

<p><b>Institution: University of Bolton</b></p>
<p><b>Unit of Assessment: 16 Architecture, Built Environment and Planning</b></p>
<p><b>Title of case study:</b> Regeneration and Facilities Management – Empowering communities through engagement</p>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>The Regeneration and Facilities Management (FM) research programme brought together different disciplines, focused on engaging with communities of people and organisations to transfer good practice to public sector services management. It included seven members of staff, five PhD students, five grant-funded research projects, RAE2008 funded PhD projects and other non-grant projects; employing applied or action research approaches in working closely with organisations for the development and implementation of research outputs.</p> <p>The theme of community engagement and empowerment has resulted in organisational policy changes, improved social sustainability and continuing professional development; changing practice in public service management and strategy development.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Regeneration and FM research was started in 2007 by Dr Margaret Nelson, Reader in the Built Environment, in response to the needs of the social housing provider, Bolton at Home. The research evolved to include collaboration with a multi-disciplinary team: Dr Femi Olubodun, Senior Lecturer Quantity Surveying; Dr Mark Johnson, Reader in Applied Research in Education Technology and Systems; Stephen Powell, Reader in Inquiry-Based Learning; Richard Millwood, Reader in Distributed Learning (left 31/07/13); Rosemary Galway, Senior Lecturer Education Studies; Nooshin Akrami, Senior Lecturer Architectural Technology; Mike Lawrence Principal Lecturer (left 31/01/13); and PhD students Ebun Akinsete (completed), Roz Fox, Mohammad Tammo, Bobby Nisha-Mohammad and Rukaya Abowen-Dake.</p> <p>Several grant and non-grant funded projects brought together research in regeneration and FM to develop this new area of research, which seeks to transfer knowledge to develop sustainable approaches to regeneration and improve public services management. Three projects, Employer-based Regeneration CPD Training Initiative, Effective Group-working in Multi-Professional Teams that Support Regional Regeneration, and Developing Regeneration Provision for Greater Manchester, developed models for employer-led CPD development, and investigated the complexities involved in developing e-learning. These were to support work-based learners and continuous improvement at personal and organisational levels.</p> <p>The Community Engagement project involved an in-depth examination of community engagement practice by a PhD student based at Bolton at Home, which resulted in a new participatory community engagement strategy for the organisation. The evaluation PhD project was founded on the challenges faced by organisations in evaluating the impact of regeneration projects/programmes. It identified the lack of social indicators, and focus on economic indicators for measurement of regeneration projects/programmes. Evaluation was mostly driven by funders or political interests, and very rarely captured long-term impact of the projects/programmes.</p> <p>The RAE2008 funded PhD research in Community-based FM reviewed existing conceptual and theoretical models of FM in the community, and developed a new guidance for organisations in this sector. Another RAE2008 funded PhD in evidence-based decision-making in regeneration, has led to the development of a new process for undertaking cross disciplinary research. This process was adopted by the Bolton Council funded ‘Stay at Home’ project, in collaboration with the parent network, Bolton Care 4, to develop a flexible model for long-term care for people with learning disabilities to live independently in family owned homes after the death/incapacitation of their parents. Although the immediate impact will be for Bolton Council, the outcomes will be applicable to all local authorities in the UK and internationally, who have responsibility for care of persons with learning disabilities.</p> <p>The significance of this programme lies in the development of a holistic approach to sustainability addressing the economic, social, political, physical and environmental dimensions. It focuses on examining and developing good practice in strategy development, decision making, engagement, service management and evaluation. The ‘communities’ involved in the research included local</p>

## Impact case study (REF3b)

(geographical), business and people. Impact so far has been within the collaborating organisations. However, the emerging knowledge is being cascaded through other organisations and on-going dissemination including the Bolton Regeneration Conference 2011, which reached a national audience.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. Letter of support from Bolton at Home
2. Letter of support from Bolton Council
3. Letter of Support from Cath Walsh, former Chief Executive of GMSA.
4. Nelson, M. and Fox, R. (2009), REGEN-1 Effective Group-Working in Multi-Professional Teams that Support Regional Regeneration, Final Report, 2009, University of Bolton, Available on the World Wide web URL: <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Regeneration/Research/Regen1/Publications/REGEN-1%20Final%20Report.pdf>
5. Akinsete, E. and Nelson, M. (2012), Evaluation in Regeneration: Assessing the Wider Impact, Report submitted to Bolton at Home for Social Accounting case study.

The JISC funded project, Effective Group-Working in Multi-Professional Teams that Support Regeneration was peer reviewed by other grant holders under the theme, and was also subject to evaluation by the Greater Manchester Strategic Alliance (GMSA) and external evaluation by an independent evaluator.

The grants from the GMSA were competitively awarded, and subject to evaluation by the funders through the final reports submitted for the projects. Each project had a steering group made up of employer representatives and academic representatives from the University of Chester and Manchester Metropolitan University who monitored the projects through each stage.

The projects undertaken with Bolton at Home were overseen by a steering group of academics and senior management of Bolton at Home. Reports were presented to and reviewed by the senior management of the organisation periodically before implementation of recommendations.

The Bolton Council project is being overseen by a steering group made up of a multi-disciplinary team of academics, representatives of Bolton Council and of the independent parent network Bolton Care 4.

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The key organisations to have benefitted from this research programme are Bolton at Home, Bolton Council, GMSA and their partner organisations. The projects' outcomes were applied within stakeholder organisations.

