain (Sheffield Hallam University), Roz Davies (Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust), and Caroline Slocock (Civil Exchange). You can see our full programme of speakers as well as event recordings on the [conference website](#).

Finally

The PPP Editorial Team would like to take this opportunity to thank all our authors, reviewers and conference speakers this year - your support of the journal is really valued.

If you are interested in [submitting an article](#) to PPP, [join our mailing list](#) or want to attend our [Annual Conference](#), you can find all the information on our website and we look forward to hearing from you.



CRESR Seminar Series

What is it?

The CRESR seminar series brings together academics, policy experts and sector-based professionals to present and discuss key issues across a range of areas linked to CRESR's areas of interest. Seminars are attended by academics, students and practitioners and are open to anyone with an interest in the subject, providing opportunities for learning, discussion and networking.

The 2020/21 programme

The CRESR seminar series was held online for the first time in 2020/21 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst there were some drawbacks and challenges to this approach, holding the seminars online also had some benefits in terms of helping us to reach wider audiences and enabling contributions from a range of speakers.

The 2020/21 series featured five one-hour seminars throughout the academic year and these explored a range of themes including the impact of Covid-19 on those with low incomes, active travel for healthy and inclusive cities and the challenges of domestic carbon reduction and fuel poverty. The seminars were very well-attended with between 40 and 90 attending across the series.

Our seminars

- **Title: Community responses to Covid-19**
Speakers: Simon Kaye, Luca Tiratelli, David Robinson and Mandy Wilson
- **Title: Tackling the dual challenges of domestic carbon reduction and fuel poverty**
Speakers: Lucie Middlemiss, Helen Stockton and Elizabeth Blakelock
- **Title: Covid-19 and the impact on those with low incomes**
Speakers: Ruth Patrick and Tony Wilson

- **Title: Spatial inequalities: deprivation, household income and infrastructure**
Speakers: Jenni Cauvain, Brendan Nevin and Alan Harding
- **Title: Active travel for healthy and inclusive cities**
Speakers: Rachel Aldred, Stephen Edwards and Pete Zanzottera

[View abstracts and recordings from 2020/21 programme](#)



Finally

Finally, thank you to everyone who supported the CRESR seminars this year: helping to set up and run the sessions online, suggesting speakers, promoting the series, and chairing and attending sessions. Thank you also to all the speakers who helped make it a really engaging series, with interesting presentations and discussions across the sessions.

[View the 2021/22 programme](#)

Publications

Reports

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Ambrose, A., Archer, T. and Bimpson, E. (2020) [Research to identify early lessons emerging from the Innovative Housing Programme: Summary](#). Welsh Government.

Ambrose, A., Gilbertson, J., Speake, B., Bimpson, E., McCarthy, L. and Ramsden, S. (2021) [Cross-sector review of affordability support: an evidence review for the Consumer Council for Water](#). Consumer Council for Water.

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Archer, T. and Skropke, C. (2021) [The Impact of Covid-19 on Village and Community Halls in England - Findings Report](#). Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE).

Batty, E., Harris, C., Leather, D., Pearson, S., Wilson, I., Carter, C., Coldwell, M., Stiell, B. and Willis, B. (2020) [Children's Communities final evaluation report](#). Save the Children UK.

Beatty, C., Crisp, R. and Gore, T. (2020) [Co-design in the WorkingWin programme: good practice and learning](#). Sheffield City Region.

Beatty, C. and Fothergill, S. (2021) [The impact of the Coronavirus Crisis on Older Industrial Britain](#). Coalfields Regeneration Trust.

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Crisp, R. and Waite, D. (2020) [Inclusive growth under a COVID-19 recovery](#). Sheffield Hallam University.

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Dayson, C., Baker, L., Rees, J., with Bennett, E., Patmore, B., Turner, K., Jacklin-Jarvis, C. and Terry, V. (2021) [The 'Value of Small' in a Big Crisis: The distinctive contribution, value and experiences of smaller charities in England and Wales during the COVID 19 pandemic - Summary report](#). Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales.

