

# Realising Just Cities UK

An Overview of Activity  
2016–2019



Realising  
Just Cities

“Without a minimum of hope, we cannot so much as start the struggle”

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope*, 1992.



To find out more about our work, visit [realisingjustcities-rjc.org](http://realisingjustcities-rjc.org), check out videos on the Realising Just Cities UK Video Hub ([tiny.cc/RJCvideos](http://tiny.cc/RJCvideos)) or email Beth Perry at the Urban Institute, University of Sheffield ([b.perry@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:b.perry@sheffield.ac.uk)) who can put you in touch with the relevant team member.

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## Realising Just Cities through Co-production?

“**T**he battle for sustainable urban development will be won or lost in cities . . . there is a need for a radical paradigm shift in the way cities and human settlements are planned, developed, governed and managed.” (The New Urban Agenda, Habitat 2016)

Cities are sites of opportunity and challenge. We need to be increasingly concerned about symptoms of mounting urban crisis including urban inequality and advanced marginality, deteriorating living conditions, civil unrest, unemployment, homelessness, economic insecurity and resource scarcity.

Greater Manchester and Sheffield are city-regions in the North of England characterised by many similar issues, such as ageing industrial infrastructures, pockets of wealth alongside increasing deprivation in certain areas, high levels of air pollution and congestion, decaying housing stock and powerful private sector developers.

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**We need both knowledge and action to radically rethink how to manage and develop our cities.**

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External forces have created new challenges in the period coinciding with our work. Austerity policies have scaled back the resources of municipal authorities, reducing capacity to alleviate urban poverty amongst the most vulnerable populations. Dealing with the “climate emergency” and wider issues of intergenerational and intersectional equity have had to compete for attention in an increasingly pressured policy environment. Brexit has driven wedges between and within families and communities, breaking traditional political affiliations and increasing segregation between social groups.

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**Who makes decisions, whose knowledge matters and who benefits from urban policies and processes?**

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And what about devolution? Several English metropolitan areas have gained additional powers and responsibilities through new city deals with central government since 2012. For some, the limited nature of deals and the way they were brokered means little change should be expected. For others, devolution could—and must—be an opportunity for more radical change.

A sense of increasing injustice prevails among many of the neighbourhoods, communities, and places we have engaged with. A sense that:

- » **In a world where resources, money and power are concentrated in the hands of a few, people haven’t got enough to eat, a decent home or good employment. We need distributive justice. This means people have the right to have their basic needs met, for food, shelter, well-being and safety, for example.**
- » **People still feel powerless to impact on decisions that affect them—with policies done “to” rather than “with” them. We need more procedural justice. This means people have the right to participate in institutions, processes and planning about and for cities.**
- » **In a world where new technologies can share knowledge instantly at the click of a button and decisions are made at speed, markets and governments privilege some forms of knowledge over others. We need epistemic justice. This means people have the right to be heard and their expertise valued in addressing urban issues.**

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**Our current research and action are grounded in the present, but look to produce strategies for ushering in different urban futures.**

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Realising Just Cities UK has sought to move beyond this critique of what is wrong in our cities. Inspired by deep traditions of thought, from critical urban theory and pragmatism, we have looked for and created spaces of possibility and hope, alternatives and imaginaries, underpinned by an engaged social scientific practice. The idea of “co-production” has become increasingly popular, and is proposed by some as a way of “democratising” knowledge production. We are using our projects to reflect on this claim and learn about the strengths and limits of “co-production” in combining critique with engagement to make our work matter.

## What is Realising Just Cities UK about?

Realising Just Cities is a 4-year international collaborative programme (2016–2019) designed and delivered by the Mistra Urban Futures centre. The programme aims to co-produce knowledge and action to support more sustainable urban transformations in different urban contexts in the Global North and South.

Mistra Urban Futures’ distinctive approach has been to create platforms for organising knowledge from different urban stakeholders to support sustainable transitions. These Local Interaction Platforms (LIPs) are based in Gothenburg, Skåne, Kisumu, Cape Town and Sheffield-Manchester.

Realising Just Cities UK (RJC UK) is hosted by the Sheffield-Manchester LIP, led by the Urban Institute at the University of Sheffield with colleagues across the Faculty of Social Sciences. It is a partnership between scholars, activists, residents, policy-makers, social enterprises and community organisations working to support progressive social, economic and environmental change.

Our programme of research and action seeks to test and learn about how co-production can help realise more just cities: by working with residents, activists and communities; exploring municipal co-production; and reflecting on necessary changes in the practices, processes and sites of knowledge production. The University team involved 13 people, including PhD students, working with hundreds of co-researchers in different organisations and settings.

## What is this report about?

This report showcases work undertaken by the team in Sheffield and Greater Manchester (GM) since 2016, when the University of Sheffield became the host of the SMLIP. The programme had started in Greater Manchester in 2012, where many of the activities have continued. Over time, new projects and comparative work have taken place locally in Sheffield.

We have undertaken a diverse range of projects and activities, of different sizes and durations. Our projects have developed in various ways—some have been designed collaboratively with international partners and then localised with partners on the ground; other projects have responded to local needs and developed from beginning to end with local stakeholders. Some have been more “co-productive” than others.

Some small and simple, some large and complex; all equally committed to combining research and action to tackle social, spatial, cultural and environmental urban injustice.

This report is not an analysis of “what we found”. Much of the detail can be discovered in other reports and publications, co-authored jointly with those who have been involved. Some of the work is ongoing, and we will continue to engage in intellectual analysis and practical implementation of the findings.

We offer here an overview, a light touch representation, of the vast activity that has been undertaken. Whilst this report is authored by the Realising Just Cities UK team, we recognise that the work is the product of the energies and commitments of the much wider partnership. We are grateful to all those who have been involved and acknowledge their contributions in our Roll of Honour on page 50.

# Our Projects

## At a Glance

<p><b>Housing Futures: Community-led Alternatives for Greater Manchester</b></p> <p>Creating a city-regional network and an evidence base around how community-led housing could benefit areas of long-term deprivation with GM Housing Action.</p> <p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>Community-led Organising: Seeing the Inner City from the South</b></p> <p>Enabling Mums Mart and South African and Kenyan affiliates of Slum/Shack Dwellers International to inspire and explore community-led action in deprived areas of Greater Manchester.</p> <p><b>10</b></p>	<p><b>Whose Knowledge Matters in Spatial Planning?</b></p> <p>Understanding and valuing the role of citizen expertise in spatial planning, through interviews with planners, group discussions with activists and campaigners, and mapping with residents in Miles Platting, Manchester.</p> <p><b>12</b></p>
<p><b>Cultural Democracy, Justice and Heritage in the City</b></p> <p>Promoting the need to take arts, culture and heritage seriously in realising just cities, through international collaborations and comparative co-production.</p> <p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>Self-Organising Action for Food Equity</b></p> <p>Co-designing digital infrastructure with food system actors to enable collaboration between business, community groups and social enterprises in Sheffield and Greater Manchester.</p> <p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>Jam and Justice: Co-producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation</b></p> <p>Developing an Action Research Collective in Greater Manchester, bringing together decision-makers, community organisations, citizens and academics, to think differently about governing the city through ten co-delivered projects.</p> <p><b>20</b></p>
<p><b>Participatory Cities</b></p> <p>Exploring what the UN commitment to “meaningful participation” means on the ground, through interviews and policy discussions—with a specific focus on elite understandings of “co-production” in Greater Manchester.</p> <p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>Localising the Sustainable Development Goals</b></p> <p>Helping UK local authorities’ consider the relevance and potential localisation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with Sheffield City Council and UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development.</p> <p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>Working Across Boundaries</b></p> <p>Enquiring into the challenges and opportunities academics face when working across the boundaries of the university, to understand the conditions and practices of engaged research.</p> <p><b>28</b></p>
<p><b>Trade Unions and Just Transition</b></p> <p>Contributing actively to trade unions’ engagement in a Just Transition, through work with the Trades Union Congress’s regional Task Force to understand the capacities and capabilities of trade unions in climate change and their dynamics in energy-intensive industries.</p> <p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>Universities, Knowledge and the Northern Powerhouse: A Feminist Critique</b></p> <p>Uncovering how universities contribute to the processes of knowledge production shaping regional economic strategy, with a focus on gender in policy-making and analysis.</p> <p><b>32</b></p>	<p><b>Co-producing Climate Policy: Working with the Greater Manchester Low Carbon Hub</b></p> <p>Supporting pathways for citizen engagement in climate policy in Greater Manchester through an embedded placement, to learn by doing about the strengths and limits of co-producing climate policy.</p> <p><b>34</b></p>

# Working with Residents, Activists and Communities

“

Co-production [is] both a process of material improvement and a process within which knowledge, capacity and relationships are built . . . it is also very much a process through which the agendas of social movements are advanced.

”

**Diana Mitlin and Sheridan  
Bartlett, 2018, in Environment  
and Urbanization**



# Cohousing: Potential and Challenges

#GMHousingFutures

21<sup>st</sup> June 2018

## Housing Futures: Community-led Alternatives for Greater Manchester

**G**reater Manchester Housing Action (GMHA) was founded in November 2015, motivated by concern about the worsening housing crisis and the opportunity presented by city-regional devolution in Greater Manchester. This progressive coalition of activists, organisations, and academics wanted to go beyond reactive campaigns, to shape political discourse and create a more socially just housing system.

Housing Futures was co-designed by a steering group comprising representatives of GMHA, RJC UK team member Sophie King, members of three Greater Manchester housing cooperatives, and Dr Richard Goulding who contributed research expertise on the Greater Manchester housing sector.

### How can community-led housing benefit residents living in areas of long-term deprivation?

The aim was to create an evidence base, and a network of interested parties, around a core concern: understanding how community-led housing can benefit residents living in areas of long-term deprivation. The project was timely: national government had announced a £60m per annum Community Housing Fund; and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) had also announced a housing strategy review. Getting the evidence base recognised within city-regional policy, and contributing to the development of a support infrastructure, quickly became additional primary objectives.

**“If people have the passion and energy to deliver their own homes, I think it’s my job to help them do so”**

—Jon Sawyer,  
Director of  
Housing and  
Residential  
Growth,  
Manchester  
City Council

#### There were four main strands of action:

- (1) A desk-based review of the existing policy and practice evidence-base, to feed into the GMCA housing strategy review
- (2) Primary research about challenges and opportunities within GM’s political economy, to shape findings and recommendations
- (3) A series of public talks and debates, to increase discussion of the issues and create a network, informed by expert panellists whose contributions also became research data
- (4) Building relationships of trust with residents in low-income neighbourhoods, with the aim of co-planning community-based briefings and learning exchanges to increase awareness about community-led housing as a potential strategy for change.

Housing Futures became a key actor within the city-regional community-led housing movement, sustained as a working group of GMHA. A regional infrastructure hub is planned, with Housing Futures, social housing providers, and other stakeholders working in partnership with the GMCA. Manchester City Council have pledged to make three sites available for pilot initiatives.

Partnerships with residents in low-income areas have developed incrementally. A small number of activists from such areas participated in the Housing Futures event series (see blue box). Two community-based briefings and two exchanges between Manchester residents and founding activists at Granby 4 Streets CLT in Liverpool have taken place. This is now a key focus of Housing Futures, alongside advocacy for specific attention to social and spatial inequality within the infrastructure hub.

Key drivers of effective co-production included: a steering group with diverse backgrounds and skills and a shared commitment to social justice; equal decision-making power including over financial resources; and the ability to draw on the reference group’s expertise. Working with residents who have learned over many decades to mistrust professionals claiming to have new “solutions” takes time and cannot be rushed. The co-production of this knowledge and action with an established movement-building activist network has meant that it is now possible to follow through on the strategy developed, at a pace set by communities themselves.





RJC UK team member: Dr Sophie King

**Find out more:** The report “Housing Futures: What can community-led housing achieve for Greater Manchester?” is available to download from the GMHA website.

**Housing Futures’ Events**

In 2018 the Housing Futures team organised six public events to raise awareness, share knowledge and encourage discussion and debate about the merits of community-led housing for low income areas of Greater Manchester. Three of these were specific to the main forms of community-led housing researched: housing cooperatives, co-housing, and Community Land Trusts.

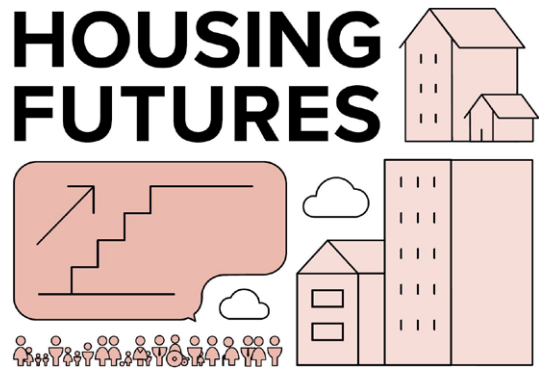
Guest speakers included Salford & Eccles MP Rebecca Long Bailey, who spoke about Labour’s work on alternative housing models, and Jack Makau of Slum/Shack Dwellers International Kenya who shared perspectives from the Global South. Such expert-led panel discussion generated additional co-produced data for the research.

The events were sponsored by the University of Manchester’s Urban Institute, Cooperatives UK, and the University of Sheffield.

Catch up on YouTube: [tiny.cc/housingfutures](https://tiny.cc/housingfutures)

“Working with academic researchers has developed our capacity and added legitimacy to what we are trying to do. . . It has enabled us to develop our connections with a much wider network of people”

—Hannah Berry, GM Housing Action



Through Housing Futures, RJC UK research has informed the planning of Greater Manchester’s proposed community-led housing hub, and increased public awareness of alternative ownership models.

“I am happy to accept [the applicable recommendations] and work with interested partners to take them forward”

—Paul, Mayor of Salford and GM Portfolio Holder for Housing

[gmhousingaction.com/housing-futures](https://gmhousingaction.com/housing-futures)  
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# Community-Led Organising: Seeing the Inner City from the South

**S**lum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) is a network of savings-based movements in 32 countries across the Global South. Eighty-five per cent of the international membership are women who come together through savings groups, which form federations of the urban poor from the community up to the city and national scale. Regular saving at neighbourhood level forms the movement's building blocks, creating trust and informal social welfare networks. Communities then gather data about their neighbourhood, using this to develop projects and advocate for slum upgrading and more permanent shelter solutions. The movement fosters community autonomy and leadership. Alliances are managed carefully, ensuring the movement is driven from below, led mostly by women.

Mums Mart is based in Wythenshawe, one of England's most deprived neighbourhoods. Since 2010, austerity policies have made daily experiences of poverty and social and spatial inequality more acute in cities like Manchester.

Women bear the brunt of cuts to public services and welfare as the household caregivers and informal social welfare providers at a community level. Yet, women in areas of long-term deprivation are some of the least likely urban residents to have a voice in decisions affecting their neighbourhood; unlikely to exploit the new political opportunities created by city-regional devolution. When Mums Mart met South African SDI activists visiting the University of Manchester in 2015 and 2016, a conversation began about the relative absence of autonomous organising among and between residents in long term deprived communities across Greater Manchester.

Sophie King worked with Mums Mart to co-design an open-ended action research process through which Mums Mart—and over time, other local women's groups around Greater Manchester—could explore and experiment with the ideas and tools of SDI affiliates. They were supported by the South African Alliance and then by Muungano Wa Wanavijiji, relationships facilitated by Diana Mitlin (University of Manchester).

**"We've now got little groups coming from us and spidering off everywhere"**

—Maria, Mums Mart

The "action" involved adapting SDI approaches including savings mobilisation, community exchange, city-wide networking, and community research. Sophie took on some functions of an SDI-style professional support agency such as facilitating local exchanges, asking questions to encourage reflection and strategising, and mediating relationships with useful technical professionals. Mums Mart—who set up their own savings group in 2016—reached out to other communities across Manchester, Salford and Stockport.

## **Women bear the brunt of cuts to public services and welfare as the household caregivers and informal social welfare providers at a community level.**

North to South international exchanges were a critical ingredient. In 2017, members of Mums Mart travelled around different branches of the South African Alliance, learning about the power of regular exchanges between women within the same neighbourhood and across different neighbourhoods within the same township or city. They were inspired by Rose Molokoane, an anti-apartheid and trade union activist who has risen to lead the South African and then the international SDI movement. Mums

Mart returned to the UK determined to mobilise more women to learn about savings, and to come together to discuss the common issues affecting them in their own and other deprived areas. Four savings groups have since formed, with a new city-wide inner-city exchange process.

