

## Impact template (REF3a)

**Institution:** University of Portsmouth

**Unit of Assessment:** 17 Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology

**a. Context**

The research undertaken in UoA17 spans diverse elements of geography which is reflected in the organisation of our three research groups: **Environmental Processes and Change (EPC); Geographies of Health, Well-being and Lifecourse (GHWL); Historical Geography and Spatial Analysis (HGSA)**. This diversity is also evident in the varied nature of the non-academic groups who are served by our work. Elements of our research have impacted on the **international** stage, including the International Toy Research Association and the European Centre for Environment and Human Health. We have also benefitted **national government** and **government agencies**, (e.g. Office for National Statistics; National Health Services of Scotland and England; Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs; the National Archives and the Environment Agency). We also serve other **national** charitable or private organisations including the Marine Management Organisation, Play England, the Building Research Establishment, Action for Smoking and Health (ASH) England, Wales and Scotland. Through our research, we also have a strong history of shaping and informing the activities of **regional organisations** (e.g. South Downs National Park Authority) and we work closely with representatives from **local stakeholders** and governance groups (e.g. Portsmouth and Chichester City Councils; Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Tobacco Alliance; Arun and Rother Rivers Trust and Sussex Wildlife Trust). Given this diversity, the impact generated from our research is also wide-ranging and can be categorised as follows:-

- **Improving the knowledge base of expert opinion** regarding social, cultural and health policy debates (especially in the areas of smoking behaviour, gender and entrepreneurship and children's play provision).
- **Contributing to wider society** by providing detailed demographic, health and population data, very often in a historical context. Much of our Geographical Information Systems (GIS) research is often repurposed for **public engagement**, especially around the historical GIS work.
- **Informing environmental management practice** in the area of coastal processes, flood defences and river management strategy. Furthermore, public understanding of environmental processes and environmental management, (especially understanding the need for adaptive management techniques) also benefits from our research and consultancy contributions.

**Informing on techniques for historic building** preservation and conservation, through engagements with architects (e.g. St Paul's Cathedral).

**b. Approach to impact**

We recognise that successful impact depends, ultimately, on maintaining our excellent research reputation in strategic areas. This overarching aim of our research strategy is therefore a key element in our approach to impact. UoA17 at Portsmouth has a strong history of undertaking excellent 'real world research' (as evidenced in previous RAEs) and activities to promote impact have been strengthened to ensure that we continue to benefit as wide a range of end users, in as many ways, as possible. Our approaches to impact are varied but include:-

- **Promotion of public engagement through the creation and continuing expansion of public facing historical GIS websites** that provide vast amounts of historical, socio-demographic and mapping materials for local historians, schools, genealogists and the general public in a user-friendly way. The *Vision of Britain* web site (UOP17GBHGIS Impact Case Study) currently attracts 150-200,000 unique visitors per month and there have been over 3000 downloads and 475,000 unique visitors associated with the Bomb Sight website since it first launched in December last year.
- **Provision of public and community health intelligence** for small area planning, targeting and monitoring. ICS UOP17SMOKING demonstrates the impact of research on the monitoring of smoking prevalence, targeting and planning of anti-smoking campaigns and influencing tobacco-related policy. Information has been supplied as tables for bespoke areas, written reports in the public domain and via interactive maps hosted on the ASH England public-facing website, highlighting the 'iron chain' linking smoking and deprivation.

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- **Undertaking social and environmentally-related research projects** such as a project funded by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), as part of the interdisciplinary team to look at the influence of vegetation on the levees following Hurricane Katrina. Similarly, evidence from a collaborative project investigating the wider societal impact of cadet forces, commissioned by the Council for Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations, has been used by the Prime Minister's Office as a backdrop for recommendations to expand cadet forces. This work has also been showcased by the Royal Geographical Society as impactful research and features as Case Study 16 in their 'Making the case for Geography' <http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Advocacy+and+Policy/Making+the+case+for+geography.htm>.
- **Media engagement, public lectures and public exhibitions.** Noteworthy examples of media and wider public engagement stem from our historical GIS work. This has informed several TV documentaries such as "What really sank the Mary Rose" (shown on The History Channel) and Channel 4's 'Time Team' documentary with an estimated 3.7million viewers in the UK alone. Updated material on the interpretation of the Cowdray Engravings for the new Mary Rose Museum was covered in worldwide TV news which was estimated at reaching 900 million viewers worldwide. This research has also been the subject of around 30 public lectures since 2008, including lectures at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and The National Archives. Work associated with our Children's Geographies theme has also provided contextual materials for the website linked to the Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum of Childhood's exhibition of war toys.
- **Providing expertise at practitioner workshop/brainstorming/networking events.** Staff across the unit have engaged with over 50 non-academic external organisations. Examples include Denmark's Dig-Dag (Digital Atlas of Denmark's Historical-Administrative Geography) project providing advice on place-name databases; Tanzanian Revenue Authority (advising on taxation processes); the Institute of Small Business Economics (discussing mothers who have made a life-choice to become entrepreneurs); Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Tobacco Alliance (advising on youth tobacco consumption); V&A Museum of Childhood's 'Action Man Study Day' (involving toy manufacturers, collectors and curators to develop public-facing web materials concerning the wider geopolitical context of war toys) and Chichester and Bradford City Councils to provide expertise on urban design.
- **Research to address user-defined challenges.** Such programmes involve established contacts from user groups at the outset. Examples include research on cannabis and tobacco co-consumption in collaboration with both local and national tobacco control groups; research on river restoration involving collaboration with the South Downs National Park Authority and the Arun and Rother Rivers Trust. We also invest in PGR students where their research not only enhances strategic areas but also has a real world impact (following ideas of the RCUK model of CASE studentships).