Dayson, C. and Batty, E. (2020) [Social Prescribing and the Value of Small Providers - Evidence from the Evaluation of the Rotherham Social Prescribing Service: Summary](#). NHS Rotherham, Voluntary Action Rotherham.

Dayson, C. and Batty, E. (2020) [Social Prescribing and the Value of Small Providers - Evidence from the Evaluation of the Rotherham Social Prescribing Service](#). NHS Rotherham, Voluntary Action Rotherham.

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Dayson, C., Harris, C. and Woodward, A. (2020) [Evaluation of Age Better in Sheffield: Qualitative insights into interventions to address social isolation and loneliness](#). Yorkshire Adoption Agency.

Dayson, C., Pearson, S. and Bennett, E. (2020) [Evaluation of the Early Action Neighbourhood Fund: Learning Summary - Evaluating Complex Systems Change Projects](#). Big Lottery Fund.

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Fothergill, S. and Gore, T. (2021) [Plan for the North: How to deliver the levelling up that's really needed](#). Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, Sheffield City Region.

Gore, T., Bimpson, E., Dobson, J. and Parkes, S. (2021) [Local Government Responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic in the UK: A Thematic Review](#). Sheffield Hallam University.

McCabe, A., Wilson, M. and Macmillan, R. (2020) [Stronger than anyone thought: Communities responding to COVID-19](#). Local Trust.

McCabe, A., Wilson, M. and Macmillan, R. (2021) [Building on Local Learning about Big Local in 2020](#). Local Trust.

McCarthy, L., Parr, S., Green, S. and Reeve, K. (2020) [Understanding Models of Support for People Facing Multiple Disadvantage: A Literature Review](#). Fulfilling Lives Lambeth Southwark Lewisham.

McKenzie, P., Green, G., Gilbertson, J., Stafford, B. and Cook, S. (2020) [A Health Impact Analysis of the Affordable Warmth Programme: 2014-2018](#). Ulster University.

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Wilson, I. and Leather, D. (2020) [The Economic and Social Impact of Racing in Yorkshire](#). Go Racing in Yorkshire.

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Damm, C. (2021) [A UK Charity Classification System](#). VSSN, March 2021.

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Academic outputs

- Ambrosio Albala, P., Middlemiss, L., Owen, A., Hargreaves, T., Emmel, N., Gilbertson, J., Tod, A., Snell, C., Mullen, C., Longhurst, N. and Gillard, R. (2020) [From rational to relational: how energy poor households engage with the British retail energy market](#). Energy Research and Social Science.
- Arbell, Y. (2021) [“A place that is different from the usual capitalist world”: the potential of community-led housing as safe and just spaces](#). Spatial Justice, 16.
- Archer, T. (2020) [The mechanics of housing collectivism: How forms and functions affect affordability](#). Housing Studies, 37 (3).
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- Beatty, C. and Fothergill, S. (2020) [The Long Shadow of Job Loss: Britain’s Older Industrial Towns in the 21st Century](#). Frontiers in Sociology - Work, Employment and Organizations, 5, p. 54.
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- Dayson, C., Bimpson, E., Ellis-Paine, A., Gilbertson, J. and Kara, H. (2021) [The ‘resilience’ of community organisations during the COVID 19 pandemic: absorptive, adaptive and transformational capacity during a crisis response](#). Voluntary Sector Review.
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- Eadson, W. and van Veelen, B. (2021) [Assemblage-democracy: Reconceptualising democracy through material resource governance](#). Political Geography, 88.
- Eadson, W. and While, A. (2021) [Carbon Calculation and the Urban Green Economic Opportunity](#). In: Fairbass, J.M. and Vasilakos, N., (eds.) Emerging Governance of a Green Economy. Cambridge University Press, 127-147.
- Elmansuri, S. and Goodchild, B. (2021) [Tradition, modernity and gender in the Arab home: a study from Tripoli \(Libya\)](#). Housing Studies, 36 (1), pp. 1-22.