Exchanges to Nairobi deepened understanding about community mobilisation, the importance of autonomy from party political agendas, and the adage that "information is power". Mums Mart have mobilised the community around women-friendly and green spaces in Wythenshawe. A network of community associations is forming to increase knowledge on local development plans and available public land in North Manchester. A new charity will provide a legacy support structure for the GM Savers network.

The "research" involved ethnographic reflection followed by collective critique, and more traditional qualitative interviewing with participants (UK, South African and Kenyan) and with local stakeholders in the neighbourhoods where savings groups have begun to organise. A final group discussion of findings to draw out collaborative lessons will be undertaken by the end of December 2019.



RJC UK team member: Dr Sophie King

**Find out more:** Read about the research methods, and reports from the community exchanges online at [communityledorganising-rjc.org](http://communityledorganising-rjc.org).

## Inner City Exchange

In June 2019, residents from nine neighbourhoods across Manchester and Stockport met over two days to share their experiences of community action on poverty and inequality. They were joined by representatives from Muungano Wa Wanavijiji, the Kenyan affiliate of Slum/Shack Dwellers International, and residents from Granby 4 Streets, a community-led housing initiative in Liverpool.

The gathering was coordinated by Sharon Davis, co-founder of Mums Mart, a Wythenshawe-based saving scheme, on behalf of the Greater Manchester Savers network with support from RJC UK. Residents shared experiences of neighbourhood change over time, “exclusionary politics” and “being redeveloped to the point of extinction”. Tina Cribbin inspired everyone with poems from her new collection on life and regeneration in Hulme, *Classphemy*, reminding participants: “there’s power in this tower”.

Because this exchange also focused on the future and the possible, participants and guests shared stories of successful community work and social movement organising. Kenyan activists Jack Makau and Joseph Kimani explained how low income women living in Nairobi slums had built a savings-based movement, seeing settlements upgraded and new housing built; while Erinma Bell spoke about her success challenging politicians to advance the community’s agenda in Moss Side.

The Manchester participants agreed to make the inner city exchange a regular forum in order to amplify community voice in Manchester.

“The more we did exchanges with the South African and Kenyan Federations, the more we realised it’s not just about the money . . . it’s bringing people together to do things . . . to fight for what you need, for what you want, to fight wrongs in your community, to fight for rights”

—Sharon, co-founder GM Savers

“We’re reaching out to the wider community to get them to come and raise their issues, and to see where we could go from there”

—Kelly, Miles Platting

Exchange visits with Slum/Shack Dwellers International partners in Kenya and South Africa, and with community-led activists around Greater Manchester provided inspiration for new local action, including a new network called GM Savers.

[gmsavers.org.uk](http://gmsavers.org.uk)  
[knowyourcity.info](http://knowyourcity.info)



Inner-city exchange, June 2019. Photograph by Sophie King.

A photograph showing a hand pointing at a map with a cup of coffee. The map has various street names and symbols. The cup is white and filled with a dark liquid. The background is slightly blurred.

## Whose Knowledge Matters in Spatial Planning?

**W**hose knowledge matters when we represent the city? Who decides what land to protect or destroy, whose heritage to celebrate, whose stories to tell and who gets “seen” in the visual and spatial record of the city?

From 2017 to 2019, RJC UK researchers Victoria Habermehl and Beth Perry undertook interviews with planners, focus groups and mapping workshops with residents. The project focused on the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework, a collaborative planning document and future plan for the region, covering housing and development across the ten local authorities in GM. The spatial framework had been controversial since before the election of the new Greater Manchester Mayor in 2017, who promised a “radical rewrite” to respond to public concern. The controversy raised questions over the issues which mattered to residents and the expertise they could bring to the planning process.

Interviews focussed on planners’ roles, expertise and knowledge, as well as how residents’ knowledge was valued in planning processes. The team held workshops with community groups and activists to learn about alternative approaches to spatial planning and participation. Mark Burton, an independent scholar-activist supporting the project, organised a focus group about the Spatial Framework in Manchester. Through the Participatory Cities project (pages 22-23), RJC team members organised roundtables in Sheffield and Cape Town, and connected with innovative NGOs including Just Space and URBED, as well as comparing contexts in Sweden, Cape Town and the UK.

Initial work revealed the pressure that local authorities were facing under austerity. Planners reported increasing pressure to do more with less, whilst dealing with competing demands from local authorities, developers, campaign groups and communities. Many said they wanted to engage more with residents, but struggled to find the time or resources. They also lacked power to use non-market-based considerations in decision-making. Residents said they felt their knowledge about where they lived was undervalued, and that planning did not take the actual impacts of planning decisions on everyday life in the city into account.

**“They have built the houses, but they have not given us any shops or facilities”**

—resident, Miles Platting

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**What issues matter to residents?**

**What expertise is overlooked in the planning system?**

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In Spring 2019, the focus moved to neighbourhood level, in Miles Platting, Manchester. This built on relationships developed through Sophie’s research (see Community-Led Organising, pages 10-11). Residents worked in a collaborative process with the RJC team, graphic designer, Dan Farley, and alternative map-maker, Dr Liz Mason Deese, to produce a counter-map which valued local knowledge, showing both challenges, as well as community power and solidarity. The map was produced to reflect residents’ views and experiences of living in the area and was displayed at the Manchester Histories Peterloo 1819–2019 commemorations (see blue box).

The work raises questions about the institutional conditions for local authorities to work differently with residents, activists and communities. The example of strategic planning in Greater Manchester reveals the wider context for city-regional governance in England, as cash and time poor officials seek to muddle through and make do with limited resources, constraining the opportunities for citizens’ expertise to be valued in decision-making processes. What the academic team call “austerity co-production” draws attention to the challenges of doing more with less, which exacerbates the privilege of those with access and expertise, such as developers. Whose Knowledge Matters also demonstrated ways of recording and valuing diverse expertise, through methods such as counter-mapping, to enable voices to be heard that are otherwise excluded from formal processes.



RJC UK team members: Dr Victoria Habermehl and Professor Beth Perry

Mapping the local area with Miles Platting residents, UK RJC researchers demonstrated an alternative approach to value citizens' knowledge about where they live.

[whoseknowledgematters-rjc.org](http://whoseknowledgematters-rjc.org)  
@ESRC\_KnowMatt



**Find out more:** View the exhibition leaflet and the “Platting, Pigeons and PFI” map on the Whose Knowledge Matters website.

### Countermaps and protest: exhibiting at Manchester Histories' Peterloo Commemorations

Maps usually focus on official representations of physical locations. Countermaps trouble and disrupt formal representations to value residents' everyday experiences of what it actually means to live in the city. As part of Manchester Histories' Peterloo 2019 commemorative programme, Whose Knowledge Matters used a co-researched counter-map of one Manchester neighbourhood to explore themes of protest, democracy and freedom in the 21st century city.

Miles Platting residents have experienced significant change in their neighbourhood due to austerity and privatisation processes. Community researchers from Miles Platting worked with the RJC UK team, and Urban Institute visiting fellow Dr Liz Mason-Deese, to map these changes. Together they identified sites of community power, such as the Community Grocer, a membership project providing affordable food and cookery classes. They mapped challenges—including footpaths blocked by redevelopment—and highlighted mysteries, such as the unfulfilled promise of a new park.

The resulting map was displayed at Manchester Central Library throughout the Peterloo commemorations. A second participatory counter-map was made at the exhibition itself, with visitors contributing their knowledge, sharing histories, protests and issues that matter to them in the city. Exhibition visitors were invited to add their own knowledge to make a People's Map of Manchester, charting sites of community power, challenges, and mysteries. The goal was to provoke reflection on whose knowledge matters in the context of a vast and rapidly changing urban landscape.

“We wanted to value and reveal residents' knowledge . . . to challenge current ways of making and shaping decisions about how places develop”  
—Victoria, RJC UK

“The ‘Whose Knowledge Matters?’ exhibition was a very important part of the programme. It's vital we reveal the often hidden stories and histories of people and places so they can be taken into account”  
—Karen, Chief Executive, Manchester Histories, Peterloo 1819–2019



## Cultural Democracy, Justice and Heritage in the City

**T**he role and value of culture in realising just cities has been historically and persistently marginalised in strategies and policies across multiple scales of action. This has motivated a range of actors to argue for alternative imaginaries and the importance of integrating cultural dimensions in sustainable urban development. Engaging with everyday cultural practices, and the conditions of everyday life in the city, provides critical starting points for more progressive and sustainable transitions.

One mechanism for achieving this has been through campaigning for culture to be a “fourth pillar” for sustainability. The grouping of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) has sought to promote the “Agenda 21 for Culture”, to promote the rightful place of culture in all public policies. The New Urban Agenda, signed in Quito, Ecuador, appears to further correct a cultural blindness in sustainable development policies and practices by insisting on the importance of cultural diversity and tangible and intangible heritage. In particular, it notes the important contribution of culture to addressing the impacts of climate change, promoting equitable and affordable access, and developing peaceful, inclusive and participatory cities.

Examples of this in practice can be seen across Mistra Urban Futures’ sites: working with communities to value residents’ ideas for cultural activity (Salford, Greater Manchester), supporting women to make and sell craft to generate income (Kisumu), developing co-creative museums and mapping diverse heritage values (Gothenburg), and enabling artistic practices to release the power of place (Cape Town).

Through sharing experiences and projects, the Mistra Urban Futures network identified common concerns. Whose culture, whose heritage matters? How do international frameworks reflect cultural diversities across the Global South and North? What tensions and issues emerge in the instrumentalisation and essentialisation of culture as a tool in sustainable development? What does this mean for action at a local level, within and beyond state actors, to support cultural diversity, cultural democracy and justice?

**“We need more ecological approaches to the creative city, in which alternative spaces, practices and norms are made visible and valued”**

—Beth, RJC UK

### What does it mean to think comparatively in co-production projects?

Two projects were funded to develop and strengthen our collaboration. A survey of 18 festivals in the Global North and South was undertaken by Beth Perry, with colleagues Rike Sitas and Laura Ager, to look at the role of festivals as “integrative sites” for sustainable urban development. The survey was undertaken as part of a co-funded project with the CHIME (Cultural Heritage and Improvised Music in Europe) project, led by Tony Whyton at Birmingham City University.

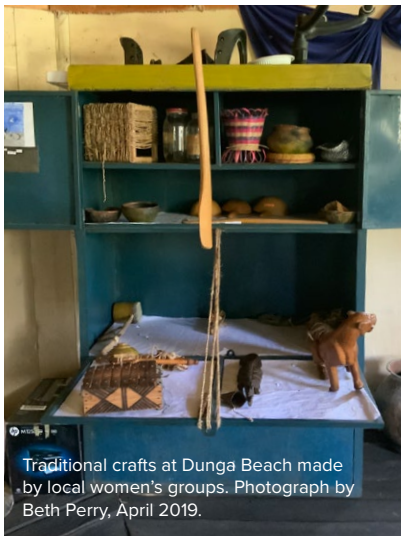
Festivals in Cape Town, Kisumu and Greater Manchester were included in the final report, to explore the dynamic relations between heritage and place: from large international ones (such as Manchester International Festival), to crowd-sourced participatory processes (such as Manchester Histories) to small community festivals (Ordsall Festival). An article in *The Conversation* profiled the potential of festivals in place-making and urban sustainability.

This gave rise to a second ongoing project, funded by the British Academy. *Whose Heritage Matters: Mapping, Making and Mobilising Heritage in Cape Town and Kisumu* explores the possibilities and tensions in harnessing cultural heritage to support sustainable livelihoods in low income communities. With project partners Rike Sitas (African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town), Patrick Hayombe and Fred Odede (Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology), interviews, focus groups and site visits have already been carried out, exploring local meanings and perspectives on cultural heritage and sustainable development in Cape Town and Kisumu. Reflections on these activities appear online at [heritagematters-rjc.org](http://heritagematters-rjc.org). In 2020, a series of cultural activities will be co-designed and delivered with artists, community-based organisations and cultural practitioners in each city.

These projects offer a distinctive lens on co-production. First, the process raises the question of what it means to think comparatively in co-production projects? Further reflection is needed on the value of comparative work, if a commitment to local co-production and de-colonial research methods is maintained. Second, there is a fruitful and necessary disciplinary dialogue needed to ensure that arts and humanities perspectives and methods are not overshadowed in the search for more technical approaches to realise the just city. Creative mapping, exhibitions, walks and festivals can be part of a dynamic research process that celebrates and enables participation in research.



RJC UK team members: Professor Beth Perry and Dr Victoria Habermehl



Traditional crafts at Dunga Beach made by local women's groups. Photograph by Beth Perry, April 2019.

**“In the face of the multiple crises that face African cities, the cultural and social lives of residents can often get sidelined”**  
 —Rike Sitas, Whose Heritage Matters Co-investigator, African Centre for Cities

**UK RJC researchers networked with cultural researchers in Cape Town and Kisumu to develop collaborative work on cultural heritage and sustainable livelihoods.**

**Find out more:** Read our work “Cultural Heritage Entanglements and Festivals as Integrative Sites” on the Heritage Matters website.

**“I’m taking away more questions about the top down vs bottom up nature of community music”**  
 —participant, Making Music, Making Communities seminar

**Making Music, Making Communities**

University of Sheffield academics, Professors Beth Perry (Urban Institute) and Stephanie Pitts (Sheffield Performer and Audience Research Centre, Department of Music), decided to explore common interests in culture, participation and place through co-organising a seminar. Building on previous work, including a report on the contribution of local music groups to their communities, the pair decided to host a one-day symposium in June 2018 to ask how music and community connect to global debates about sustainability, urban justice and democracy.

The symposium focused on how musical groups and organisations shape and are shaped by their localities in a plurality of ways, reaching in and through communities to achieve tangible and intangible impacts. Themes included culture, democracy and participation, how music impacts on people and places, and doing collaborative research with musical groups, musicians and communities.

Participants included Xenia Davies (Making Music), Abigail Gilmore (University of Manchester), Leila Jancovich (University of Leeds), Robin Simpson (Voluntary Arts), Jane Milling (University of Exeter) and Fiona Goh (Exploring Music Making/ Freelance Arts). Attendees agreed that this space created conversations between a mix of academics, practitioners and community groups that would not usually happen, with a diverse range of perspectives offered.

[heritagematters-rjc.org](http://heritagematters-rjc.org)  
 @Just\_Heritage



## Self-Organising Action for Food Equity (SAFE)

**F**ood acts as social glue. Lack of access to decent food can cause significant health problems. From austerity to climate change, pressures to produce and distribute food fairly and sustainably are intensifying. Cities pose both challenges and opportunities for systemic change. In public, commercial, voluntary, and social enterprise sectors, people and organisations are working to tackle different challenges across the food system, with increasing emphasis on cross-sectoral collaboration. Could co-designing shared digital infrastructure help?

Parallel projects ran in Sheffield and Greater Manchester. In each city, researchers sought to identify people and organisations already engaged in food system change to start a conversation about what technical tools might help them work better together toward a more just, sustainable food system. Two Action Research Teams (ARTs) were formed, meeting quarterly. The ARTs were supported to share decision-making on the type of digital infrastructure that could help collaboration. Both cities produced a webpage to represent organisations working on food in the city.

In Greater Manchester, the SAFE project coincided with a period of instability. Mayor Andy Burnham pledged support for a city-regional partnership board and food strategy at the 2018 Green Summit. Uncertainty around how city-regional leaders would action and resource this commitment made it harder to identify and agree upon what social and digital infrastructure SAFE could support with its limited budget and specific timeframe. The project had to locate itself in a pre-existing political context, which introduced the challenge of how to engage different actors with diverse past experiences, expectations and needs.

In Sheffield, the work facilitated a change in direction for the existing Sheffield Food Network. Historically, the network had simply been a map that enabled discovery of sustainable food sources. Stakeholders recognised that the online presence needed an update. Regather, a social enterprise committed to localising Sheffield's food economy, obtained funding to reformulate the network as SHEFFOOD, a strategic partnership seeking Sustainable Food Cities status. SAFE supported this transformation, contributing to the construction of a web forum to plan and discuss the future of the city's food system. According to Regather Director Gareth Roberts, SAFE was critical in catalysing these wider changes to SHEFFOOD.

