Royal Geographical Society
(with the Institute of British Geographers)

2026 Postgraduate Conference Schedule

24–25 February 2026

Welcome to the RGS-IBG's

2026 Postgraduate Conference

We're delighted to welcome you online and to the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) in London for the 2026 Postgraduate Conference.

The event brings together postgraduate researchers to present a snapshot of the exciting and important research being undertaken by postgraduate geographers on novel topics and in diverse contexts. The event is a friendly and inclusive space to share your research.

Information

In-person session format

In-person paper sessions will be 75 minutes long, with sessions including between four and five papers.

Presentations will be a **maximum of 10-12 minutes in duration**, with up to 5 minutes for questions.

Several sessions will run concurrently. You're welcome to attend whichever session you like.

Online session format

Online paper sessions will be between 60 minutes long. Shorter sessions will include three papers; longer sessions will generally include four papers.

Presentations will be a **maximum of 10-12 minutes long**, with up to five minutes for questions.

Workshop (online only)

We have a publishing workshop on the afternoon of 25 February.

Information for presenters

Presentations should be a **maximum of 10-12 minutes.**
The session Chair will give you a prompt when you have five minutes remaining.

Please head to your session venue (or return to the Zoom session, if presenting online) **five minutes before the session** commences to prepare any slides for projection and introduce yourself to the session Chair.

If you are presenting in-person and would like to present slides or other visuals during your talk, please bring these with you on a USB drive. You will not be able to display visuals by

connecting your own device to the display.

If you are presenting online and would like to present slides or visuals, please ensure you are familiar with the 'Share your screen' function on Zoom before the conference commences. This is how you will share your slides at the conference.

Catering (in-person only)

All lunches are vegetarian or vegan as standard. There will be at least one gluten free option each day. If you notified us of specific allergy or dietary requirements, please select the allergen-free option reserved for you.

If you have a specific allergy or dietary requirement and have **not** notified us of this, please do so as soon as possible by emailing rhed@rgs.org.

Our catering partner cannot guarantee that lunches will have been prepared in a nut-free kitchen. If you have questions about the menu, please speak to an organiser.

Code of Conduct

All delegates are reminded that they agree to comply with the Code of Conduct during the online and in-person Postgraduate , including the evening reception.

Schedule: Tuesday 24 February (In Person)

See the table below for full presentation listings.

Time	Activity			Room
9.30–10.00	**Arrival, Registration and Coffee** Doors of the building open from 9am. We encourage arrival from 9.30.			**Coffee in main hall**
10.00 – 11.10	**Welcome to the PG Conference followed by Keynote Lecture** *On the persistence of sovereign fantasies: nonsovereign subjects, antagonistic encounters and nonrelational ethics* With Dr Vickie Zhang (University of Bristol)			**Education Centre**
11.15 – 12.30	Session 1	A) Cities		Education Centre
		B) Climate Change, Infrastructure, and Renewable Energy		Drayson Room
		C) Palaeoclimatology		Sunley Room
		D) Critical and Political Geography		Lowther Room
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch Break/guided tour of the Society			
13:30– 14.45	Session 2	A) Migration		Education Centre
		B) Social Justice		Drayson Room
		C) Sustainability and Resilience		Sunley Room
14.45 – 15.15	Break			
15:15– 16:30	Session 3	Gender		Education Centre
		Environmental Change		Drayson Room
		Development and Regeneration		Sunley Room
16.30		Conference photograph and in-person conference close.		

Schedule: Wednesday 25 February (Online)

Zoom Link for Online Day:
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Research & Higher Education is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.
Join Zoom Meeting
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82819091961?pwd=yKFgul9tZdwsrbKGedKsaalsbNAbbG.1

Meeting ID: 828 1909 1961
Passcode: 858078

One tap mobile
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Join instructions
https://us02web.zoom.us/meetings/82819091961/invitations?signature=jH0L6vO-_xNHi2Q-_aMoFqGn59m9u5eSDRkACmW_5ys

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Time	Activity
13:30 – 14:30	**Welcome and 'Publishing as a Postgraduate' Workshop** **Speakers include:** Professor, Peter Hopkins, Newcastle University, Editor, The Geographical Journal Dr Anna Laurence, Managing Editor, RGS-IBG Journals Dr Jeremy Schmidt, Queen Mary University of London, Editor Area
14:30–14:45	**Break**
14:45 – 15:45	**Session 1: Cities and Infrastructure** Chair: Ed Armston-Sheret, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Papers: Sophie Laidlaw, Liverpool John Moores University, 'Establishing Resilient Community Flood Groups to Reduce Flood Impacts in England and Wales.' Nancy Brett, Linköping University, 'Beyond Distance: Boundary-Making and the Negotiation of Localness in a Swedish City-Regional Food System.' Micaela Mancini, Gran Sasso Science Institute, 'Fast (and furious) policy: The 15-minute City in Oxford.' Ka Wing Pang, Durham University, 'Living with Density 101: Lessons from Singapore's Housing Landscape.'
15:45– 16:00	**Break**
16:00–17:00	**Session 2: Identities and Bodies**

Chair: Ed Armston-Sheret, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG).

Papers:
Clare Courtney, University of Manchester, '"An Appetite for Belonging" Food-centred Methodologies in Understanding Belonging in Migrant Provision Spaces.'

