

Housing, Equalities and Good Relations

April 2009 expert seminar series

IPEG at The University of Manchester is hosting a series of expert seminars in association with the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The seminars will look at some key housing issues from an equalities and human rights perspective. The presentations and discussion that follows will develop new insights and have a strong equality and human rights focus, helping move the debate forward and assist in the policy development of the EHRC.

Housing Markets and Inequality Round Table (with Urban Studies at the University of Glasgow), Wednesday 1 April, Weston Lecture Theatre, University of Glasgow

Round Table 1 of a series of three events with the EHRC on current issues in housing, equalities and human rights.

This seminar builds on earlier research by IPPR and a study by The Smith Institute which showed that different communities have very different housing tenure patterns, for example, ethnic minorities are over-represented in private rented housing. What are the equality implications of these residential patterns for households? Policy often emphasises affordability as a key to choice and access. But rather than look at affordability and rent levels or ceiling prices we will concentrate on the effects on particular groups of living in housing they can afford or take because they have unequal choice in some other way (exclusions forcing people into the PRS for example) and how that prevents access to an unstigmatised location or housing that facilitates greater social equality.

Questions to be explored include:

- Who has benefitted and who has lost out from housing policies.
- The suitability of accommodation and access restrictions.
- Inequalities, inefficiencies and inadequacies of current housing services, markets and policies.

A Round Table event chaired by Professor Alan Harding

Speakers and topics:

Brendan Nevin and Phil Leather

Empirical evidence of changing scale and patterns of housing-based inequality from the 2008 Housing Needs Assessment and other recent research.

Malcolm Harrison, University of Leeds

Housing, race, gender, and disability based inequalities and possible future agendas.

Mike Dailley, Govan Law Centre

Evidence of inequality arising from poor conditions on the private rented sector in Glasgow, also drawing on their new homelessness prevention project.

Grant Carson, Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living

Disability issues relating to housing and location.

Programme:

9.30	Arrival and coffee
10.00	Two speakers to frame the debate
10.40	Plenary discussion
12.00	Lunch
1.00	Two speakers
1.40	Plenary discussion
2.30	Ideas sharing
3.00	Close

The 2009 Housing Green Paper: the equalities dimension, Friday 3 April, London, RIBA

Round Table 2 of a series of three events with the EHRC on current issues in housing, equalities and good relations.

This seminar will advance recent debates that have revolved around the proposed housing reform green paper on social and private rented housing (due in 2009), providing input into the Commission's work on the equalities and human rights implications of such potentially significant reforms.

Questions to be explored include:

- Are the current priority need criteria adequate?
- Explore feasible alternatives to allocating housing on the basis of greatest need.
- What are the implications of alternative allocation criteria in terms of equality and human rights?
- How can housing policy combat poverty, improve the independence and social inclusion of different groups?

Speakers and topics:

David Robinson, CRESR, Sheffield Hallam University

Reflecting on empirical work for DWP on social tenants and worklessness: impact of proposed reforms.

Becky Tunstall, London School of Economics

The historical context for understanding the future role of the social rented sector.

Caroline Hunter, University of York

Conflicting emphasis of anti-social behaviour and equalities legislation in housing.

Peter Mackie, Shelter Cymru

Recent research on the social and private rented sector and debates on and scope for reform of legislation in Wales.

For registration and administrative queries about these events please contact charlotte.jackson@manchester.ac.uk. For other queries about the events please contact james.e.rees@manchester.ac.uk.

Housing, Sustainable Communities and Good Relations, Wednesday 8 April, Urbis, Manchester

Round Table 3 of a series of three events with the EHRC on current issues in housing, equalities and good relations.

Currently, all public bodies, including local authorities, have the statutory duty to promote good relations as part of the remit of the Single Equality Act 2006. This could be a potentially useful tool for public bodies to use, for example, to encourage better community relations in areas where there are tensions arising from diverse populations. The round table explores the diverse dimensions of promoting sustainable communities and good relations.

Questions to be explored include:

- How do we understand good relations in connection with housing policy, regeneration and the design of the built environment?
- How can urban planning and housing policy contribute to social cohesion and good relations?
- Do current debates about sustainable communities offer a meaningful way forward for promoting social cohesion and good relations?

Speakers and topics:

Ludi Simpson, The University of Manchester

Migration and the geography of ethnic groups, ethnic integration. Problems of using housing policy to address assumed ethnic segregation.

Harris Beider, Institute for Community Cohesion

The potential of housing organisations' role in tackling diversity and cohesion challenges.

Shoab Akhtar, Great Places Housing, and Mushtaq Khan, Housing Diversity Network Associate

Practical aspects of creating places and promoting good relations and the role of housing agencies in promoting quality and choice.

Paul McCay, Papworth Trust

Equalities are more than just ethnicity, bringing disabilities into the housing agenda and creating inclusive communities.

Barbra Wallace, Women's Design Service

Experience of engaging women in design and creating inclusive housing and places.