A learning point for RJC researchers concerned the relative emphasis placed on engaging with food system stakeholders and digital expertise of different kinds. In the design of the project most early efforts were placed on engaging with ART members. The academic team sought to translate participants' visions into potential digital products, brokering with small and large-scale production companies in each city on contractual and pro-bono bases. Eventual recruitment of a digital activist within the GM team made a significant difference to progress, enabling a collaborative events calendar for groups to promote events while drawing users to the forum. A key take-away was to bring digital expertise into the project at an earlier stage.

SAFE draws attention to the lack of critical scholarly work at the intersection of debates on the role and value of digital technologies in co-production, and in the food system more widely. Initial findings were presented at academic conferences in the UK and Norway in 2019, within sessions looking at the digitisation of food platforms. The project was also a springboard for wider discussions about food networks, for instance, through a partnership with Sustainable Food Cities for a two-day workshop exploring the potential for a Northern Food Network (see blue box). ART members also exchanged knowledge with food system researchers and activists in Gothenburg, through an online seminar and visits between the city-regions.

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**Can co-designing shared digital infrastructure help food chain actors to collaborate across sectors?**

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**"A really exciting collaboration and sharing of ideas"**

—Andrew, Leeds





RJC UK team members: Dr Nick Taylor-Buck, Dr Charlie Spring, and Professor Beth Perry

**Find out more:** Browse Sheffield Food Network’s resources online at [sheffood.org.uk](http://sheffood.org.uk), and visit Greater Manchester Food Forum at [gmfoodforum.org](http://gmfoodforum.org).

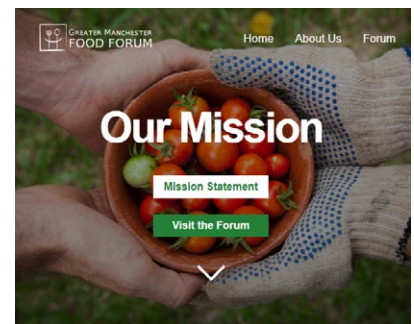
### Northern Food Network

In July 2018, the SAFE team co-organised an event to bring together thinkers and actors from across the North of England interested in a Northern Food Network. Sustainable Food Cities had heard queries from members perceiving a lack of support and direction from central government around a sustainable food system, including academic institutions hoping to play a stronger role in supporting positive and systemic change. As in Sheffield, Middlesbrough, Leeds, York, Durham, Lincoln, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester and Leicester had already been developing city-wide food partnerships and strategies.

Food has a tendency to fall between policy priorities and departmental responsibilities. The event asked: how can we create linkages? Who represents food priorities? And how can connecting and organising at a regional level help address the London-centric tendencies of UK government? Participants were overwhelmingly in favour of a Northern Food Network, and hoped to meet in different cities across the North to share achievements and discuss challenges. Some shared their thoughts on camera, summarised in a short film on the Realising Just Cities UK video hub.

This event was organised by the SAFE project, in collaboration with the University of Sheffield Sustainable Food Futures (SheFF) who hosted and provided sponsorship.

UK RJC researchers developed digital tools to tackle food inequality with stakeholders from across the North of England.



“We are dealing with historical issues of lack of investment, poor infrastructure, ill health, managed decline of some cities, long-term unemployment, the way that money is devolved . . .”  
—Lucy, Liverpool

“Collaboration isn’t just for the future but needed now patiently, but urgently”  
—Charlie, RJC UK

[urbanfood-rjc.org](http://urbanfood-rjc.org)  
 @GtrMSustFood  
 @sheffoodsocial



Activists share experiences as part of an inner-city exchange; Manchester, June 2019. Photograph by Sophie King.



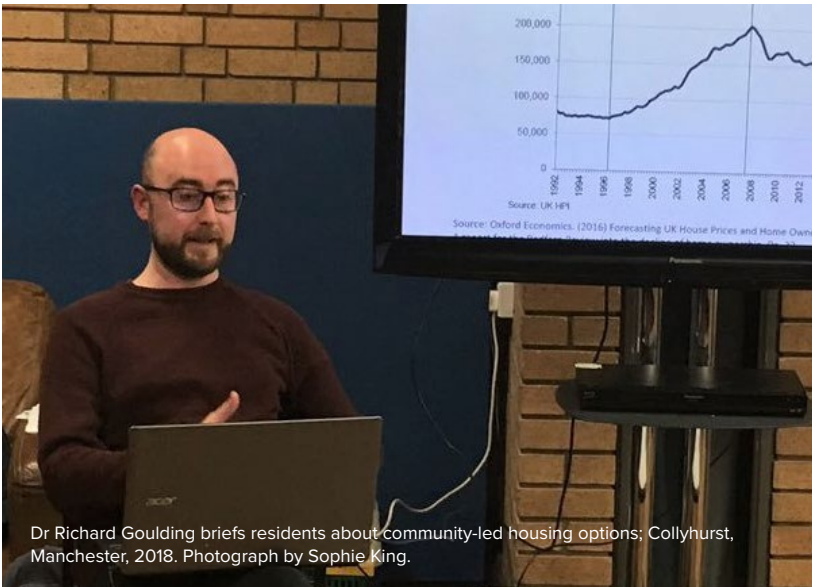
Detail from the People's Map of Manchester, interactive exhibit as part of Whose Knowledge Matters Peterloo exhibition; Manchester Central Library, July 2019. Photograph for Realising Just Cities.



Cultural heritage workshop in Kisumu. Photograph by Beth Perry.



Sheffield Food Network Steering Group. Photograph by Charlie Spring.



Dr Richard Goulding briefs residents about community-led housing options; Colyhurst, Manchester, 2018. Photograph by Sophie King.

# Exploring municipal co-production

“

We have a scarcity of ideas about how we might intervene to change the local public realm and its governance, about what kind of city and political community we want to create instead.

”

Mark Purcell, 2013, in  
Policy and Politics





# Jam and Justice: Co-producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation

**D**evolution in England has been seen by some as an opportunity to address big urban issues through giving city-regions greater powers and responsibilities from central government. Greater Manchester was the first English city-region to agree a deal for greater devolved powers from central government. The deal was criticised by some commentators for being made behind closed doors. Since then there has been an expressed desire for more open dialogue and to work differently with citizens. In 2017, residents elected their first Mayor to head up a new Combined Authority, bringing the ten local authorities together in a formal partnership.

In 2016, during one of many conversations with city officials, the Assistant Director for the Environment, Mark Atherton, asked: “how can we find the jam in the sandwich and engage with 2.8 million people?” This gave rise to an embedded PhD placement (see Co-producing Climate Policy, page 34) and also led to one of RJC UK’s largest projects, Jam and Justice, which attracted funding from the UK ESRC’s Urban Transformations research programme. Jam and Justice was a partnership led by Beth Perry at the University of Sheffield, with the Universities of Manchester (Liz Richardson) and Birmingham (Catherine Durose) and the Greater Manchester Centre for Voluntary Organisation (Alex Whinnom).

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**The Action Research Collective was designed to bring together a diverse group, who shared a common desire for social change.**

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The central part of Jam and Justice was the formation of the Action Research Collective or ARC. The primary responsibility of the ARC was the co-design, delivery and analysis of small-scale projects to think differently about how we govern cities. The idea was to bring together a diverse group, who shared a common desire for social change. The ARC formed an extended peer community of co-researchers, working in and between existing sectoral and organisational settings. The Jam and Justice team held an open application process, with 50 people from Greater Manchester applying. The team focused on finding people with diverse expertise and connections across Greater Manchester.

Jam and Justice wanted to test ways to connect decision-makers, civil society and citizens (“the jam”) and look at involving those usually excluded from such processes to address wider issues (“justice”). The focus was on the idea of co-production in urban governance—what it means for how cities are governed, how policy decisions get made and, more importantly, what we can do collectively to tackle urban issues. The small-scale projects co-designed with the ARC explored ten urban issues. For example, how energy is produced for cities, how public money could be

spent to produce more social value, how older people could be better supported to live a good life in their own homes, and what new roles local politicians could play to work even more productively with communities.

Each of the ARC’s projects involved different forms of action and investigation, bringing in hundreds of additional partners and co-researchers. As the projects drew to a close, multiple sources of data were analysed to identify seven practices to support co-production in action: designing for openness; shaping the dynamics of participation; blending expertise; humanising experiences; linking voice and values; connecting with formal policy and decision-making; and holding the process.

Jam and Justice concluded that the promise of co-production is seductive. Co-production offers a stepping stone toward wider change, yet there’s no simple “fix” or method for co-production. Co-production needs to connect those with and without power and resources through recognising that everyone has skills and expertise to contribute. Co-production strategies, accords or statements of intent can provide a marker in the sand. But it is only through collective actions with a commitment to more just cities, learning-by-doing, and organisational and individual willingness to change that the promise of co-production can be realised.

“Jam and Justice has provided the space to . . . put away existing conceptions in order to think and rethink areas where we otherwise presumed there was no other option available”

—Anne, GM VCSE Accord Lead

“Who has the power to shape our collective futures? Devolution offers the opportunity to do something different, to focus on citizens and not structures”

—Jez, ARC member and Director, Shared Futures CIC



RJC UK team members: Professor Beth Perry, Dr Bertie Russell, Dr Vicky Simpson and Dr Iona Hine.

**Find out more:** View the report, “How can we govern cities differently? The promise and practices of co-production”, on the Jam and Justice website.

**Double Down Devolution**

“The most common way we give up our power is thinking we don’t have any.” – Cllr Eve Holt

In 2018, Jam and Justice’s Action Research Collective was invited to chair a debate as part of Manchester Histories festival. A year after Andy Burnham’s election as Greater Manchester Mayor, the debate focused on whether or not devolution could empower civil society, local authorities and citizens to shape and make the city-region.

Some argued devolution could help make decisions that are more relevant to local circumstances. For others, it was a way of pushing out responsibilities for delivery without any resources.

Speakers included Jam and Justice researchers Amanda Bickerton, Bert Russell, Jez Hall, and Liz Richardson plus guests Eve Holt and Sheni Ravji-Smith, with Nicola Headlam as chair. Rather than a “panel-at-the-front” model, speakers sat in a circle with spare seats placed amongst them. Attendees were invited to join the inner circle, creating dynamism in the discussion.

Manchester Histories live-streamed the debate, which had barely got going when the hour was up. Strong attendance testified to the need to keep public discussion about the opportunities of devolution alive.

“Jam and Justice gave me space and permission to push stuff further, to ensure co-production is more than a buzzword and form a vision of what’s possible, driven by values of justice”

—Maddy, Co-production Project Manager, GM Health and Social Care Partnership

[jamandjustice-rjc.org](http://jamandjustice-rjc.org)  
 @jamandjustice

Through an ambitious programme of co-produced action and research, Jam and Justice enabled policy-makers and practitioners to evaluate the strengths and limits of co-production.



Jam and Justice co-researchers and the Everyday Politics photovoice exhibition, July 2019.



## Participatory Cities

**T**he United Nations' New Urban Agenda (2016) commits members to "urban . . . development that is people-centred . . . empowering all individuals and communities while enabling their full and meaningful participation".

But what actually makes participation meaningful, and who decides? The UN doesn't provide the answer, leaving it up to us—citizens, politicians, activists, civil servants and academics—to work it out in practice.

Participatory Cities is an international collaborative workstream that involves different mechanisms to explore what the UN's commitment to "meaningful participation" means in urban decision-making, planning and practice. The RJC UK team have been studying this question with partners in the Mistra Urban Futures centre. Work has involved twinning projects, hosting joint panel debates and roundtables on participation in planning, (see also *Whose Knowledge Matters in Spatial Planning?*, page 12) and reflecting on how the design of the local interaction platforms have supported the involvement of different groups in our own work.

In Greater Manchester RJC UK team members also wanted to document and scrutinise policy elite understandings of meaningful participation, particularly given the increasing turn towards what we call "municipal co-production". Commitment to "genuine co-production" is articulated as one of the principles driving the GM Combined Authority; the project therefore aligned with an optimal moment to examine developments in discourse and practice at local and city-regional levels, and to observe the intersection between political and executive roles in and across the ten local authorities.

Three policy workshops were delivered with middle and senior decision-makers in different parts of the GMCA. These sought to test whether a common high-level narrative on meaningful participation exists and to identify knowledge and practice on co-production. Early examples of municipal co-production were brought to the table by policy officers including the GM Good Employment Charter, Digital Strategy, Ageing Hub and a co-production project "Elephants," working with people with severe and multiple disadvantage.

Data were also gathered through 1-to-1 interviews with key figures—typically chief executives and elected leaders of GM's ten local authorities, as well as the elected mayor and chief executive of the city-region. The project wanted to find out:

- **What do urban leaders—political and executive—think of when they encounter the phrase "meaningful participation"?**
- **Is there a consistent understanding within and across different urban contexts?**
- **Are there practices associated with meaningful participation or ways of doing things differently?**

The project was only possible through its embedding in a wider knowledge exchange programme, co-produced between the GMCA

and academic researchers involved in RJC UK and Jam and Justice, called *Developing Co-productive Capacities* (see blue box). This enabled high-level access, endorsement and support to critically and collaboratively reflect on the messages emerging from the interviews.

Analysis is ongoing. But early findings indicate widespread variability in the use and understanding of co-production. Many associate it specifically with service delivery. A smaller number talked in terms of

paradigmatic cultural change, of a whole different way of governing. Typically, "co-production" is not conceived of in political terms—as a new ethos and approach to governing our cities that needs to be actively realised. However, interest is increasing in a progressive understanding of "co-production" and what it might offer the GMCA.

The project is part of a long-term agenda, underpinned by the commitment of RJC UK to prioritise learning, institutional and cultural change over bite-size but measurable policy statements. Interviewees found the space valuable to reflect on how to meaningfully democratise the city; time to think deeply can be scarce for officers and politicians, and opportunities for dialogue across localities are commonly constrained to operational issues. The wider comparative learning programme within *Developing Co-productive Capacities* also enabled officials to think about meaningful participation through understanding what is happening in cities around the world.

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**Time to think deeply can be scarce for officers and politicians, and opportunities for dialogue across localities are commonly constrained to operational issues.**

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RJC UK team members: Professor Beth Perry and Dr Bertie Russell.

**Find out more:** Combined Authority delegates recorded thoughts after each field trip, writing in Realising Just Cities' Trans-Local Learning series: [realisingjustcities-rjc.org/blog](http://realisingjustcities-rjc.org/blog).

## Developing Co-Productive Capacities

In January 2018 discussions began between RJC UK researchers and GMCA decision-makers to formulate a coherent “gateway” for collaboration. A process called Developing Co-productive Capacities was co-designed and co-funded to enable knowledge exchange and to facilitate the engagement of officials in the programme as a whole. The programme included workshops, interviews (see Participatory Cities) and field trips to Cape Town, Barcelona (for the UN International Observatory for Participatory Democracy’s annual meeting), and Gothenburg. Co-researchers from Jam and Justice’s ARC and officers from the West Midlands city region have also participated in these activities.

The negotiation of this year-long process took more than three months, with high-level sign-offs required to enable city officials to participate. Whilst delaying the initiation of the interviews, this led to strong buy-in and credible commitment, as well as high interest in the results of analysis. This agreement itself reflected trust and relationships built up through 16 years’ prior action research in the city-region.

[realisingjustcities-rjc.org/participatory-cities](http://realisingjustcities-rjc.org/participatory-cities)



Sharing insights from the West Midlands in Gothenburg, March 2019.

By engaging senior decision-makers in sustained dialogue, UK RJC researchers are connecting theory to policy change in Greater Manchester’s Combined Authority.

“As we look to put this principle of ‘doing with, not to’ into practice, it has become clear that this is a journey we can and should ‘do with’ other leading municipalities around the world”

—David and Nick, GM Combined Authority, after the Cape Town conference

“How do I create meaningful engagement between regional strategy and citizens/service users within a democratic context?”

—Fiona, West Midlands Combined Authority, after the Gothenburg exchange

“It was helpful to leave our local context in order to place what we are doing in a wider frame and solidify my understanding of the work in relation to other international case studies and movements”

—Alice, Community Journalist and ARC member, after the Barcelona trip



## Localising the Urban Sustainable Development Goals

**T**he Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in 2015 as part of the United Nations' Agenda 2030. These 17 Global Goals are an urgent call to action for all countries—rich and poor—to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. Yet there remain questions over whether the SDGs provide a meaningful framework for urban transformation, or indicate business-as-usual and a new form of green-washing.

Building on a pilot project, led by David Simon and Sandra Valencia at Mistra Urban Futures, which sought to test the relevance of the SDGs in different cities, this project enabled the Urban Institute to collaboratively explore the relevance and value of localising the SDGs with Sheffield City Council. A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed and signed, and the project was redesigned several times to take the interests and needs of the local authority into account at a time of wider change.

