

Supporting Housing Justice in Indian Housing Policy

Anandh Krishnan Madasamy & Habitat International Coalition



Dissertation Title

Housing Justice: State policies in support of the social production of habitat.

The Problem

“Social Production of Habitat” creates living spaces, urban components, and homes controlled by the people who produce them, with support from not-for-profit social agents. Habitat International Coalition support this process in helping those who can't access housing through the market, credit, or subsidies to realize their right to housing and the city.

What We Did

The project sought to develop a deeper understanding of the Social Production of Habitat concept and its adaptation in the context of Indian housing policies. The insights will be collated to contribute more widely to support housing justice in Indian housing policy.

Our Hopes for the Project

The initial insights from the project revealed that Indian housing policy is top-down rather than socially produced, with beneficiaries not involved in decision-making. The research was conducted in collaboration with Habitat International Coalition, in hopes that the project will drive new directions for the organisation and their work within India.



Student collaborator

Anandh Krishnan Madasamy



Mapping norms against UK oil and gas expansion

Clarissa Salmon & Stop Rosebank community



Student collaborator
Clarissa Salmon

Dissertation Title

The development of norms against oil and gas expansion in the UK since COP26.

The Problem

The climate science is clear: continued oil and gas expansion is not compatible with net zero. Yet successive UK governments have committed to new oil and gas projects that will lock us into fossil fuel production well beyond our 2050 net zero target.

What We Did

My dissertation aim was to map the development of norms against oil and gas infrastructure expansion in the UK. Specifically, I sought to analyse the network of campaigns, their theories of change and their framings of the 'no more oil and gas' demand. These research questions were selected in collaboration with other fossil fuel phase-out activists to enable strategising and strengthening of the movement. For my methods, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 campaigners from 12 groups and undertook a supplementary discourse analysis.

Our Hopes for the Project

I am hoping to share the finding in written forms- the dissertation itself, and a condensed "movement primer"- but also to action key recommendations over time. This research is rooted in an ongoing commitment to scholar-activism: my fossil fuel phase-out campaigning preceded and informed the research journey, and will continue after my MSc! Ultimately, I hope to use this research to reinforce the movement and contribute towards fossil fuel phase-out in the UK.

Exploring youth voice with The Mix

Hannah Middle & The Mix



Student collaborator

Hannah Middle



Dissertation Title

Youth-led or just another tick box exercise: Exploring young people's and employees' perceptions and experiences of youth voice at Unite Youth.

The Problem

The Mix is a digital youth charity that prides itself on being youth-led. They wanted to assess whether their current Youth Voice Structure is enabling meaningful youth engagement. They hoped to understand young people's perceptions and experiences of shaping the charity, and staff perception and experiences of working with young people. They also sought to understand the factors that facilitate and prevent youth involvement.

What We Did

I met with the Mix to co-design the research idea and decide which research questions would be most useful for their evaluation. I conducted eight digital interviews with young people and members of staff at the Mix. I used a reflexive thematic analysis to generate themes and answer the research questions. In previous evaluation the Mix have relied on survey data, so my qualitative methodology enabled me to capture a more subjective and in-depth depiction of youth and staff experiences.

Our Hopes for the Project

I have categorised my initial findings as outcomes of engagement, facilitators of engagement and barriers to engagement. One recurring observation among participants was that the Mix could improve accessibility enable broader and more in-depth youth participation. I will deliver my findings to staff at the Mix in a presentation. This research will be used to to inform their annual Youth Voice Strategy and enable improved implementation of their youth-led ethos.

Capturing campaigns to end raw sewage pollution

Jemima Gibbons & Surfers Against Sewage



Photographed by Jemima Gibbons



Student collaborator
Jemima Gibbons



Dissertation Title

Murky Waters: conflicting imaginaries, competing narratives and power dynamics in the campaign to end raw sewage pollution on the south east coast

The Problem

In 2023, Southern Water reported over 29,000 untreated sewage “spills” into seas, lakes and rivers in the south east of England. In Hastings, the problem was worsened by wastewater floods which devastated shops and homes in the town centre.