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Parr, S., Hawkins, A. and Dayson, C. (2021) [The Ethical Dilemmas of Food Banking: an Analysis of the More Than Food Programme](#). Journal of Poverty and Social Justice.

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Richardson, M., Dobson, J., Abson, D.J., Lumber, R., Hunt, A., Young, R. and Moorhouse, B. (2020) [Applying the pathways to nature connectedness at a societal scale: a leverage points perspective](#). Ecosystems and People, 16 (1), 387-401.

Redman, J. and Fletcher, D. (2021) [Violent bureaucracy: a critical analysis of the British public employment service](#). Critical Social Policy.

PhD Students 2020/2021

Completed during 20/21 academic year

Name	Supervisors	Thesis Title
Jamie Redman	Del Fletcher and Richard White	An Investigation into Young Jobseeker's Experiences of Benefit Receipt in an Era of Conditional Welfare, Insecure Labour Markets and Pejorative Welfare Narratives
Abi Woodward	Richard White, Peter Wells and Nadia Bashir	Getting by? The lived experiences of a Pakistani Muslim community

New starters

Name	Supervisors	Thesis Title
Becky Greenwood	Lindsey McCarthy and Kesia Reeve	Exploring the role of informal urban community support in homeless women's sense of dignity
Laurie Heykoop	Will Eadson, Richard Crisp and Aiden While	Green Jobs: The Low Carbon Economy and Labour Market Disadvantage
Mia Rafalowicz-Campbell	Ed Ferrari and Steve Parkes	Equity in the provision of active travel infrastructure - learning from a city-region approach

Current students

Name	Supervisors	Thesis Title
Paul Anderson	Stephen Green, Kesia Reeve and Paul Hickman	Relocation as a way of ending homelessness
Elle Butterworth	Will Eadson, Stephen Parkes and Ellen Bennett	A Political Analysis of the Scalar Arrangements of UK Urban Air Quality
Alvaro Castano Garcia	Aimee Ambrose and Will Eadson	Reconnecting with energy: using innovative research methods to overcome energy invisibility
Chris Devany	Richard Crisp and Tony Gore	'Hidden NEETs'; Understanding marginalisation through relational class
Lorna Dowrick	Chris Dayson, Rob Macmillan and Chris Damn	Understanding the impact of enduring public sector austerity on local civil society-state relationships
Irene Gonzalez Pijuan	Aimee Ambrose and Lucie Middlemiss	Growing up in Energy Poverty
Rebecca Hamer	Del Fletcher, Kesia Reeve and Ed Ferrari	Recovery Pathways Project Focussing on Women's Recovery in Scotland
Ben Jessop	Bob Jeffery and Richard Crisp	Precarity among migrant workers and barriers to accessing formal support
Joseph McMullan	Richard Crisp and Bob Jeffery	A Working-Class Backlash"? An Exploration of How Class, Culture and Identity Shape 'Rupture' in a Post Brexit World
Sophia Negus	Paul Hickman, Lindsey McCarthy and Kesia Reeve	Blurring the Boundaries between the 'deserving' and 'undeserving': experiences of in-work Conditionality
Larissa Povey	Del Fletcher, Richard Crisp and Tony Gore	Female Ex-offenders and Welfare Conditionality
Elizabeth Sanderson	Ian Wilson and Ryan Powell	Negotiating Transitions: Marginalised youth today and the move to adulthood
Carina Skropke	Ed Ferrari, Ian Wilson and Tom Archer	Community ownership of physical assets in changing times
Josie Soutar	Chris Dayson, Ellen Bennett and Peter Wells	Social Impact Bonds and the implications for small and medium-sized UK charities
Kaeren Van Vliet	Aimee Ambrose, Sadie Parr and Ed Ferrari	Public and Space and Public Private Interface in Contemporary UK Residential Development
Josie Wilson	Ed Ferrari and Stephen Parkes	Active Travel and the School Commute