Key early work included a desk-based review of how existing local strategies align with the SDGs, using the Sheffield Transport Strategy as a case study to explore how SDGs might be embedded in the way sustainability is measured and reported. At the same time, 22 stakeholder interviews were carried out by the RJC UK team, exploring local awareness and perceptions of the SDGs. These interviews highlighted the low profile of the SDGs, with many stakeholders unsure of their status or relevance to local government.

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**Interviews highlighted the low profile of the SDGs, with many stakeholders unsure of their status or relevance to local government.**

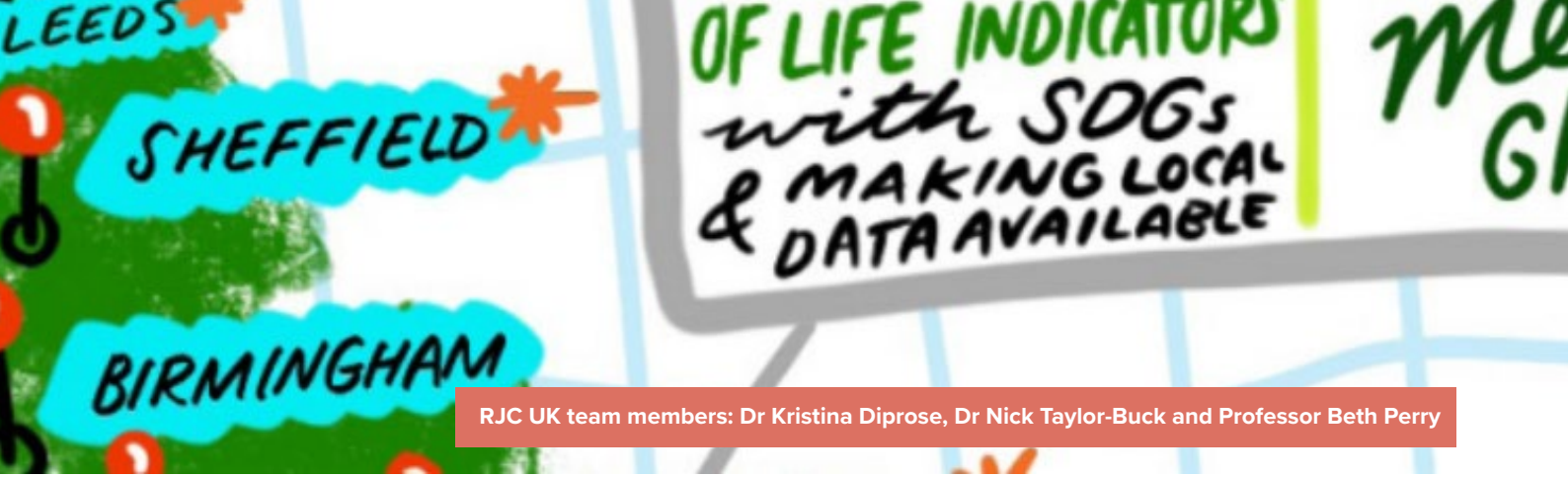
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As local authorities struggle with austerity and reductions in public funding, prioritisation is needed. With changes to personnel, getting consistency in staff engagement can make for a challenging environment for co-production. The research has raised the profile of the SDGs locally and generated useful insights. As part of the work, the team prepared responses to the UK's first Voluntary National Review of SDG implementation, participating in Department for International Development stakeholder consultations, as well as completing the United Cities and Local Governments' survey on good practice in localising the SDGs and submitting written evidence to a House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee inquiry. A successful partnership with Emily Auckland and colleagues at UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development, enabled the team to host a two-day knowledge exchange workshop (see blue box). This informed a joint policy briefing for cities who wish to learn from current best practice.

While local partners are eager to work together, there is only so much they can achieve with limited resources and no national coordination of this work. For example, a key issue raised by cities that have explored monitoring progress towards the SDGs is the availability of and access to disaggregated data, ideally at the neighbourhood level. Other national governments, such as Sweden, have developed domestic SDG action plans, appointed an independent delegation to oversee progress towards the SDGs, and published a national suite of voluntary local indicators that were developed in consultation with local government. The collaboration between UK RJC researchers and UKSSD is being taken forward through new work commissioned by the London Sustainable Development Commission.

With UKSSD, UK RJC researchers opened a wider conversation about the role of cities in delivering the sustainable development goals.





RJC UK team members: Dr Kristina Diprose, Dr Nick Taylor-Buck and Professor Beth Perry

**Find out more:** Read the joint policy briefing, “Localising the Sustainable Development Goals”, on our website.

**Joint UK workshop: localising the SDGs**  
The first national conversation between UK cities on working with SDGs!  
RJC researchers forged a partnership with UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development (UKSSD) to facilitate an exchange of practices at the national level. Aided by a grant from the Grantham Centre for Sustainable Futures, Realising Just Cities and UKSSD co-designed and co-delivered a two-day workshop with local authorities and stakeholders from other cities.  
The workshop, in June 2019, heard examples from leading adopters of the SDG framework including Bristol, Liverpool and London, and formulated several principles. The Local Government Association General Assembly subsequently passed a motion in support of the SDGs, noting that “Local government has a vital role to play in terms of the planning, implementation and monitoring in local areas, work that will be key in delivering the UK’s progress on meeting the ambitions of the Agenda 2030.”  
A new support network has formed for cities keen to exchange expertise. A joint policy briefing based on key workshop data and ideas was published in September 2019.  
Find out what UK urban stakeholders hope to see happen next: [tiny.cc/uk-sdgs](https://tiny.cc/uk-sdgs)

“The SDGs . . . provide a framework to galvanise political, business, and other society interests in delivering things that will improve people’s quality of life”  
—Paul, London Sustainable Development Commissioner

“Two thirds of what needs to happen to fix the planet can only happen locally . . . there’s a fundamental role for place, and community and people, and that really can only happen where we live”  
—Jamie, Bradford Council

[realisingjustcities-rjc.org/sustainable-development-goals](https://realisingjustcities-rjc.org/sustainable-development-goals)

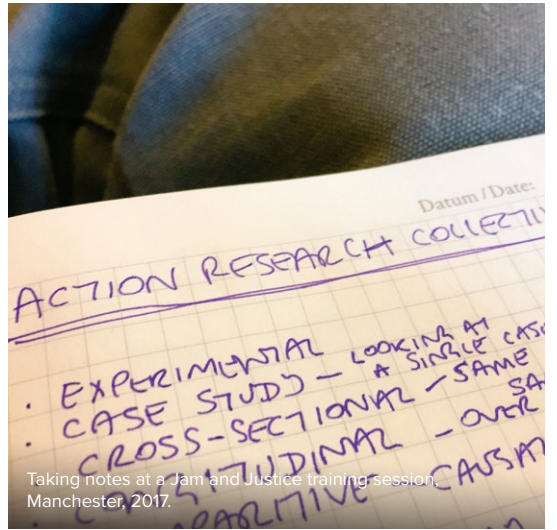
“The SDGs . . . provide an integrated picture of the social, economic and environmental aspects of the city, and help us understand how the interlinkages between these areas work”  
—Allan, Bristol City Council



Workshop with UKSSD, June 2019. Photograph: Ed Cartledge.



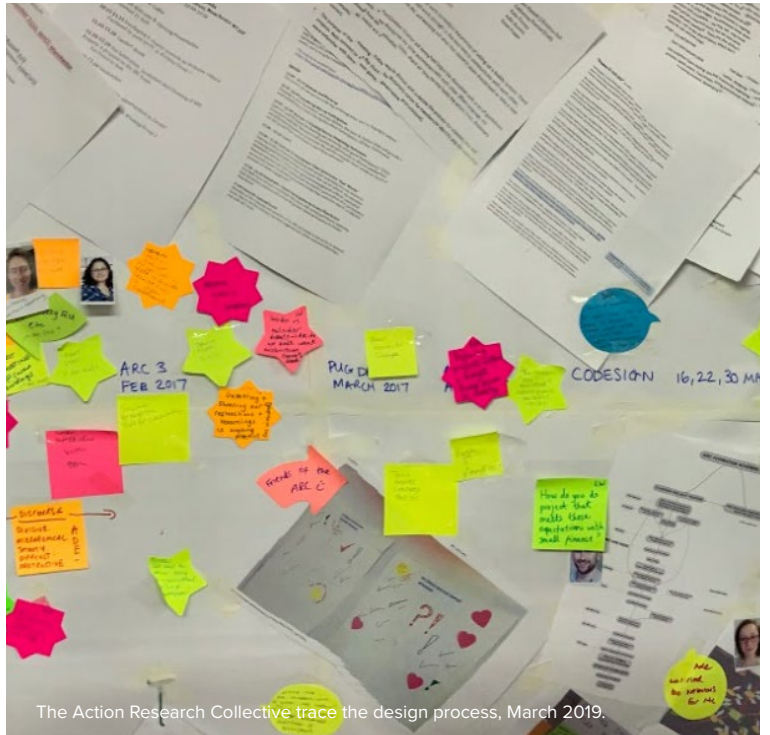
Participatory planning discussion, Cape Town, 2018.



Taking notes at a Jam and Justice training session, Manchester, 2017.



Localising the SDGs: Realising Just Cities artwork by Nifty Fox.



The Action Research Collective trace the design process, March 2019.



Workshopping ways to Co- Produce the City, Realising Just Cities delegation in Barcelona. Photograph: UN International Observatory for Participatory Democracy.

# Practices, processes and sites of knowledge production

“

An 'experimental intelligence' [frees us] from the bondage of the past, due to ignorance and accident hardened into custom . . . it is in [a] constant process of forming, and its retention requires constant alertness in observing consequences, an open-minded will to learn and courage in re-adjustment.

”

**John Dewey, 1957, in  
Reconstruction in Philosophy**



# Working Across Boundaries

**H**ow does academia value research committed to transforming society? What can be learned from the lived experience of academics working collaboratively for social justice and other real-world change?

Universities are commonly regarded as legitimate sites for knowledge production. Rewards for work come from particular cultures and recognition through peer-reviewed outputs. At the same time, measuring the impact of research

## What do universities and funding bodies need to learn and change in order to promote, rather than constrain, the activities of the socially-engaged academic?

of the university and who are committed to transforming society? What do universities and funding bodies need to learn and change in order to promote, rather than constrain, the activities of the socially-engaged academic?

Through a series of interviews with academics engaged in this work, including some who have chosen to leave the academy, this project explores the challenges and pitfalls of working across boundaries. The aim is to explore the motivations that drive such work and the ways that researchers navigate the existing system in order to develop careers. Such an investigation makes it possible to identify conditions which enable this kind of work. Data from the interviews have been combined with additional insight from focus group discussions, including some conducted within the Realising Just Cities programme in Cape Town, in November 2018 (see page 31).

**“Very often when we consider our own expertise, we do not consider our limits but instead celebrate the exceptionality of what we’ve achieved. [...] Universities are the personification of this...”**

—Tim, RJC UK

What are the lessons for universities and funding bodies? These include:

- **Longer-term partnerships through varying forms of secondment.**

Universities can offer a distinct quality of space and time to think and to conduct informed dialogue. This is a two-way process involving those outside of academia using the time to develop knowledge and learning to take back into their places of work.

- **Utopian thinking**

Encouraging people to imagine alternative futures, and using history to illustrate how change is possible.

- **Allowing specialisation within career progression, rather than creating a one-size-fits-all development model.**

Attention is needed to how universities are structured. Academics need permission to generate knowledge through different pathways with those outside of the organisation, rather than being evaluated through the narrow confines of particular metrics.

- **A need to recognise and understand new ways of knowing**

Different ways of knowing, doing and representing research are not of less importance to the production of traditional academic knowledge. Rather, they are a condition of the survival of the university as a distinct site of knowledge production.

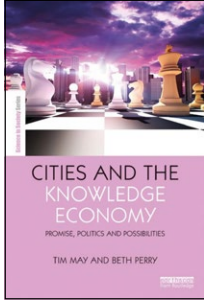
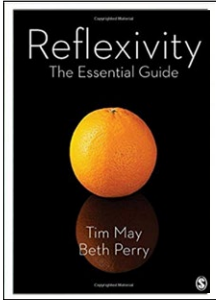
Such research inevitably raises ethical questions. If impact and engagement agendas are narrowly defined and used as levers for change, does this risk tacitly deepening the financialisation of education and research? What are the effects of the “democratisation” of research through approaches such as “co-production” in linking knowledge with transformative action?

The project also involved introducing critical methodological content into teaching and research training programmes at the University of Sheffield, organising an action research masterclass with Professor Davvyd Greenwood and supporting the Action Research Peers network (see page 33). Further academic seminars are planned to reflect on contested knowledge for sustainable urban development and the challenges posed to traditional forms of academic representation in working across boundaries.



RJC UK team member: Professor Tim May, with Professor Beth Perry

**Find out more:** Read chapter 1 of “Reflexivity: The Essential Guide” and the introduction to “Cities and the Knowledge Economy” on the RJC UK website.



“Sometimes it would be nice to have a job you can leave at 5pm. You carry it with you. How do you shed it when you go into your home life, if at all?”  
—early career academic

“You want to celebrate and cherish everything people have shared with you”  
—early career academic

### Methodological issues and emotional labour workshop

“It’s that feeling that you’ve done something useful, having worked with people to find out what useful is . . . feeling like you’ve made a change in practice . . . enabled space for people to tell their story without being judged . . . that instant moment of feedback and thanks.”

In December 2018, sixteen early career researchers gathered at the University of Sheffield to discuss methodological issues and emotional labour in co-produced research. Organised with financial support from the Jam and Justice project, the workshop was jointly run by Tim May and Beth Perry, with participants coming together to discuss and share their experiences of co-produced research. The questions discussed included:

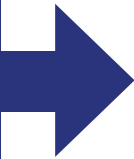
- Who owns the knowledge from collaborative research and who can be attributed with having produced it?
- How are the boundaries between justification and application in research negotiated and understood and from what positions?
- What are the implications for the process of research, and judgements of value?

Participants concluded that support networks and spaces to talk about the challenges of co-producing research are essential. Structures, cultures and processes need to adjust to displace assumptions of predictable and linear modes of research and provide adaptability and flexibility. You can read a report of the workshop on the Realising Just Cities blog.

[realisingjustcities-rjc.org/working-across-boundaries](https://realisingjustcities-rjc.org/working-across-boundaries)

**Making explicit the challenges faced by academic researchers who work to change society, UK RJC research seeks to reshape research practices and funding priorities.**


Academic researchers are experimenting with Working Across Boundaries at different levels of career. Part of the RJC UK programme involved funding three PhDs to explore different urban justice issues and develop research and action to address them. Read about the work of our PhD researchers Jenny Patient, Alex McVicar-Payling and Ryan Bellinson in the following pages.





# Trade Unions and Just Transition

PhD Researcher: Jenny Patient  
Supervisors: Professor Beth Perry and Dr Stephen Connelly

 @jennyspatient

*“Trade unions hear different stories—about climate change and what the response should be—from employers, industry bodies, the government and climate campaigners; they have no ‘honest broker’ to adjudicate between these stories. How can trade unions become their own honest broker?”*

The TUC brings together more than 5.5 million working people who make up its 48 member unions.

Jenny Patient’s PhD research is a co-production partnership with the Trades Union Congress (TUC) in the North of England, supported by Realising Just Cities and the University of Sheffield’s Department of Urban Studies and Planning.

The quote above—heard at the 2016 TUC Conference—expresses both the need and desire for trade unions to collaborate and build capacity around tackling climate change. The UK has respectable targets for carbon reduction, and climate action will involve most workplaces. Yet efforts to involve stakeholders such as trade unions have been very limited. Trade unions, meanwhile, have plenty on their plate, with austerity and low pay, reduced density of membership, and then Brexit, to worry about.

In Yorkshire and the Humber, there is a sizeable cluster of heavy industries, with energy and carbon-intensive processes: Sheffield steel, and less famously, glass manufacture in Leeds and cement and chemical plants around the Humber estuary. Meeting low-carbon targets is challenging. The experience of “industrial transition” locally has often been traumatic, with communities devastated by the loss of employment in coal mines and steel mills over the last 40 years.