Research groups and impact activities are **supported by two University-wide networks** in the areas of Environment (University of Portsmouth Environment Network (UPEN)) and Ageing (University of Portsmouth Ageing Network (UPAN)). Staff from UoA17 work closely with UPEN and UPAN to maximise impact and seek out fruitful cross-Faculty and cross-Institution collaborations. UPEN, for example, was instrumental in building links between UoA17 researchers and the new South Downs National Park Authority.

### c. Strategy and plans

Our impact strategy is closely linked to our strategy for developing world leading research across our research groups and is underpinned by three key principles:-

1. Significant and far-reaching impact arises from excellent research undertaken by excellent, well-networked and credible researchers. Impact strategy cannot be divorced from a solid, sustainable research strategy.
2. Non-academic impact must be valued to the same degree as academic engagement.
3. Research must be supported throughout the length of a project and post-project (via financial and infrastructural means) to realise impact.

Our strategy and plans to address elements of impact are driven by a number of key objectives. We will:-

- **Consolidate existing partnerships** with key external stakeholders who benefit directly from our research. For example, we will continue to build on our strong links between our HGSA

researchers and the National Archives, the US National Park Service and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Likewise our GHWL group are continuing to strengthen their collaboration with local and national tobacco control groups such as ASH Wales and Hampshire Tobacco Alliance. The key aim of all such partnerships is to align the goals of our research with the key needs of these user-groups and, wherever possible, secure collaborative funding.

- **Increase participation in regional, national and international user-group networking events.** For example, support to strengthen impact between our EPC group and national and regional coastal management stakeholders is being sought via the EU Interreg (ie interregional cooperation programme) Codymac (Coastal Dune Dynamics and Management: Anticipating Climate Change) initiative.
- **Continue to host events for key stakeholders** that promote our work and provide an opportunity for user-engagement, aiming for at least two such events per academic year.
- **Build critical mass and collaborative work in strategically important areas** to minimise disruption of staff turnover in developing long-standing excellent, impactful research across REF cycles. In particular, and alongside the opportunities associated with Big Data, we are well-placed to continue to address key agendas linked to *Living with Environmental Change*, *Global Uncertainties* and *Lifelong Health and Wellbeing*.
- **Construct a robust framework for the monitoring, assessment and evidencing of impact** across the UoA and throughout the research lifecycle. We will continue to work closely with our press office and web-team to maximise impact dissemination.
- **Prioritise internal support for research projects that address key stakeholder challenges**, involve key partners and include a range of impact activities. UPAN (see above), for example is currently helping to develop a pathway to impact on a cross-faculty collaboration between researchers in UoA17 and UoA2 on the societal and health impacts of low fertility on elderly dependents in Southern India.

Achievement of these objectives will be supported by **actions and processes that create an environment where impact-related activities are explicitly acknowledged, resourced and rewarded.** We will:-

- Support staff in identifying the potential impact of their research, and developing their pathway to impact strategy.
- Include impact-related activities as part of our annual staff appraisal process and provide training and professional development (enterprise and media training) to support these.
- Increase opportunities for staff mobility and research exchanges with external stakeholders that maximise the impact of research within this UoA.
- Target funding sources for networking workshops, seminar series, exchanges, and engagement activities to maximize the impact of the research across the UoA.

Target our internal resources (e.g. funding for strategic projects, conferences and workshops).

**d. Relationship to case studies**

Both of our case studies originate from original, excellent research in which end-user consideration has been built into the projects from their outset. Furthermore, the research underpinning these case studies has been developed over a long period as ‘core business’ for their respective research groups (Geographies of Health, Well-being and Lifecourse; Historical Geography and Spatial Analysis). UOP17SMOKING demonstrates the provision of user-defined evidence-based research to key stakeholders for the development of public health-related policy. UoP17GBHGIS exemplifies the direct engagement of the public with research and the enhancement of public understanding of place-related social and demographic change that this delivers.