What We Did

I volunteered with environmental groups in Hastings for 6 weeks in order to better understand different narratives in the campaign to end raw sewage pollution, with particular focus on the digital layer (data, apps and algorithms). My main partner was Surfers Against Sewage. I organised a paddle-out as part of a national day of action and helped build relationships between the national organisation and campaigners and politicians in Hastings.

Our Hopes for the Project

My findings focus on the impact of ongoing raw sewage pollution on everyday lives in Hastings, the meaning of infrastructure and how people, especially activists, step up to bridge the gaps when infrastructure fails.

Promoting mental health in the skate community

Morgan Love & Ben Raemers Foundation



Dissertation Title

An Evaluation of The Ben Raemers Foundation's SMiLe Films for Promoting Mental Health Awareness in the Skateboarding Community

The Problem

Mental health is often overlooked in the skateboarding community. After the 2019 suicide of pro skateboarder Ben Raemers, the Ben Raemers Foundation was created to raise awareness and prevent suicide. This project seeks to evaluate one of their awareness efforts, SMiLe Films, a YouTube series where skateboarders discuss mental health, to determine its effectiveness and contribution toward their mission.

What we did

This project looked at data from eight SMiLe Films, including interview transcripts, viewer metrics, and comments. Key themes were identified from the interviews to spot patterns in how skateboarders discuss mental health. Viewer engagement, such as watch counts, likes, and comments, were examined to compare the Films.

Our hopes for the project

The evaluation saw how SMiLe Films promote mental health awareness on YouTube. The interviews highlighted key issues like mental health and substance use in skateboarding. Positive viewer feedback shows the Films are creating a supportive space, which is key to the mission of Ben Raemers Foundation.



Student collaborator

Morgan Love



Exploring trust among community leaders

Oona Miller & Citizens UK



Dissertation Title

Understanding trust in community engagement with health institutions – an exploration of Community Leaders’ trust-building experiences in South London Listens.

The Problem

South London Listens (SLL) originated as a programme of community engagement by South London NHS mental health trusts to address mental health needs arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. With Citizens UK’s involvement, it has developed into a multi-year initiative of campaigning and programme delivery, grounded in community organising methods, bringing together community organisations with partner institutions responsible for decision-making on mental health, including the NHS trusts and local authorities.

What we did

This project worked with Citizens UK to evaluate trust as component of relationship-building between community organisations and decision-makers. The project used qualitative semi-structured interviews with Community Leaders involved in SLL.

Our hopes for the project

With this project trust can improve and autonomous community—institution collaboration can develop. Insights from the project will be synthesised into a briefing note for Citizens UK and research participants. A learning session will also be co-designed with Citizens UK for delivery to their Community Organisers involved in SLL. Similar sessions may also be designed and carried out with Community Leaders, and with stakeholders from SLL partner institutions.



Student collaborator

Oona Miller



Exploring Climate Change Education in UK Schools

Robin Heuermann & The Green Schools Project



Student collaborator
Robin Heuermann



Dissertation Title

Implementing Climate Change Education in UK Schools: A Qualitative Exploration with Pupils and Teacher

The Problem

The Green Schools Project have created their own climate change curriculum for UK schools in response to the lack of climate change coverage in the national curriculum. They strongly believe that children growing up in a world altered by the climate crisis need the knowledge and tools of climate change education.

What We Did

This research sought to understand the challenges and successes of implementing the Green Schools Project's curriculum across X schools with the hopes of improving uptake and implementation in the future. Research was conducted through a mixed methods approach involving teacher interviews, student focus groups and surveys, which enabled specific feedback on the curriculum as well as broader reflections on pedagogy and educational impacts.

Our Hopes for the Project

Preliminary findings demonstrate the importance of practical learning, and suggest that accessibility needs to be improved for children with a range of SEN and socio-economic backgrounds. The recommendations of the research will help the Green Schools Project to improve their curriculum, learning outcomes and reach.

Capturing community in Hull gardens

Will Hale & Rooted in Hull



Photographed by Will Hale



Student collaborator

Will Hale



Dissertation Title

Rooted in wastelands: a study of community gardening and socio-ecological connection(s) in the margins of post-industrial Hull

The Problem

The main approach to helping address 'decline' in post-industrial cities across the UK is top-down regeneration. These projects often redevelop former industrial spaces by giving them 'new' functions (hotels, apartments, 'green' spaces). But these top-down modes of regenerating often overlook the different ways in which inner-city communities still feel and are affected by the impacts of post-industrial change.