Jenny’s research constructs a case study of the TUC’s regional Task Force on Just Transition, focusing on the dynamics and capabilities of trade unions organising in these energy-intensive industries. The action research approach reflects the live nature of the topic, the need to build knowledge on the ground that supports trade unions to play a bigger role, and Jenny’s prior involvement in the Task Force. The research problem was defined in collaboration with a small group of trade unionists, and Jenny then negotiated a placement with the TUC Task Force, taking fieldnotes, engaging in day-to-day activities and collecting data through wider interviews.

A particularly fruitful question has been to ask how trade unions connect thinking about climate change with other priorities such as pay inequality, working hours, gender and youth gaps, and renewed membership growth. Opportunities to build relationships and gain insight into trade union thinking have grounded the research to date and enabled learning from trade unionists who have much to contribute to a just low-carbon transition.

Embedded research aims to create impact throughout its stages—escalating concern over climate and the upcoming UN Climate Change Summit in Glasgow (2020) are multiplying the possibilities to shape what happens.

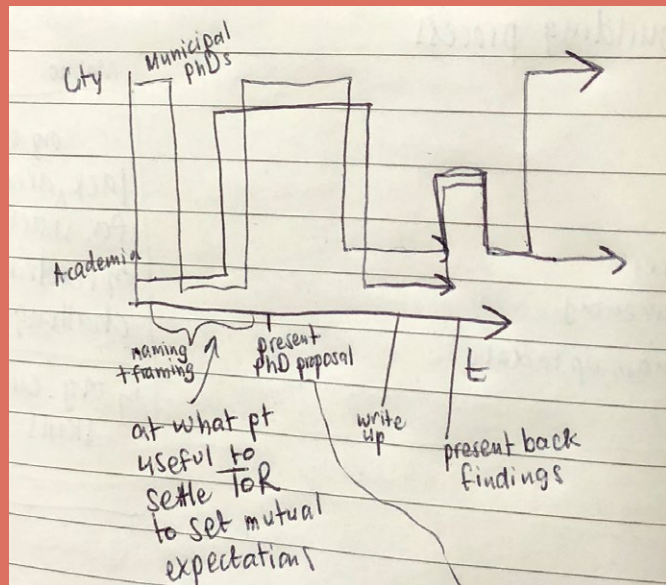
Around 28,000 people work at the 20+ biggest greenhouse-gas-emitting sites in Yorkshire and the Humber region.



## Workshop: Edgy PhDs

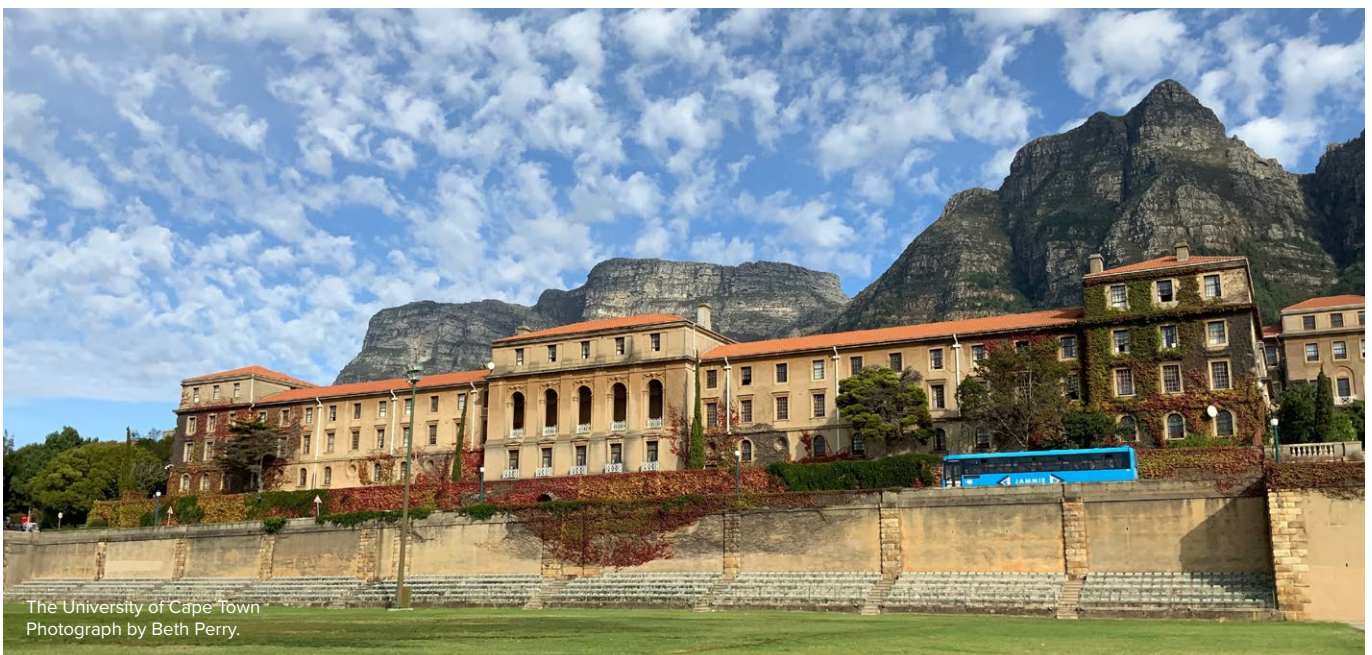
What do new researchers need for boundary-crossing research to flourish?

In November 2018, nine early career researchers met in Cape Town to discuss the trials, triumphs and tribulations of “edgy PhDs”. Led by Zarina Patel, Tim May and Magnus Johansson, the workshop was part of Mistra Urban Futures’ annual conference. Each participant explained how they came to be working at the interface(s) of research and practice. Together, they examined assumptions, highlighted different kinds of tensions in the process of research and identified practices that help to address those. Key recommendations included creating explicit feedback mechanisms, allowing extra time for the building of trust, and fostering communities of practice in partnerships between academia and communities and organisations. For researchers, knowledge exchange must be recognised as an essential expertise in its own right, requiring working across normal occupational boundaries. This, in turn, requires disciplined reflexivity and support from within university cultures.



Part of the Working Across Boundaries project.

Sketching the shape of edgy action research at the Cape Town workshop, November 2018.



The University of Cape Town  
Photograph by Beth Perry.



# University Knowledge and the Northern Powerhouse: A Feminist Critique

PhD Researcher: Alexandra McVicar-Payling  
Supervisors: Professor Tim May and Professor Rowland Atkinson

 @alixx\_p

*“The economic imaginary of the Northern Powerhouse is neither apolitical or neutral in terms of what values and knowledge are prioritised. Where are the women and the knowledge they bring? If women are absent, how likely is a truly inclusive and sustainable economy—in the Northern Powerhouse or otherwise?”*

**T**he Northern Powerhouse seeks to develop the North of England by using city-regions as engines of economic growth. Alex McVicar-Payling’s research project aims to understand what forms of knowledge are utilised for this purpose. What knowledge is omitted from policy processes and with what consequences for different populations?

City-regions have become more central for the British Government following the financial crisis and subsequent restructuring of public bodies. This restructuring resulted in the closure of Regional Development Agencies, the primary mechanism for regional development in England. The Government then supported the creation of 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). These are voluntary public-private partnerships, tasked and government-funded to develop economic growth strategies for their city-regions (Strategic Economic Plans).

A central concern of Alex’s project is the contribution of universities in the North of England to the region’s 11 LEPs, and, in turn, to the larger regional development strategy—the “Northern Powerhouse”. How exactly do different forms of knowledge inform the work of LEPs? Universities have been accorded a central role in knowledge-based urban development, both as key economic actors and as sites of knowledge production. Yet the role of universities in the practices and strategies of LEPs in the Northern Powerhouse is under-examined.

In June 2014, UK Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne told an audience at Manchester’s Museum of Science and Industry, “We need a Northern Powerhouse”.

**The Northern Powerhouse region includes 23 universities, six of which rank in the top 20 for research excellence nationally.**

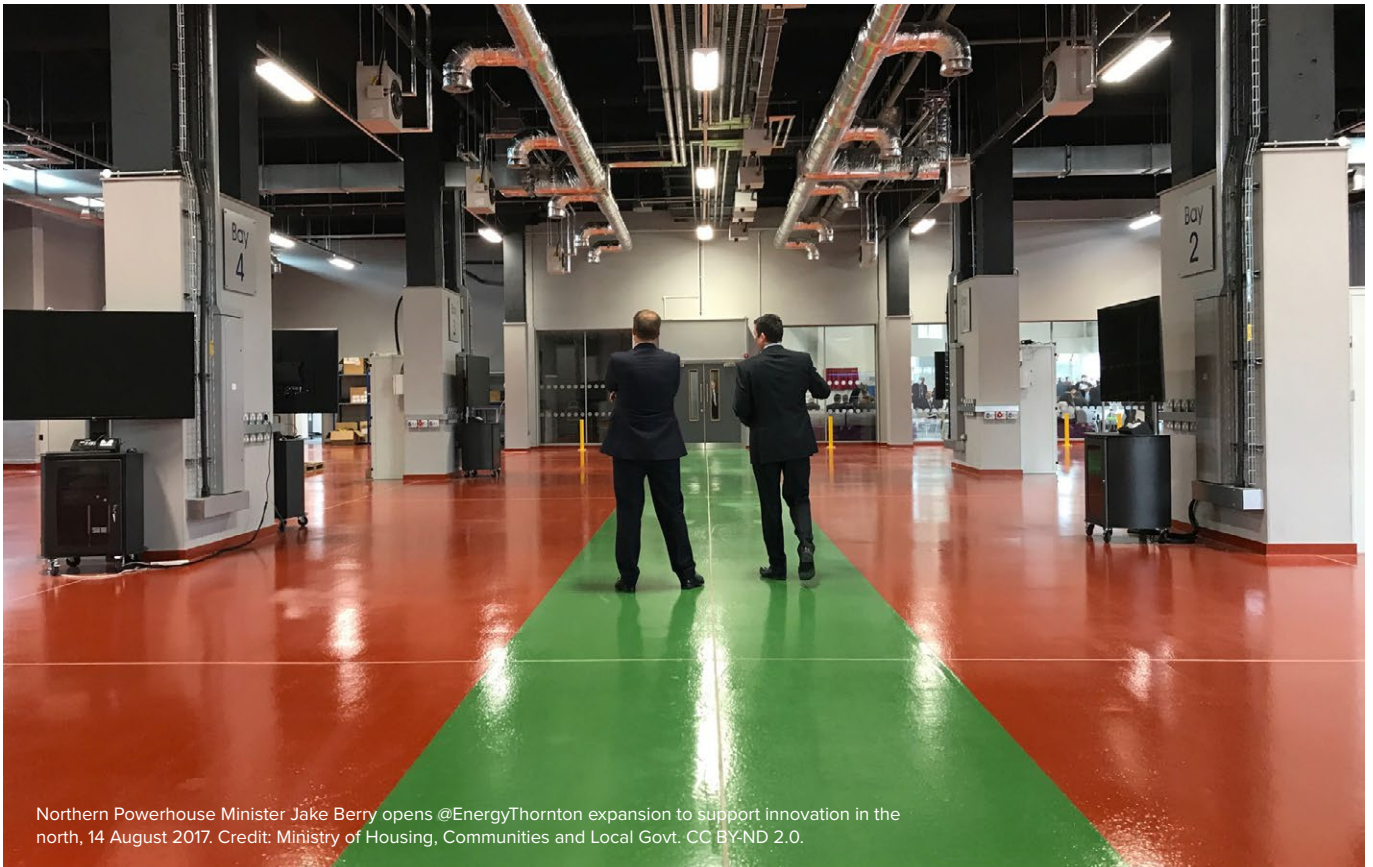
How knowledge is mobilised and for what purpose leads to particular and often narrow views on what is “strategically important”. This process is not neutral. A gender-blindness, constituted in spatial terms between public and private spheres, along with a possible failure to consider how policy impacts on people’s lives in different ways, have consequences for the urban population as a whole.

Alex begins by surveying documents from the formal policy process to identify what forms of analysis have taken place in Northern Powerhouse city-regions. This will enable appraisal of the extent to which an understanding of inequalities has been incorporated into strategic intentions. Interviews will be undertaken with strategic decision-makers to understand their perspectives on how knowledge-production informs different stages of the Strategic Economic Plans, what knowledge was utilised for that purpose and why. This will be supplemented through ethnographic work. Interviews will also be conducted with those in universities who work in the areas of urban studies and gender to understand their perspectives on the process itself and the extent to which the process and strategies are seen as inclusive of different viewpoints.





Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry with Chief Executive Alex Laffey of the 100th Northern Powerhouse Partner—Eddie Stobart, 30 November 2017. Credit: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Govt. CC BY-ND 2.0.



Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry opens @EnergyThornton expansion to support innovation in the north, 14 August 2017. Credit: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Govt. CC BY-ND 2.0.

## Action Research Peers

We need more peer support for students using participatory action research methods!—concluded a group of Sheffield PhD students from Urban Studies and Planning, following a masterclass by Professor Davydd Greenwood, organised by Tim May in 2018. Jeni Vine, Marion Oveson, Jenny Patient and Katherine Blaker came up with the idea of Action Research Peers to support students with critical thinking, and offer practical help to those using different participatory approaches. They secured funding from the University's Think Ahead programme and, following discussion with Beth Perry, match funding from Realising Just Cities UK.

Action Research Peers hosted two forums in February and July 2019, a colloquium in May and a series of writing days and retreats. The colloquium offered the chance for Sheffield students to engage in action learning with Dr Ruth Patrick (University of York), Dr Sally Lloyd-Evans (Reading University) and Professor Beth Perry (Urban Institute, University of Sheffield). The organising team of Action Research Peers reflected that the process had built good connections at Sheffield between those interested in an action research approach and supported cross-departmental linkage, as well as enabling connections with similarly-minded researchers at Sheffield Hallam University. They are now working out how the initiative can be taken forward, as they approach their final years of study.



# Co-producing Climate Policy: Working with the Greater Manchester Low Carbon Hub

Researcher: Ryan Bellinson  
Supervisors: Professor Beth Perry and Dr Aidan While

[realisingjustcities-rjc.org/ryan-bellinson](https://realisingjustcities-rjc.org/ryan-bellinson)  
@rbellinson

*“For co-production to gain traction within local government policy development processes it is necessary to have strong internal organisational coordination, buy-in, and capacity.”*

**A**lthough the climate emergency has drawn strong media attention to the issue recently, policy professionals have been discussing what to do about climate change for over 30 years. Local authorities in Greater Manchester have taken numerous policy actions on climate for decades, with mixed results. Building on their involvement with Realising Just Cities UK in 2012–2016—and the need to “find the jam in the sandwich”—GM’s environment team decided to explore pathways to better engage citizens and other urban stakeholders in climate policy development.

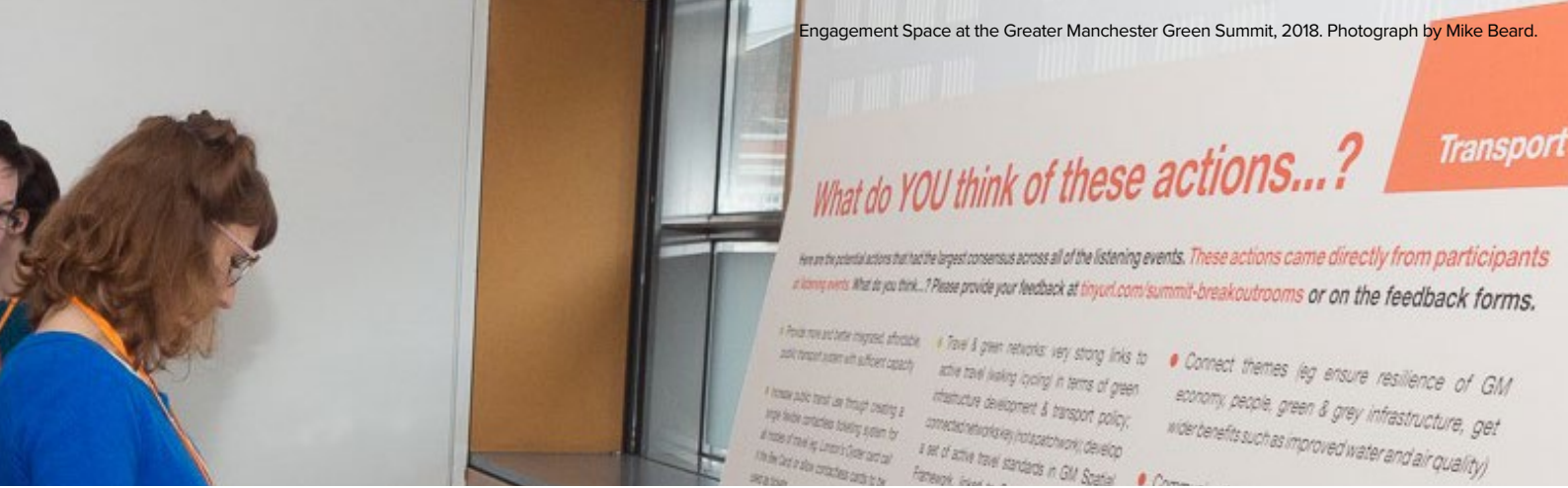
During 2017, Beth Perry and Mark Atherton, the Assistant Director for Environment, Greater Manchester, made plans for an innovative embedded PhD position between the GMCA’s Low Carbon Hub Board and the University of Sheffield, supported by Realising Just Cities. The position was designed to explore how co-production is understood and implemented within local government institutions and how co-productive policy development might support citizen engagement. It was also intended to add concrete capacity for co-production to the small environment staff team, to deliver on new commitments made by Mayor Andy Burnham for a “Green Summit”.

