

Institution: Loughborough University
Unit of Assessment: C17 Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology
Title of case study: Regulating the effects of Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and student populations
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Research by Professor Darren Smith into Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) improved knowledge of the effects of students in university towns in the UK and North America. His research led to revised national planning/housing legislation to integrate students into university towns and provide student housing in more strategic ways. Ministers for Communities and Local Government and Housing used his evidence when revising Use Classes. National consultation documents and government-commissioned evidence-gathering reports on HMO emphasise the importance of his research. His work led to Local Authority Student Housing Strategies and University Student Accommodation Strategies, best-practice guides for student-community relations by National Union of Students (NUS)/private sector, and inclusion of student housing in Regional/Local Housing Strategies and Housing Market Impact Assessments.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The expansion of higher education led to a dramatic increase of student populations in UK university towns and cities. The UK system of students moving away from their home towns to study in another location led to high demand for temporary, term-time accommodation. As a result, there was a proliferation of Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) involving the conversion of family housing. This led to profound changes to local neighbourhoods, communities and housing markets. Pioneering research by Professor Darren Smith (2010-present) on studentification has shown how these social changes can be conceptualised and understood by academics, politicians, policy makers, practitioners and local communities.</p> <p>Professor Smith's work on the effects of increasing student populations on local communities and coining of the term "studentification" [3.1], built upon Professor Phil Hubbard's research (2008-2009) on urban change and student housing at Loughborough University [3.1, 3.2]. Since his arrival at Loughborough University in 2010, initially to work with Professor Hubbard, and supported by his research assistant Dr Sage (2010-2011), Professor Smith has undertaken original analyses of census and administrative datasets to analyse spatially the wider magnitude of HMO in the UK. This work led to the construction of a HMOH index to standardise the concentration of HMO [3.3]. This has demonstrated that HMO is an issue that spans university towns and cities, coastal and small market towns. These findings have meant that the reach of Professor Smith's research has extended to politicians, policy makers and other stakeholders in coastal towns and market towns.</p> <p>At local government level, there has been much uptake of Professor Smith's research in policy formulation for student housing and local communities. An exemplar here is Brighton and Hove City Council and the University of Brighton (and Sussex) funding Professor Smith to research, author and, then update, student housing strategies for the city [3.4, G3.1 to G3.3]. A key outcome of this research was recognition of the need for purpose-build student accommodation in the city, to reduce the ever-growing concentration of HMO in established residential neighbourhoods within close proximity to university campuses.</p> <p>Professor Smith also undertook analyses of the student housing market to consider the effects of economic recession and other changing socio-economic and political conditions, such as higher tuition fees. This suggests that students are increasingly becoming more segregated in towns and</p>

cities, and this could have an important bearing on student experiences and how students interact with established local communities.

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

Outputs based on research undertaken at Loughborough University and published within leading, international, peer-reviewed, journals illustrating how concentrated student populations are transforming towns and effecting local communities, neighbourhoods, and housing markets:

- 3.1. Hubbard, P. (2008) 'Regulating the social impacts of studentification: a Loughborough case study', *Environment and Planning A* 40(2): 323-341, DOI:10.1068/a396.
- 3.2. Hubbard, P. (2009) 'Geographies of studentification and purpose-built student accommodation: leading separate lives?' *Environment and Planning A* 41(8): 1903-1923, DOI:10.1068/a4149.
- 3.3. **Smith, D.P.** (2012) 'The social and economic consequences of Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in UK coastal towns: geographies of segregation', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 37(3): 461-476, DOI: 10.1111/j.1475-5661.2011.00487.x.
- 3.4. Sage, J., **Smith, D.P.** and Hubbard, P. (2012) 'The rapidity of studentification and population change: there goes the (student)hood', *Population, Space and Place* 18(5): 597-613, DOI: 10.1002/psp.690.

Grants (£'s given are the allocation to Loughborough University)

- G3.1** Smith, D (PI): *Student Accommodation Strategy for University of Brighton*, commissioned by the University of Brighton Vice-chancellors Office; Value £8,000.
- G3.2** Smith, D. (PI): *Brighton and Hove Student Housing Strategy*, commissioned by the Strategic Housing Partnership and Leader of Brighton and Hove City Council; Value £4,500.
- G3.3** Smith, D. (PI): *Student Accommodation Strategies on the South-East Coast*, for Residential & Catering Services, University of Brighton; Value £40,000.