What we did

The project took place with Rooted in Hull, a community garden on a former dock site. Using photo-elicitation, volunteers and staff took photos reflecting their experiences, which were then featured in a photo exhibition at the garden. The goal was to understand how urban gardening can help Hull's inner-city communities connect with their industrial pasts and envision a future, offering a more inclusive approach than top-down regeneration.

Our hopes for the project

As part of the project, I spent a fair bit of time volunteering in the garden, too. Overall, the ambition is to shed light on the positive role which these community garden initiatives can play in fostering connection and opening up more inclusive narratives of change in post-industrial cities such as Hull.

Reframing language to improve HIV Prevention

Maksida Sabackic & Positive East



Dissertation Title

Investigating the influence of provider communication and language reframing on HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) uptake among Black African and Caribbean women: a systematic review

The Problem

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV has been available in the UK since 2017, but its uptake among women, particularly Black African and Caribbean (BAC) women, has been low. This project examines communication barriers between BAC women and PrEP service providers, emphasizing the need for reframing risk-based language in order to destigmatise and normalise PrEP as a tool of sexual health empowerment.

What we did

This project is a systematic review developed in collaboration with Positive East. We evaluated the influence that health consultations and language used by health service providers has on the uptake of HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medication among Black African and Caribbean women.

Our hopes for the project

The insights from this project can guide providers in recognising the need for reframing risk-based language, thereby enhancing discussions about PrEP with BAC women. The findings will be co-designed into a community product to serve as a supplemental educational tool for reframing risk-based language to improve consultations with BAC women about PrEP.