PhD student Ryan Bellinson led this project in the field from October 2017 through June 2019. He began by spending time embedded in the GMCA to understand its organisational culture, develop legitimacy and traction within a newly established climate policy development process, and to identify a joint problem space. He then developed and delivered community listening events, practitioner working groups and other activities that fed into the policy process. Ryan collected multiple forms of data throughout his time in the field. This concluded shortly after the policy process culminated with the launch of a 5-Year Environment Plan at the 2019 Green Summit.

Data analysis is still ongoing. Three initial findings are suggested: (1) For co-production to gain traction within local government policy development processes it is necessary to have strong internal organisational coordination, buy-in, and capacity. (2) Co-productive policy development may enable politicians to take “political risks” that they would not likely be willing to take otherwise. (3) Co-productive climate policy development, even in weak forms, may enable new policy agendas and priorities to gain traction.

Our evaluation and learning process evidences the tangible impact Ryan made in developing and supporting a framework for citizen engagement. More than 1,200 people took part in listening events, many of which he facilitated. Ryan also designed and organised a participative feedback space at the 2018 Green Summit, and planned and facilitated nine detailed practitioner workshops, collecting knowledge from more than 100 participants.

Overall, the embedded research enabled citizens to engage in climate policy development in different ways. Numerous citizens reported that they felt listened to and that their views were respected to a degree that had not occurred previously in city-regional climate policy development. This research has made an impactful contribution by enabling public participation in Greater Manchester and has helped shape policy. Ryan has begun to share his learning with different audiences, including a televised appearance, to highlight the importance of collaborating with citizens to develop policy to produce local climate action.



## Co-producing climate urbanism

Cities are on the frontline of climate change—they are where the effects of climate change are acutely felt, the place where the majority of humanity lives and where the largest amount of carbon emissions are generated. Both Sheffield and Manchester City Councils have declared a climate emergency. So how can cities co-produce meaningful action to address climate change?

In September 2019, RJC UK student Ryan Bellinson coordinated a panel offering a series of case studies to illustrate how and where co-production has been used to facilitate urban climate action in Greater Manchester and Sheffield. The examples included climate campaigning, low carbon sector development, trade union environmental engagement, and local climate policy development. Brief presentations were followed by an open question and answer session, allowing those present to explore the utility of co-production for organisations tackling the climate emergency. The panel was associated with the Urban Institute's two-day Climate Urbanism workshop, led by Professor Vanesa Castan Broto, which Ryan helped to support.

**The Low Carbon Hub is a partnership-led body charged with retrofitting homes and workplaces, developing low-carbon skills, building renewable energy capacity and energy efficiency and helping the low carbon business sector flourish.**



## On the Doorstep: Contributing to a Just Sheffield

**F**or historical reasons many of our projects have been in Greater Manchester, building on long-standing connections and trusted relationships. When the Urban Institute at the University of Sheffield became the host of the local interaction platform in 2016, Realising Just Cities UK was born and new projects and opportunities were initiated in Sheffield. The Faculty of Social Sciences also provided substantial match funding and support for the work we have undertaken.

We developed the Localising the Sustainable Development Goals project collaboratively with Sheffield City Council. We also set up an action research team with Sheffield food stakeholders as part of the Self-organising Action for Food Equity project, and have hosted events related to projects around themes such as cultural democracy and co-producing climate urbanism.

We have made spaces for academics and students at the University to reflect on their research practice and work across boundaries, through providing modules, seminars, masterclasses and supporting new networks. This has sometimes meant modifying institutional processes, such as PhD ethical approvals, to align with the ethos and spirit of the programme. We have been fortunate to have the support of a dedicated administrator, Vicky Simpson, to actively intermediate across different sectoral boundaries and negotiate the set up and management of our large and distributed programme.

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**We want the learning and experience of Realising Just Cities UK to support transformations on the doorstep.**

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Many people inside and outside the University told us it was hard to access the range and diversity of engaged urban research happening across the institution. RJC researchers Beth Perry and Kristina Diprose undertook a trial to map what external partners might “see” from the outside in, looking at the online representation and presence of Sheffield-based research. The results were patchy. We are now working on a prototype digital tool “Just Sheffield” to help organise and represent the diversity of Sheffield academics research in the city and wider region. We will test, learn and refine this iteratively with colleagues.

Following conversations with engaged scholars in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning, we match funded our support for a new initiative in Arbourthorne, an area of Sheffield that is in the top 40% of the most socio-economically deprived areas of the UK. We hope An Even Better Arbourthorne (see page 37) will provide opportunities to connect learning institutions across Sheffield to foster relationships and community capacity over the next 3 years.

We have also started sharing the knowledge and learning generated through Realising Just Cities UK with city partners. Throughout Autumn and Winter 2019, we have meetings and workshops set up with Sheffield city-region stakeholders to discuss the relevance of our work now and in the future.

Finally, we have begun to feed our research and action into ongoing work at the University around the Sustainable Development Goals and the “civic university” agenda. As we systematically analyse our work to draw out the theoretical and practical implications across projects, we are committed to ensuring that the learning and experience of Realising Just Cities UK can support transformations on the doorstep.



Professor Beth Perry, Dr Kristina Diprose, Dr Nick Taylor Buck, Dr Vicky Simpson and Professor Tim May.

## The “Just Sheffield” Portal

Realising Just Cities UK is in good company. There are hundreds of members of staff and students across departments and faculties at the University working with local residents and communities, local authorities and city partners. Who are they? What is the collective impact of this work? And how can we share knowledge and learning about what is going on inside and outside the University?

In discussion with Lee Crookes, Beth Perry and Kristina Diprose undertook pilot mapping in February to May 2019, searching staff profiles, research projects and collaborations on publicly accessible webpages. We started with the Faculty of Social Sciences, wanting to identify how publicly visible engaged urban research is, how individual academics profile their local work and whether there was any collective representation. We found more than 100 staff members and 50 current or recent projects . . . and counting. However, academic career pathways encourage staff to represent their interests thematically; online sources can be out of date and cross-cutting work across departments, for instance, with the Schools of Health and Related Research, Medicine, or English, is hard to identify.

Work is now underway to develop a prototype online tool, with developer Ciaran McCauley, to explore how to collectively represent this work, in an easily accessible, interactive, easy to maintain and cost effective way. The prototype will be tested in November–December 2019 as part of wider discussion about these issues.

## An Even Better Arbourthorne

An Even Better Arbourthorne (AEBA) is a partnership project between Arbourthorne Primary School, Growtheatre and the Centre for Innovation in Voluntary Action (CIVA).

Arbourthorne is the fourth most deprived ward in Sheffield and there is a real need for action by families and the community to address issues of poverty and its contributory factors. Arbourthorne Primary School, led by its Executive Headteacher Vanessa Langley and her senior management team, have been committed to doing something about this. The school has a long history of working closely with its community, including a highly-valued life skills house—Red Robin House. Building on these foundations, AEBA was developed between the primary school and Michael Norton (CIVA) with funding from many donors, including the Reaching Communities fund and Tudor Trust. With the support of Project Co-ordinator Rachel Newman, Project Worker Paige Liddle, school staff, parents and children, early initiatives include cooking together for Family Feasts, to explore health and nutrition; a Community Fridge, redistributing surplus food; and Action Stations, providing small grants for big ideas to improve life in the community. Activities are also enhancing and developing provision at Red Robin House.

Lee Crookes, Urban Studies and Planning, and Beth Perry, Urban Institute are learning partners for the AEBA initiative. The initial aims are to design an alternative participatory evaluation that embeds learning with local partners to contribute to long-term community ownership and sustainability, and strengthen learning links between the school and the university.

# Realising Cities

Our activities



More than 300 co-researchers and collaborators, including Jam and Justice's Action Research Collective.

## Funded by:



Mistra Urban Futures

ESRC

In-kind contributions  
The time, knowledge and expertise given by co-researchers and other collaborators

The University of Sheffield  
including the Grantham Centre for Sustainable Cities and Sheffield Institute for Sustainable Food

- AHRC
- British Academy
- The University of Manchester
- The University of Birmingham

Overall value: nearly £2.5 million

14 locally-engaged research projects, responding to climate change, economic injustice, social inequalities, spatial planning, urban governance, knowledge-based change, and urban transformation

...and several international comparative projects, including work on festivals and cultural heritage and sustainability.

2 city regions

Greater Manchester

Sheffield

A 13-person team at the University of Sheffield

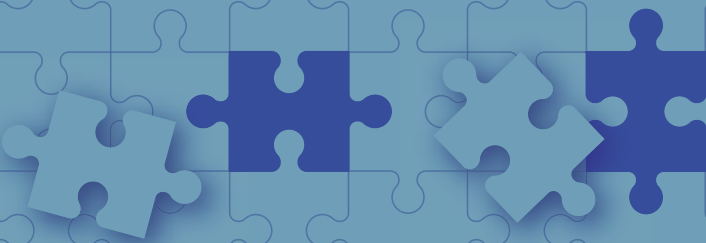
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1 platform

to support our projects hosted by the University of Sheffield

# ng Just s UK:

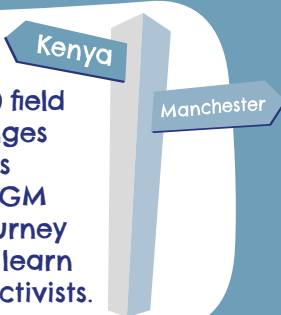
ty in brief



Contracted formal partnerships with more than 60 people and organisations.

## Together we have...

Completed more than 30 field trips, exchanges and site visits including 13 GM residents' journey to Kenya, to learn from local activists.



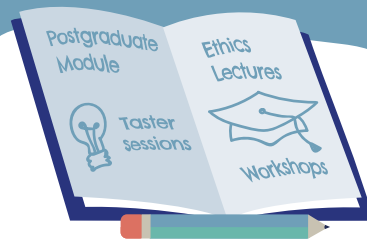
Organised hundreds of meetings, workshops, and research interviews, sitting down with Mayors, mums and trade union leaders.



Carried out, shared, or presented research in more than 17 countries across 5 continents including comparative work on the Sustainable Development Goals.



Hosted dozens of discussion panels and focus groups, including the Double-Devolution Debate, planning roundtables in Sheffield and Cape Town, Co-producing climate urbanisms and 6 expert panels on community-led housing.



Trained a new generation of researcher-practitioners with 20 targeted activities, including a postgraduate module, open taster sessions on participatory methods, ethics lectures, and workshops on Edgy PhDs and Emotional Labour.

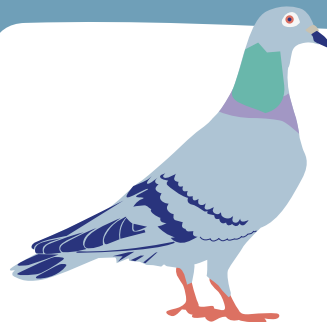
# SHEF FOOD

Sheffield's Food Partnership

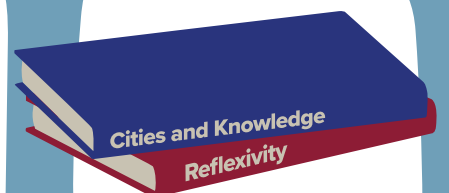
Fostered at least a dozen networks, coalitions and alliances including the Municipalist Action, Research and Advocacy Network (MARAN), and catalysed ShefFood.



Adopted different patterns of working, both formal and informal, from Developing Co-Productive Capacities, to embedded PhD students working in different organisational settings.



Produced 25 videos, 61 blog posts, 13 reports and policy briefings, plus 2 touring exhibitions—featuring community knowledge and pigeons.



Published 18 journal articles, 15 opinion pieces, 10 book chapters, and 5 books.

## So what?



ARC member Paul Maher speaks up for young people. Guardian Live—Manchester Histories debate, June 2019. Photograph by Jill Jennings, University of Manchester.

**H**ow do we know that engaged urban research has made a difference? The challenges of identifying, tracking and attributing impact in complex, messy co-production projects can be huge. How do pathways to change manifest? How diligently can one determine and record the different factors that contribute to outcomes? Where multiple partners and external forces have supported a pathway to change, how can we understand the distinctive contribution of our work to realising more just cities?

Realising Just Cities UK projects have operated at different scales, with different models of project governance and management. Roles have been performed by many different people, reflecting the capacities and expertise of those directly involved. The intensity and nature of collaboration varied both between and within projects, responding to the commitment and needs of diverse stakeholders and distinct goals.

Each project has undertaken its own learning and evaluation processes according to a common set of questions. The team have used different approaches to support this: directly reflecting with participants, interviewing participants on each other's projects, keeping diaries and fieldnotes and contracting external consultants to provide an independent view. As a recent piece in *Nature* argues, understanding the value of co-production needs to be undertaken with extended peer communities.

Through careful record-keeping we have sought to generate some quantitative proxies for the wider value of the platform. The data challenge of looking across multiple distributed projects, where each has a large degree of autonomy, cannot be underestimated. When does a participant become a co-researcher? Where people give their time and expertise without payment, how should the value of that contribution be recorded?

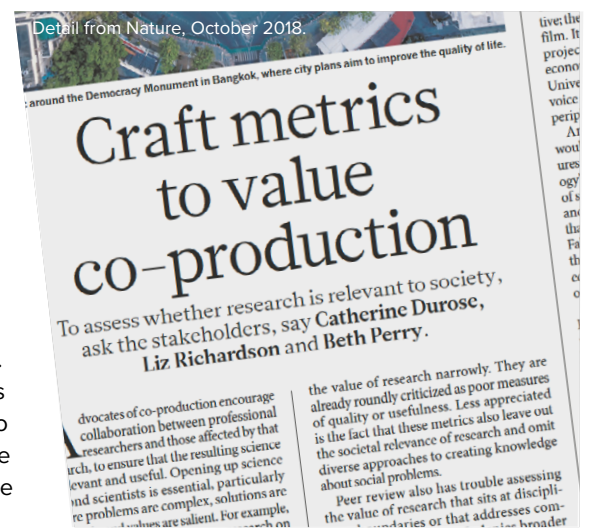
For example, the roll of honour on pages 50-51 is deliberately structured to recognise all whose names have been willingly recorded as collaborators with this programme, without closely differentiating the role of co-researcher from other kinds of recorded participation. The infographic on pages 38-39 represents those figures about which we can be totally sure. In-kind contributions, for instance, are estimated by counting working hours spent together. But this does not account for the time individuals give to preparation for, or communicating between, meetings. Our conservative approach gives us confidence that what we can count represents only the tip of a much deeper iceberg.

We have also had support, supplemented with university knowledge exchange funds, for dedicated impact officers to capture testimonials, policies, practices and tools across our programme. We have used a range of strategies to achieve impact—using traditional and innovative methods. The results show how Realising Just Cities has begun . . . to do just that.

Realising just cities through co-production is a long-term and incremental process. What we have achieved has been possible through decades of previous embedded work in each city-region. Here, we share some highlights of both concrete impacts and the wider values that the programme has had for those involved. We will continue to analyse, theorise and mobilise to ensure that the work can continue to contribute knowledge and action to realise more just cities.

### Shaping policy processes, opening imaginations

UK RJC researchers have sought to contribute their knowledge to shape policy processes using traditional mechanisms, for instance, submitting ten consultation responses, at local, national and international levels. Policy implications are detailed within many reports, including on the future of community-led housing, and localising the Sustainable Development Goals.