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

Advisory services to Government and private sector at a national level

Professor Smith's research on HMO raised awareness amongst politicians, policy makers, practitioners, local communities and other stakeholders of the effects of students on university towns and cities. As a leading academic expert of student housing, Professor Smith engaged with a range of policy makers and stakeholders in local and national contexts, as exemplified below.

First, Professor Smith was called upon by the Minister for Communities and Local Government, to provide evidence for revisions to the Use Classes Order planning legislation in 2010 [5.1]. As part of this process, Professor Smith's research was cited in the national consultation documents for proposals to change housing and planning legislation to regulate more fully the production and management of HMO, and government-commissioned evidence-gathering reports for changing housing and planning legislation in 2010 [5.2]. Professor Smith was invited as an expert witness in 2009 and 2013 by the Brighton and Hove City Council and Charnwood Borough Council Scrutiny Panels on student housing, respectively [5.3].

Second, Professor Smith was invited to advise on the merits of proposed changes to housing and planning legislation as part of a review of the wider private rented housing sector in 2010 [5.4], and proposed changes to the definitions of the Use Classes Orders. This led to the creation of a new Use Classes Order for HMO in the UK planning system in 2010, which now requires planning

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permission for the conversion of dwellings to HMO.

Third, Loughborough University research on studentification has been cited in parliamentary debates about growing student populations in the constituencies of MPs, and has been used by MPs as evidence to support their calls for changes to planning and housing legislation. This research has been referred to in numerous government-level reports including Scottish Government Planning Circulars and Committee Reports, House of Commons Regional Committees, Northern Ireland Assembly (see for example a Parliamentary question to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [235974] on Community Relations and Students in:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm081118/text/81118w0029.htm>).

Planning student housing in strategic ways for local contexts

The impacts of Professor Smith's research on local policy formulation on student housing can be divided into two key areas:

First, Professor Smith's research led to the development of student housing and student population-specific policies and strategies. This includes the first-ever development of designated Local authority Student Housing Strategies (Brighton and Hove, Charnwood, Leeds, Newcastle, Nottingham) [5.3], and University Student Accommodation Strategies (e.g. University of Brighton, Bristol, Leicester) [5.5].

Second, thanks to Professor Smith's research, student housing is now recognised as a key dimension of wider housing and local community planning within: five Regional Housing Strategies (e.g. London Plan, County Durham); 15 Local Housing Strategies (e.g. Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford) [5.6]; 8 Local Housing Market Impact Assessments (e.g. Canterbury, Leicestershire, Liverpool); 3 Student and Community Relation Strategies (Cardiff, Portsmouth, NUS) [5.7]; management of private sector providers of student housing (e.g. Unite Student Homes); national and local community organisations (e.g. National HMO Lobby, Nottingham Action Group) [5.8]; and national voluntary, professional and practitioner organisations (e.g. Royal Town Planning Institute) [5.9]. His research has been cited in planning applications and at public planning appeals (e.g. Manchester in 2011). The impact of his research also reached beyond the UK to influence policy making in Australian and North American university towns (e.g. Montreal, Canada) [5.10].

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

The following sources of corroboration can be made available at request:

- 5.1. MP and Minister for Housing, corroborating letter.
- 5.2. Communities and Local Government, (2008), *LG Evidence Gathering – Housing in Multiple Occupation and possible planning responses: Final Report*, (<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/evidencegatheringresearch.pdf>)
- 5.3. Brighton and Hove City Council, (2009), *Student Housing Strategy 2009-14*, (<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/index.cfm?request=c1188834>)
- 5.4. Invited Advisory member of CLG consultation on HMO and planning legislation: (<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmcomloc/50/50ii56.htm>)
- 5.5. University of Brighton Student Accommodation Strategy (2010-2016).
- 5.6. Nottingham City Council, corroborating letter.
- 5.7. National Union of Students (NUS), (2007), *Students in the Community: Working together to achieve harmony*, (<http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Education/documents/2007/06/11/communityreportnus.pdf>)

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- 5.8. National HMO Lobby and Nottingham Action Group, corroborating letters.
- 5.9. RTPI Houses in Multiple Occupation and The Planning System and Houses in Multiple Occupation RTPI Development Management Network
(<http://www.rtpi.org.uk/knowledge/topics/housing/hmos/>)
- 5.10. [Milton-Parc student and community strategy report, Montreal
(<http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/care-english-april-20-2010-final1.pdf>)