Between 2008 and 2012, Bolton at Home witnessed strategic and policy impacts, including: improvements to practice and quality of engagement with citizens; changes to organisational strategy and policy; developing aspiration and increasing skills and qualifications in communities; and sharing of best practice to ensure successful outcomes can be achieved by all parts of the organisation.

Specifically impact was achieved through:

- Informing strategic policy regarding community engagement, leading to improved customer involvement in scrutinising and shaping services
  - o Change in Bolton at Home and Bolton Council strategy on community engagement, which resulted in increased resources and staffing at the UCAN Centres
- Development of a Participatory Engagement model for working with the community and partners to improve quality of life outcomes in deprived areas
  - o Improved community engagement and development practice through the creation of a framework for engagement strategy and a refresh of the community strategy from 2013
- Changing practice in teaching, knowledge exchange and transfer of best practice across both Bolton at Home and the University of Bolton, directly supporting improvements to work practice in regeneration, community engagement and development, neighbourhood management and employer engagement, through work-based learning
- Enhanced efficient and effective services and activities in neighbourhood management, building confidence and improving opportunities for local people to address health, education and training needs, unemployment and crime
- Community engagement planning and evaluation framework created to enhance methods and impact of working with local people
- A change in evaluation of impact assessment to include social accounting and social return on investment informed by our evaluation study (see section 5, reference 3)

## Impact case study (REF3b)

- Development of new collaborations for knowledge transfer
- Developed skills and competencies in community representatives to become informed customers and be more effective in participatory decision making
- Students involved in community projects improving corporate social responsibility and employability
- More efficient and effective work practices leading to improved social impact
- Person-centred approach focussed on social, community, economic and physical aspects of regeneration
  - o Employment / career progression for staff and residents undertaking university courses. The 20-credit module, Introduction to Regeneration, has been running for six years, and has engaged with 108 students (employees, volunteers and fulltime students) from 11 organisations and differing backgrounds. A 2012 internal survey identified that 36% of the students who completed this module have gained employment or promotion as a result. It was one of the three finalists for the HCA awards, Skills for Better Places, in 2009.

The joint Bolton Regeneration conference 2011 to disseminate the research outcomes led to:

- further collaboration with Phoenix Community Housing, London;
- development of student projects between the University's Community Studies group and Bolton at Home.

The impact for the Greater Manchester Strategic Alliance (GMSA) occurred between 2008-2010 through the participation of network members in the research projects and dissemination of good practice across the network. The Effective Group-working in Multi-Professional Teams that Support Regional Regeneration project in collaboration with the GMSA and 13 partners from the regeneration and education sectors, highlighted the challenges in developing lecture content for e-learning. The research output, a module, Working in Groups, has been undertaken by 106 Community Studies and Youth and Community students at the University, and available on Jorum for public access. The components of the module have been viewed 2459 times and downloaded 872 times (May 2013 statistics). The challenges identified led to further research in technology-enabled learning undertaken by Dr Nelson, which fed into the university's revalidation programme.

The key impact was in the development of the GMSA Advance programme validated by the University in 2009 as the Professional Development Framework, a flexible credit accumulation framework, which enables students to transfer credits earned from certificated and experiential learning into a framework leading to an award. This was further developed into a research framework for undergraduate and postgraduate studies through the Inquiry-Based Inter-Disciplinary Learning (IDIBL) project; expanding the University's widening participation and lifelong learning programme, with the first graduates in July 2013.

The 'Stay at Home' project started in 2013 with Bolton Council, leading to improvements in engagement with parents and service partners, participatory development of innovative solutions, improved practice between Council and care and support providers, and developed wider partnerships with minority communities. Though still in the early stages, the project has also identified other long term impact on strategy and policy as documented in the supporting letter from Bolton Council.

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

1. [www.bolton.ac.uk/regeneration](http://www.bolton.ac.uk/regeneration)
2. Gwen Crawford, Director of Regeneration, Bolton at Home, Valley House, 98 Waters Meeting Road, Navigation Business Park, The Valley, Bolton BL1 8DW, UK
3. Bolton at Home (2013), Neighbourhood Management Social Accounts report, [http://data.axmag.com/data/201307/20130723/U52137\\_F230101/FLASH/index.html](http://data.axmag.com/data/201307/20130723/U52137_F230101/FLASH/index.html)
4. John Slater, Housing Strategy Manager, Community and Place, Development and Regeneration, Bolton Council, The Wellsprings, Victoria Square, Civic Centre, Bolton, BL1 1US, UK
5. Cath Walsh, (former head of GMSA), email: cathwalsh@me.com
6. Bolton Regeneration Conference 2011, <http://www.bolton.ac.uk/Regeneration/NewsAndEvents/Conference2011/BoltonRegenerationConference2011.aspx>
7. Email confirmation from University of Manchester dated 8<sup>th</sup> May 2013 of viewing and downloads statistics from Jorum for the Working in Groups module

**Impact case study (REF3b)**

8. Students plan community projects in Bolton  
<http://www.bolton.ac.uk/MediaCentre/Articles/2013/May2013-14.aspx>

The quality of the body of research referred to in this section is evidenced by their relevancy, adoption and implementation by the organisations involved. It is also evidenced by the long term relationship being developed with these organisations leading to further funded projects.

Quality assurance of the research quality and process are under the scrutiny of the project steering groups, made up of stakeholder representatives, and reporting and dissemination through presentations, workshops, reports and conferences.