Photographs taken by community researchers for the Jam and Justice project, exhibited as part of Everyday Politics.

We have also developed knowledge exchange programmes, such as Developing Co-productive Capacities (see page 23) and created spaces for debate and discussion for city officials, activists and community-based organisations to take time out to reflect back on policy and practice. Examples include roundtables on participation in planning at the Sheffield planning conference and the Cape Town Mistra Urban Futures Annual Conference (see next page). Through engagement with different community perspectives, one Greater Manchester planner determined to rethink how the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector could be involved in spatial planning, hosting deliberative forums to inform planning processes. The Sheffield roundtable also led to Just Space participating in the Jam and Justice project to share their experience of community organising in London with Greater Manchester campaigners and community groups.

Some of our work helped highlight what knowledge is excluded from policy and provide routes for other urban stakeholders to input to decision-making processes. Counter-mapping and a high profile exhibition in Manchester Central Library captured community expertise about land use and development issues in Miles Platting and the wider city of Manchester. In Jam and Justice, photography provided method and opportunity for community researchers to analyse and share the power of their everyday politics, inspiring wider adoption of both method and action. The Everyday Politics exhibition, produced by the community researchers, has been touring different locations in Greater Manchester. Designing web infrastructure provided a different focus for conversations about local food systems. Other approaches to provide pathways for different groups to shape policy included cross- and inter-city exchanges, listening events, appreciative inquiry, and an inverted citizens' jury.

Feedback from many of those on our roll of honour suggests Realising Just Cities has played an important role in changing mind-sets, shifting policy windows and opening up policy imaginations. This is particularly recognised in Greater Manchester, given the depth and duration of work undertaken there. Our work has been used by city officials committed to deepening citizen participation to argue for different ways of making and shaping policy (see right).



GM VCSE Policy Accord lead discussing the impact of Jam and Justice at a report launch, July 2019. Photograph: Jason Lawton.

Collectively, it is possible to trace impact on six different policy domains in Greater Manchester:

- Education: young researchers informed priorities for Greater Manchester's Curriculum for Life, sharing findings with the Youth Combined Authority in April 2019.
- Environment: whilst the negotiation of an embedded PhD placement ensured repeated citizen involvement in the city-region's new 5-year plan, Jam & Justice's Energy Futures work helped bring Manchester on board with a new project ([municipalpower.org](http://municipalpower.org)).
- Housing: in December 2018, Salford Mayor and GM portfolio holder for Housing Paul Dennett accepted recommendations from Housing Futures. At the report launch, Manchester City Council Director of Housing and Residential Growth Jon Sawyer announced support-in-principle for three community-led schemes on council land.
- Health & Social Care: when off-duty care professionals made time to generate recommendations, GM Health & Social Care Partnership worked out how to match the proposals with their Living Well at Home Transformation programme goals.
- Procurement: policy commitments at GMCA level already mean more social value from a budget exceeding 7 billion GBP. GM Social Value Network are now working with GM Growth Company to realise ideas from Jam & Justice's appreciative inquiry.
- Spatial planning: the GMCA took note of the work on strategic planning, seeking advice from UK RJC researchers on how best to involve the VCSE sector in consultation on the new Spatial Framework.

## Enabling trans-local learning, exchanges and networks to realise just cities

### Participatory Planning roundtable

At the UK and Ireland “Alternative Futures for Planning” conference (Sheffield, September 2018), Realising Just Cities UK hosted a roundtable discussion exploring possibilities for participation in spatial development. The discussion focused on practices in Gothenburg, London and Greater Manchester, with input from community-based organisation Just Space. The discussion fed into the work of twinned Participatory Cities research projects: The Impact of Participation, with the Royal Stockholm Institute of Technology; and Whose Knowledge Matters.

During the roundtable, Victoria Habermehl reflected on the learning opportunities offered by such comparative conversations: “Sweden has often been used as the best example of participation you could get, but . . . some of this participation isn’t really changing institutional processes.” Comparing different contexts offers the chance “to question what sort of participation we want, and how we can start making these institutional changes.”

Watch Beth, Victoria and partner Nazem Tahvilzadeh talk about this work: [tiny.cc/RJCalfutures](https://tiny.cc/RJCalfutures)

Realising Just Cities researchers are committed to facilitating connections within and between decision-makers, civil society and residents. We have engaged decision-makers in a collaborative learning journey through creating informal spaces for exchange and international networking. Trans-local learning is an important element in opening up spaces for learning and dissemination often reserved for academics. Trans-localism points to the need for meaningful interactions between networked individuals and groups of similarly thinking people beyond the local. What is at stake is a sense of belonging through shared perspectives and concerns that transcend local boundaries.

City officials in Greater Manchester and Sheffield have engaged in scheduled fieldtrips to Cape Town and Gothenburg, supplemented with participation in the International Observatory for Participatory Democracy (see red box). At a national level, RJC researchers also facilitated the first get-together of British cities working toward the Sustainable Development Goals (with UKSSD), hosted a Northern Food Network meetup with Sustainable Food Cities, and generated lessons for the nascent English Co-Production Network.

Exchange has been a central strategic principle of the Community-Led Organising project, specifically through a reciprocal exchange programme with Slack/Slum Dwellers International Federations (see Manchester—Muungano Exchange, right), and other local and national meetings. Enabling direct sharing of experiences and opportunities was critical in building local capacity and networks.

Linked to the Housing Futures project, two teams of housing activists, academics and practitioners from Gothenburg, Manchester and Liverpool also took part in a learning exchange to swap ideas about how neighbourhoods can be transformed by communities. In the UK, Swedish delegates visited grassroots co-operatives and community land trusts in inner-city areas and heard from a cohousing group. In Gothenburg, UK participants visited areas of the city that had been dealing with gentrification and spoke to people involved in projects with community gardening and anti-racism activity. The group returned inspired with ideas, tools and tactics to provoke change back home.

### Cape Town roundtable

Ideals of “communicative planning” are literally moving out on the streets. But how participatory is planning in reality? Can small pockets of inspirational practice be identified and replicated? The 2018 Realising Just Cities conference in Cape Town provided a second opportunity for a participatory planning roundtable, comparing practices in the periphery of the South African city with the Swedish city of Malmö.

Vanessa Watson, Professor of City Planning at the University of Cape Town suggested that “sharply conflicting worldviews” in the Global South necessitate a theory of state-society engagement that places “conflicts and not consensus at the centre of the planning process”. Mavis Manyathi of the Informal Settlement Network (ISN) described how women in different areas of Cape Town are co-producing knowledge to be channelled into the planning of previously neglected township areas, based on the principle “nothing for us without us”. “[We] often say and experience that it is difficult to engage people in our processes, but when people take their own initiatives we don’t know what to do. It is not because we don’t want to—but we do not have the organisation for it,” confessed Malmö city planner Hannah Wadman.

The roundtable was organised and delivered by Victoria Habermehl and Beth Perry, with its data feeding into Whose Knowledge Matters.

**“It was really useful and inspiring to hear how other cities are using the SDGs . . . to get a better understanding of the benefits and opportunities as well as limitations and challenges of various approaches”**

—Interim Head of Sustainability,  
Sheffield City Council

## Manchester-Muungano Exchange

“With savings we can do wonders . . . ” In June 2018, six local residents from Salford, Stockport and Manchester travelled to Nairobi with Sophie King to learn first-hand about twenty years of mobilisation by the powerful savings-based movement Muungano Wa Wanavijiji, the Kenyan affiliate of the social movement Slum/Shack Dwellers International. The trip was part of the project Community-led organising: Seeing the inner city from the South.

The visitors identified similar concerns about housing and how to provide for the next generation, and admired the spirit of cooperation among the Kenyan activists. Together they discussed how to persuade people in their local communities to get involved in this kind of activity.

Read about this exchange in more detail: [gmsavers.org.uk/2018/08/](https://gmsavers.org.uk/2018/08/)



Hosts and visitors pictured during the Muungano exchange.

## MARAN: The Municipalist Action, Research, and Advocacy Network

MARAN is a network for researchers and activists looking to support the development of a “new municipalism” agenda in the UK. MARAN seeks to provide an interface between those undertaking municipalist research, advocacy and organising in the UK, and the international municipalist community; and to understand the limits of municipalism and put the concept, broadly defined, in its place alongside urbanism, localism and broader scales of political action.

Founding members include the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), the New Economics Foundation, and the Centre for Urban Research on Austerity (De Montfort University), as well as Sheffield’s Urban Institute. An initial meeting was organised by RJC UK researcher Bert Russell, with support from Beth Perry, in January 2019 and the network co-hosted a day programme of roundtable sessions at the 2019 Royal Geographical Society’s conference: Experimental Recipes for a Radical Municipalism.

## International Observatory on Participatory Democracy

In 2018, the University of Sheffield’s Urban Institute joined the International Observatory on Participatory Democracy (IOPD), a worldwide network of local governments, organisations and research centres working together to better understand and improve local democracy. That November, we sent a cross-sector delegation to IOPD’s annual conference, with officers from the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, co-researchers from Jam and Justice, and Sheffield academics Bert Russell and Beth Perry. Together, the delegation ran a workshop on “how to co-produce the city”, seeking to share lessons from Greater Manchester and pick up new ideas from international participants.

Following this event, the GMCA participants observed that “there is much to be gained from Greater Manchester being involved in this type of international forum both in terms of networks and learning”; “experimentation and being brave enough to try different approaches are key ingredients in bringing about positive change”. Jam and Justice co-researcher Alice Toomer-McAlpine concluded that “Attending the conference with such a mixed group . . . gave us all a range of different perspectives and responses to the ideas presented at the conference, making it easier to reflect from a wider GM-based point of view.”



Discussing ways to co-produce the city, Barcelona, November 2018. Photograph: UN International Observatory for Participatory Democracy.



GM Savers activists planning at the inner-city exchange, July 2019.

## Stimulating infrastructures for action and building capacity

Our projects have stimulated enabling infrastructures, brought people together and supported organisations and individuals to take action.

Mums Mart are now co-founders of **GM Savers**, a charitable women-led network spreading the word about how savings enable community-led change. 400 people signed up to learn about community-led housing with Housing Futures. Asked about organisational benefits, **GM Housing Action** report increased legitimacy to complement a robust research base. GMHA are now working with the Combined Authority and other stakeholders to create an inclusive regional enabling hub for community-led housing projects.

Capacity-building work continues in Greater Manchester through cross-sector Action Learning Sets, with participants united by a desire to build a community of practice around co-production. We have sown other seeds for change through work with councils, trade unions, schools and community organisations across Yorkshire and the Humber.

Many of those involved in Realising Just Cities UK have taken their learning back into their organisations. Based in the Openshaw neighbourhood, **Manchester Settlement** offers housing, community and childcare services. Its Chief Executive Adrian Ball, a member of Jam and Justice's Action Research Collective, identified the organisation's common goal—"creating cycles of community change"—as a result of reflecting on the decision-making strategies employed within Jam and Justice. Having a coherent goal helps Adrian and his colleagues make key decisions about future funding bids, with a more open-ended approach to service delivery. Julie Asumu, another member of the Action Research Collective, has also testified to the importance of practices learned through Jam and Justice, helping her handle a crisis when her community organisation, Chrysalis Family Centre, suddenly needed a new venue.

**Carbon Coop** have formed lasting partnerships with project stakeholders, recruiting one co-researcher to their staff team. Director Jonathan told us: "This collaborative work raised our profile . . . as a serious player in the municipal energy sector, and helped cement our role as an advocate for a citizen-led energy transition. . . . We're starting to deploy some of the lessons learnt on a European scale—and to make new international links and collaborations."

Digital tools and creative methods have helped build infrastructural capacity. Digital resources produced through the project, such as sheffield.org.uk and gmfoodforum.org, provide the means to link up good work and forge shared strategies. TransformGM.org, part of the Jam and Justice project, represents an effort to connect up transformative economic actors in Greater Manchester, while GM Decides probed the potential for online spaces to increase women's participation in policy-making. RJC UK researchers also have an active role in collaborative digital mapping through Urban Alternatives (see blue box), with the ambition of shaping international action around urban solidarity and justice.



## Urban Alternatives

From citizen-controlled energy companies to citizen-led platforms, from policies that promote the solidarity economy to innovative procurement strategies, people are demonstrating that alternative ways of living are possible. Urban Alternatives ([urbanalternatives.org](http://urbanalternatives.org)) is a collaborative mapping process which identifies, promotes and collaboratively learns from transformational urban change. Bert Russell contributed to this European project through work on Jam and Justice and Participatory Cities to understand and map initiatives emerging from social movements that are claiming the right to the city, occupying urban space, demanding social justice, democratic participation, cultural spaces and economic transformations. A central aim of Urban Alternatives is to make positive transformation visible and prove that that change is possible.



Browse the collaborative map online at [urbanalternatives.org](http://urbanalternatives.org).

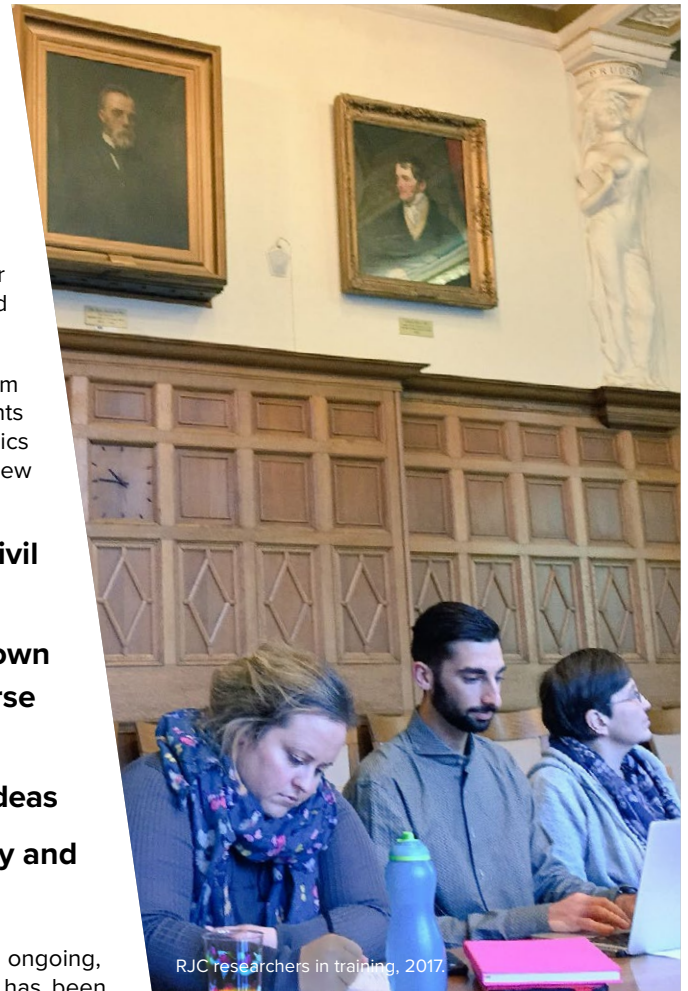
Steering group members include Madrid 129, European Alternatives, Transnational Institute, Habitat International Coalition, MISTRA Urban Futures, Sheffield University Urban Institute, University of Aalborg, RIPESS Europe, P2P Foundation, Commons Network and the Global Platform for the Right to the City.

Change is made by individuals. Some of the best impacts, and most inspiring stories, are from those who have been directly involved. Time and again our partners have told us how valuable they have found their participation and how, in many cases, it has been life-changing. Some people have started new businesses, others have taken new jobs, some have gone on to re-join academic study—motivated to continue their learning experience. Seasoned activists have strengthened existing agendas and aligned around new ones; whilst some—including those in local government positions—have found their participation has (re)ignited their commitment to urban justice and stirred up latent activism.

Learning goes two ways. As professional researchers, the RJC team were also impacted by the experience, gaining new skills, insights and practices. In Sheffield, workshops with early career academics and support for self-organised peer networking are helping new researcher-practitioners gain necessary skills.

- ✓ **Working closely alongside policy makers, civil society groups and residents**
- ✓ **Creating intermediary spaces that break down boundaries and enable recognition of diverse forms of expertise**
- ✓ **Facilitating residents to develop their own ideas**
- ✓ **Fostering coalitions-of-the-willing regionally and internationally**

Much has been achieved since 2016, and many activities are ongoing, driven by the passions and energies of those involved. Time has been invested in building relationships and initiating long-term trust-based collaborations. UK RJC researchers have worked in partnership to seed and enable movement towards more progressive and just urban futures. This is a long-term agenda. Individual RJC researchers are already committed to taking work forward in different ways, in their current and future positions. But innovative funding and enabling institutions are needed to support and nurture dedicated researchers to work in partnerships to realise just cities. We have shown what can be done when this is in place. The challenge is for decision-makers with resources and influence—within and outside the university—to make programmes such as Realising Just Cities UK the new normal, combining excellence and relevance to address persistent social, environmental and spatial inequalities in our cities.