Student collaborator

Maksida Sabackic

 **PositiveEast**
better futures for positive people

 Volunteering
Service

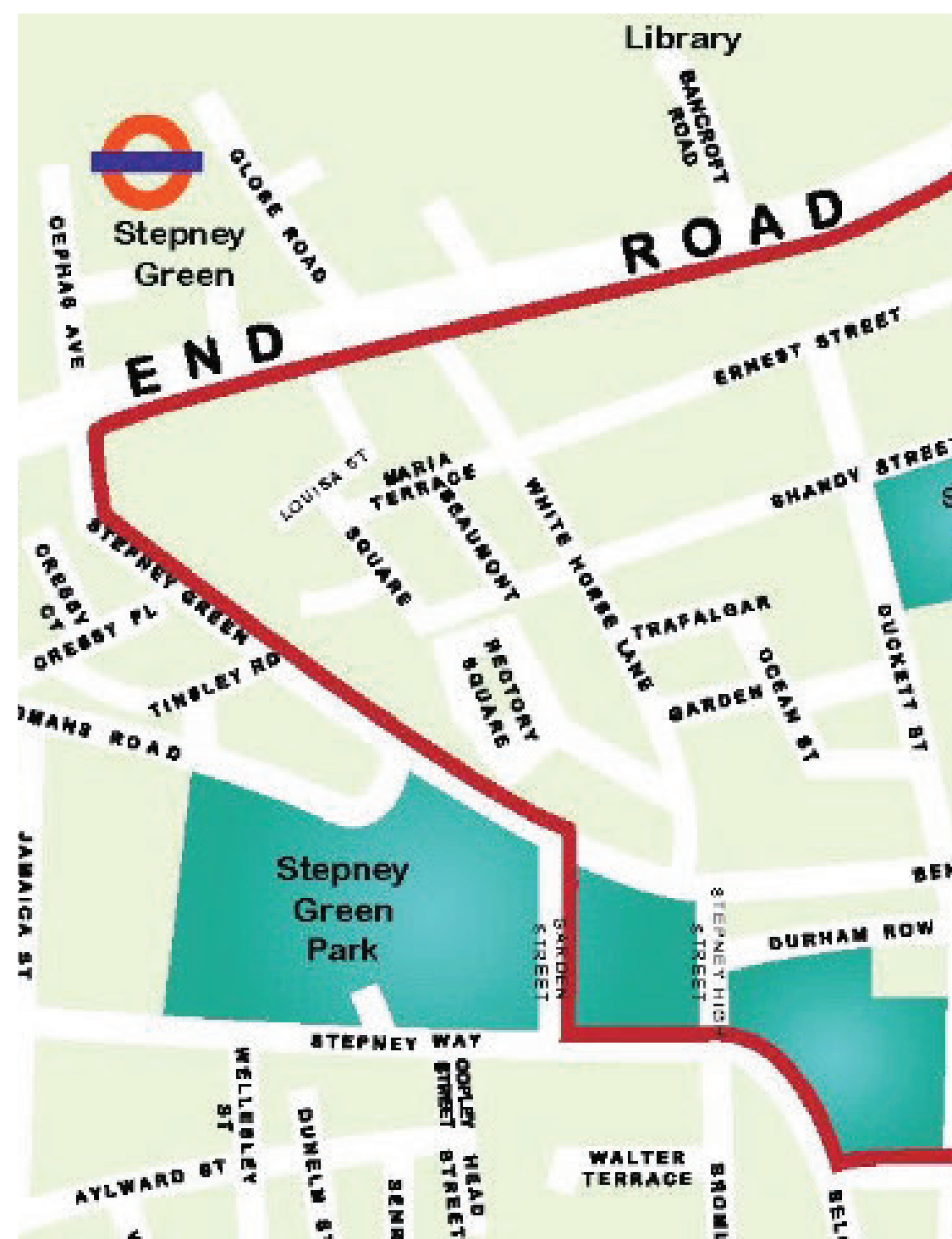
 STUDENTS'
UNION UCL

 UCL

 COMMUNITY
RESEARCH
INITIATIVE

Evaluating school meal policies in Tower Hamlets

Ting Kiat Ang (Gerald) & Ocean Regeneration Trust



Dissertation Title

How effective is the Universal Free School Meal provision policy in addressing inequalities in Tower Hamlets?

The Problem

The Ocean Estate Tower Hamlets Regeneration Project, initiated in 2009, transformed one of the UK's most deprived neighbourhoods into a thriving, mixed-use community. Over the years, the project has achieved notable successes in crime reduction, education improvements, and community engagement efforts. However, there has not been a comprehensive statistical analysis of the socio-economic transformations in the area.

What We Did

This research conducted a comprehensive comparative study in the Tower Hamlets borough spanning a decade from 2011 to 2021. In particular, it focussed on demographic changes and population dynamics, leveraging Census data. The full report provided an analysis of topics in self-contained sections on social, economic and demographic profiles. Each presented trends and comparisons with different time periods of Tower Hamlets, together with tables of supporting data.

Our Hopes for the Project

The dissertation will be shared with Ocean Regeneration Trust to provide a geographical overview of demographic changes in Tower Hamlets. Additionally, the researcher will update the Ocean Estate profile for 2023 with analysis and demographic variables of interest. The purpose of the exercise was to produce a baseline for the work of Ocean Regeneration Trust going forward, and contribute to more targeted assistance for those in need within the Ocean Estate.



Student collaborator

Ting Kiat Ang (Gerald)



Exploring views on Scottish marine enhancement

Tomas Abdala Carrillo & Mossy Earth / Cromarty Seascope



Dissertation Title

Natural resources governance through the lens of public perception

The Problem

In the Black Isle in the Scottish Highlands, many conservation initiatives legitimise land grabbing and elite land ownership. Cromarty Seascope is a community-led marine enhancement project pioneering a different approach to conservation. The project works in partnership with organizations in the local area to restore biogenic habitats and enhance ecosystem resilience. They empower local communities to become involved and take ownership in the project and generate data and evidence in an open-access mode.

What We Did

I designed a survey to collect resident's input on the proposed marine enhancement project. In addition to this, I interviewed key members of the community. Through these, I sought to understand the presence of certain design principles for successful governance of common pool resources and to collect community expectations on the project.

Our Hopes for the Project

This research is part of the community-led nature of the Cromarty Seascope project. The survey responses will be used to inform decision making. Additionally, the findings will be shared with participants, to demonstrate the importance of their contribution and encourage more engagement in the community.



Student collaborator

Tomas Abdala Carrillo