# Just urban research?

Coalitions and movements, campaigns and debate  
are needed to challenge the market and state.

Responsibility:

holding those to account who wield power and influence,  
resources to flaunt.

Grassroots action alone can't work on its own –  
we must speak back to power to shift the tone and content of policy,  
get inside the hive mind, see how it ticks  
and through knowledge then find pathways to transform;  
different ways of seeing, modes of collaboration.  
Not individual me-ing.

In interviews, focus groups, out on the street  
the same things come back from the people we meet.  
We hear change is needed; the themes are the same.  
Nomenclature morphs but what's in a name?  
Let's find common ground with values that matter –  
one thousand flowers bloom whilst communities scatter.  
Top down, bottom up, different but the same –  
each side all too focussed with playing their game.

Rival sides of the fence that make us overlook that, sometimes, at least  
it's the same book we're writing;  
same things we are citing;  
same problems to fix in this complex mix;  
this fractured world in which insults are hurled  
across the divide between them and us,  
local and global,  
as if we weren't all standing here on the same planet.  
These issues concern structure, practice and forms  
but leave to one side the question of norms.  
We don't want consensus but passion and vim;  
We don't have to sing the exact same hymn.  
But what is the heart of a collective endeavour linking global and local, state citizen together?  
Step back from bureaucracy in the committee –  
let's pay attention to the 'Right to the City':  
justice in procedures, increasing distribution, diversity, difference, tolerance, recognition.

Signs of hope blossom;  
Excitement abounds that there are alternatives doing the rounds.  
Sharing, learning, circularity, degrowth, participation increase in popularity.  
Micro-finance, crowd-sourced greening give sustainability back its meaning.  
Biospheric vertical farming makes industrial landscapes charming.  
Asset-based development through community hubs,

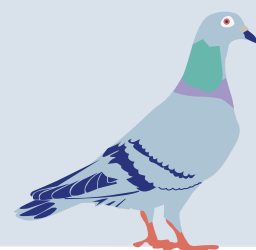
whether cafes, health centres, allotments or pubs.  
Arts-based action for social cohesion  
transforming places through cultural infusion.  
Releasing individuals' inherent creativity  
by boosting their ideas in a tide of festivity.

A spectrum of initiatives in search of the 'real' –  
prefiguring the ways we might re-make the deal  
between power and people, people and planet.  
Social, ecological, spatial –  
let's bring down bastions of palatial ignorance  
which construct the world as divisible,  
leaving possibilities and hope invisible.  
Resilience, inclusiveness and valuing community:  
such things demand justice with impunity.

So far so good, but what happens now?  
Course of action determined, the question is how?  
If pathways seem fixed, huge efforts required,  
let's find new ways to get inspired –  
Not carrots or sticks with targets to measure  
but social innovation to merge purpose with pleasure.  
Skills and expertise, an engaged university –  
connected epistemological diversity.  
Respecting boundaries, avoiding co-optation  
whilst making space for reflexive cogitation.

Call it what you will: co-creation, co-production.  
Feedback loops between theory and action –  
looking for the gaps, interstitial cracks,  
where understanding flourishes through learning to the max.  
Complex problems, wicked issues, integration needed  
between our siloed worlds; a search for wisdom seeded.  
Evidence-led policy, not policy-led evidence –  
we need critique with constructive benevolence.  
To make this work needs funding innovations  
challenging the rules and changing expectations.  
At the univer-city coalface – no chance of getting bored  
in making complex partnerships – high risk but high reward.  
Let's direct research towards this vision  
forging impact with excellence to underpin the mission.  
Governance, justice, coproduction –  
a transformative triad with global traction.

**A poem by Beth Perry 2019 (1st edition 2016).**



# What have we written?

## Books, journal articles, book chapters, popular press and news

Cities, experiments and the logics of the knowledge economy. (2016) Book chapter by Tim May and Beth Perry.

Cities, universities and urban knowledge exchange: lessons from a regional experiment in the UK. (2016) Book chapter by Tim May and Beth Perry.

Is another urbanization possible? (2016) Article in *Regions* by Bert Russell.

Knowledge for Just Sustainability. (2016) Article in *Local Environment* by Tim May and Beth Perry.

Understanding Social Accountability: Politics, Power and Building New Social Contracts. (2016) Article in *Journal of Development Studies* by Sam Hickey and Sophie King.

A mysterious death in Argentina draws attention to indigenous land struggles. (2017) Article in *The Conversation* by Nick Clare, Liz Mason-Deese and Victoria Habermehl.

Beyond Critique: The Value of Co-Production in Realising Just Cities? (2017) Article in *Local Environment* by Beth Perry and Mark Atherton.

Building Democracy from Below: Lessons from Western Uganda. (2017) Article in *Journal of Development Studies* by Sophie King and Sam Hickey.

Cities and the Knowledge Economy: Promise, Politics and Possibility. (2017) Book by Tim May and Beth Perry.

Eight Lessons from Barcelona en Comú on How to Take Back Control. (2017) Article in *Open Democracy* by Bert Russell and Oscar Reyes.

Fearless Cities: The New Urban Movements. (2017) Article in *Red Pepper* by Bert Russell and Oscar Reyes.

Navigating the rapids of urban development: lessons from the Biospheric Foundation, Salford. (2017) Book chapter by Beth Perry, Vincent Walsh and Catherine Barlow.

Radical Municipalism: Demanding the Future. (2017) Article in *Open Democracy* by Bert Russell & Plan C.

Reflexivity: The Essential Guide. (2017) Book by Tim May and Beth Perry.

The Future of Sustainable Cities: Governance, Policy and Knowledge. (2017) Special Issue of *Local Environment* journal, by Tim May and Simon Marvin.

Urban Crisis: Bonfire of Vanities to Find Opportunities in the Ashes. (2017) Article in *Urban Studies Journal Online* by Tim May.

Co-Producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation. (2018) Special Issue of *Politics and Governance* journal, by Liz Richardson, Catherine Durose and Beth Perry.

Connecting the dots: The politics of governing urban climate adaptation innovations through transnational municipal networks. (2018) Book chapter by Ryan Bellinson.

Craft Metrics to Value Co-Production. (2018) Article in *Nature* by Catherine Durose, Liz Richardson and Beth Perry.

Jackson Rising. (2018) Article in *Open Democracy* by Bert Russell.

Learning pathways and the governance of innovations in urban climate change resilience and adaptation. (2018) Article in *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning* by Ryan Bellinson and Eric Chu.

Networks of alternative economies in Buenos Aires; markets as spaces of contestation. (2018). Book chapter by Victoria Habermehl, N. Gallardo, and X. Arqueros.

Organising for Co-Production: Local Interaction Platforms for Urban Sustainability. (2018) Article in *Politics and Governance* by Beth Perry, Zarina Patel, Ylva Norén Bretzer and Meritt Polk.

Scaling up, or scaling out? Trans-local solidarity and the new municipalist movements (2018) Article in *ROAR Magazine* by Bert Russell and L. Roth.

Territories in Contestation: Relational Power in Latin America. (2018) Article in *Territory, Politics, Governance* by Nick Clare, Victoria Habermehl and Liz Mason-Deese.

What Can an Institution Do? Towards Public-Common Partnerships and a New Common-Sense. (2018) Article in *Renewal* by Bert Russell and Keir Milburn.

Beyond the Local Trap: New Municipalism and the Rise of the Fearless Cities. (2019) Article in *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* by Bert Russell.

Building the new left economics: public-common partnerships and new circuits of ownership. (2019) Article in *Open Democracy* by Bert Russell and Keir Milburn.

Cultural Heritage Entanglements: Festivals as Integrative Sites for Sustainable Development. (2019) Article in *International Journal of Heritage Studies* by Beth Perry, Laura Ager and Rike Sitas

Cultural Intermediaries Connecting Communities: Revisiting Approaches to Cultural Engagement. (2019) Book edited by Phil Jones, Beth Perry, and Paul Long.

Evidence and Insight: In Search of the Distinctiveness of the University as a Site of Knowledge Production. (2019) Article in *Insights* by Tim May.

Fearless Cities Municipalism: Experiments in Autogestion. (2019) Book chapter (and article) by Bert Russell.

Festivals can transform cities by making way for overlooked people and cultures. (2019) Article in *The Conversation* by Beth Perry and Rike Sitas.

Food Systems Sustainability: An Examination of Different Viewpoints on Food System Change. (2019) Article in *Sustainability* by Gareth Haysom, E. Gunilla Almered Olsson, Mirke Dymitrow, Paul Opiyo, Nick Taylor Buck, Michael Oloko, Charlotte Spring, Kristina Fermskog, Karin Ingelhart, Shelley Kotze and Stephen Gaya Agong

Governing the creative city: the practice, value and effectiveness of cultural intermediation. (2019) Book chapter by Beth Perry.

How "Public-Common Partnerships" Can Help Us Take Back What's Ours. (2019) Article in *Novara* by Bert Russell and Keir Milburn.



How social innovation can support citizen participation. (2019) Article in Open Access Government by Beth Perry, Catherine Durose and Liz Richardson.

Moving towards Hybridity: The Example of Citizen Participation. (2019) Article in Social Policy and Administration by Liz Richardson, Catherine Durose and Beth Perry.

Public-Common Partnerships: Building New Circuits of Collective Ownership. (2019) Article in Common Wealth by Bert Russell and Keir Milburn.

Producing Territory: Territorial Organizing of Movements in Buenos Aires. SI Contested Urban Territories. (2019) Article in Geographica Helvetica by Liz Mason-Deese, Victoria Habermehl, and Nick Clare.

Real or fake? Crisis and Self-managed economies in Buenos Aires. (2019) Article by Victoria Habermehl in Speculative Infrastructures and Cities-in-the-making: workshop magazine.

The next phase of the Preston Model is the Public Commons Partnership. (2019) Article in Citymetric by Bert Russell and Keir Milburn

Thinking Sociologically. (2019) Book by Tim May and Zygmunt Bauman.

Three Tyrannies of Participatory Governance. (2019) Article in Journal of Chinese Governance by Liz Richardson, Catherine Durose and Beth Perry.

Towards cultural ecologies: why urban cultural policy must embrace multiple cultural agendas. (2019) Book chapter by Beth Perry and J. Symons.

Cultural heritage and improvised music in European festivals. (2020) Book chapter by Tony Whyton and Beth Perry.

Participatory Cities from the “Outside-In”: The Value of Comparative Learning. (2020) Book chapter by Beth Perry and Bert Russell.

Social Research: Issues, Methods and Process. (2020) Book by Tim May and Beth Perry.

## Reports and policy briefings

How can we govern cities differently? The promise and practices of co-production. (2019) Beth Perry, Catherine Durose, Liz Richardson and the Action Research Collective.

Co-Producing the City | Jam and Justice: Co-Producing Urban Governance for Social Innovation, ESRC & Mistra Urban Futures. In Impact. (2019) Beth Perry, Bert Russell, Catherine Durose, Liz Richardson and Alex Whinnom.

Councillors and Communities. (2019) Jam & Justice and North West Employers.

Life Lessons. (2019) The Jam and Justice Group.

Life Lessons: Technical Appendix. (2019) Dan Silver, Suraya Skelland, Natalie Hindson, Joanne Hunt, Paul Maher, Beth Perry.

Localising the Sustainable Development Goals. (2019) Policy Briefing from Sheffield Urban Institute and UK Stakeholders for Sustainable Development. Kristina Diprose, Nick Taylor Buck, Beth Perry, and Emily Auckland.

Platting, Pigeons and PFI: A Community Map of Miles Platting. (2019) Residents of Miles Platting and Whose Knowledge Matters researchers.

Realising Just Cities UK: An Overview of Activity, 2016–2019. (2019) Beth Perry, Kristina Diprose, Sophie King, Vicky Habermehl, Iona Hine, Tim May, Bert Russell, Vicky Simpson, Charlie Spring, and Nick Taylor Buck, with Alex McVicar-Payling, Jenny Patient, and Ryan Bellinson.

Space in Common: Key Messages. (2019) The Democratic Society and Jam and Justice.

Testing the 21st Century Councillor Framework. (2019) Dawn Kelly, North West Employers and Jam & Justice.

Transform GM: A Pilot Study of the Social & Solidarity Economy in Greater Manchester. (2019) Bertie Russell and Benjamin Lear.

Whose Knowledge Matters? Platting, Pigeons and PFI. (2019) [Leaflet and] exhibition as part of #Peterloo2019.

An Inquiry into the Challenge of Care at Home. (2018) Inquiry participants with Jez Hall, Amanda Preece, Jayne McFadyen, and Katie Finney.

Everyday Politics. (2018) Aba Graham, Daniel Nkrumah, Saraswati Sinha, Elaine Unegbu, Jane Gregory, Nidhi Minocha, Pete Simms, Tony Wright and Steven Calver, with Catherine Durose, Dan Silver, Sarah Whitehead, Julie Asumu, and Amanda Bickerton.

Festivals as Integrative Sites: Valuing Tangible and Intangible Heritage for Sustainable Development. (2018) Beth Perry, Laura Ager and Rike Sitas with Stephen Agong, Beth Aggett, Chiara Badiali, Patrick Hayombe, Walter van der Leur, Annemiek van der Meijden, Fredrick Odede, Loes Rusch, Naomi Roux, Gail Skelly, Karen Shannon, David Simon, Olle Stenbäck, Tony Whyton, Marline Listette Wilders, Gloria Dawson and Vicky Simpson.

GM Energy Futures 2020–2035: Municipal Energy Scenarios Explored. (2018) Jonathan Atkinson, Britt Jurgensen and Hannah Knox, with Ben Aylott, Bertie Russell, Laura Williams, and Matt Fawcett.

Housing Futures: Next Steps: Recommendations of the Housing Futures Research Partnership. (2018) Richard Goulding.

Housing Futures: What can Community-Led Housing Achieve for Greater Manchester? (2018) Richard Goulding with Hannah Berry, Mick Davies, Sophie King, Carl Makin, Julie Ralph, and Isaac Rose.

People’s Procurement: Jam & Justice: co-producing urban governance for social innovation. (2018) CLES.

Our Socio-Ecological Projects. (2017) Flyer. Realising Just Cities.

**Visit [realisingjustcities-rjc.org](https://realisingjustcities-rjc.org) for full publication details, including the latest reports available to download. The Realising Just Cities website is also the best place to learn more about our creative outputs.**

**Videos produced by the UK RJC team and collaborators can be seen on the Realising Just Cities UK video hub ([tiny.cc/RJCvideos](https://tiny.cc/RJCvideos)).**





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Bruff • Gary • Gauthier Guerin • Ged Reek • Gerry Stone • Gill Fordham • Gill Valentine • Gill Walters • Glasgow Council • Gleadless Valley Residents Group • Global Development Institute (Manchester) • Global Justice Now • Gloria Dawson • GM Food Partnership • GM Good Food • GM Housing Action • GM Low Carbon Hub • GM Savers • GM Social Value Network • GMCVO • Good Food GM • Good Things Foundation • Gordon Dabinett • Graham Crow • Graham Petersen • Grantham Centre (TUoS) • Greater Manchester Combined Authority • Greater Manchester Food Partnership Board • Greater Together Manchester • Green Futures Associates • Greener Jobs Alliance • Greg Challis • Greg Davis • Greg Fell • Hamish Cunningham • Hannah Berry • Hannah Knox • Hannah Lambie-Mumford • Hannah Lee Chalk • Hannah Peake • Hannah Postles • Hans Sackers • Harpurhey Neighbourhood Project • Healthy Me, Healthy Communities • Heeley City Farm • Helen Clayton • Helen Kennedy • Hilary Hamer • Hilary Turley • HIVE IT • Homebaked CLT • 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In search of alternatives, spaces for hope and progressive urban futures, how can academics work in partnership to move beyond critique and realise more just cities?

**By working with residents, activists and community groups**

**By exploring municipal co-production**

**By transforming practices, processes and sites of knowledge production**

This report showcases work undertaken by the Realising Just Cities UK partnership, hosted by the Urban Institute with colleagues in the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Sheffield 2016–2019.