Rupankar Dey, University of Groningen, 'Geographies of Reproductive Capability: Disability, Space, and Autonomy in Kalangala, Uganda.'

Tuna Ogut, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), 'Trans infrastructures of organising: Urban production of political capacity.'

Sambhavi Varadarajan, CUNY, 'After Girlhood: Queer AFAB Youth and Urban Belonging in Chennai.'

Keynote Lecture 1

On the persistence of sovereign fantasies: nonsovereign subjects, antagonistic encounters and nonrelational ethics

Dr Vickie Zhang
University of Bristol

Cultural geographers have long argued for the nonsovereign nature of the human subject, decentering and spacing the fantasy of the sovereign individual in favour of distributed understandings of the subject. This ontology has become a guiding frame for ethico-political action, inciting calls to relate, entangle and expand. This talk, sharing work co-written with Thomas Dekeyser, enacts a pause in these calls. Wondering what space remains for conflict, contestation and denial in the life of the ethical subject, we ask: What if life-in-common is dominated not by relational entanglement and expansionary potential, but by social antagonism and its dismissals and closures? How might ethical imperatives shift when the frictions of difference are centred rather than willed away? To broach a response, this talk returns to the rightly maligned fantasy of sovereignty to recover the persistence of the desire to feel sovereign. Understanding nonsovereignty as a horror we each must find ways to bear, the search for sovereign feeling becomes the subject's impossible but necessary task. Fleshing out the concept of sovereign fantasies, this talk draws together manoeuvres across a range of minoritarian literatures – across queer theory, Black studies and Asian-American studies – to highlight different tactics and strategies they each propose for managing the antagonisms that shoot through collective life. Turning to stances of humourlessness, refusal and asociality that do not repair, yield to or redeem the social, we attempt to piece together an ethico-politics capable of acknowledging conflict, difference and the dogged persistence of the need to feel sovereign.

Dr Zhang is a cultural geographer interested in the intensities and energetics of working life in times of economic change. Her research can be broadly categorised into three strands. Empirically, she explores experiences of economic change for industrial and migrant workers through fieldwork in Australia and China. Conceptually, she develops cultural geographical approaches to affect, embodiment, and subjectivity, especially those that foreground negativity and exposure. Methodologically, she experiments with non-representational styles of working and writing, including documentary filmmaking and photography.

She is currently also a Research Fellow at the School of Geography and Remote Sensing, Guangzhou University. Prior to joining Bristol, Dr Zhang was Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the National University of Singapore. She completed her PhD in the School of Geography at the University of Melbourne, after spending her first year in the School of Sociology at the Australian National University. Her undergraduate studies, also at the University of Melbourne, were in Geography and German.

Dr Zhang was born in Naarm/Melbourne, Australia, to migrant parents from Guangzhou, China. Geography has been her way of making sense of the cascading and contradictory effects of these inherited dislocations.

Full Listings for In Person sessions

Session Title and chair	Presenter, Institution, and paper title	Abstract
Cities Chair: Teresa Irigoyen-Lopez, University of Oxford	Udita Bose Brunel University of London 'Space and Identity: Menstrual Experiences Of Adolescent Girls in a Kolkata Habitation.'	This paper examines how adolescent girls residing in urban informal settlements in Kolkata perform and reproduce their gendered identities through their everyday experiences at home, school, and in their communities. Using Butler's (1988) theory of performative acts, I argue how girls' menstrual experiences shape and reproduce their gender identities. The paper is based on fieldwork in urban informal settlements and a government school located in the urban centre in Kolkata. It employs creative methods, such as walking interviews and body mapping sessions, to gain an understanding of girls' menstrual experiences in the home, school, and community. The paper finds that girls are taught to perform femininity, a phrase that Lee and Sasser-Coen (1996) use. They are taught discipline as menarche marks their entry into adulthood, and their ability to reproduce. As a result, girls' mothers restrict them from engaging with boys in their communities. Some girls conform to the existing sociocultural regulations defining their gender identity, whereas some choose to deviate, reproducing their gender identity. The performance and reproduction of gender identity is shaped in spaces, like school and through the role of the mass media. All these sources, however, maintain that with menarche, girls are considered grown-ups and therefore they must learn to conceal their menstrual experiences through better management of the menstrual blood stain, homogenising their experiences. References: Butler, Judith. 1988. Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory. Theatre Journal, 40(4), pp. 519-531. Lee, Janet. Sasser-Coen, Jennifer. 1996. Blood Stories: Menarche and the politics of the female body in contemporary US Society. Routledge, NY, USA.
	Olamide Udo-Udoma Ejorh University of Sheffield 'Children's Play, Localised Displacement and Urban Space: Insights from a Dense Low-Income Settlement in Lagos.'	This paper explores how children living in a dense, low-income settlement in Lagos experience and negotiate urban space in the context of localised forms of displacement. In Oworonshoki, displacement commonly arises from forced evictions, land-grabbing demolitions, and flooding—events which alter the physical layout of neighbourhoods and reshape children's everyday spatial routines. Despite the prevalence of these disruptions across African cities, children's geographical perspectives on such spatial change remain under-examined. Drawing on child-centred qualitative research—including group interviews, child-led photo walks, life mapping, play diaries and play mapping—the study investigates how children describe the spaces they use, avoid, transform and

		assign meaning to following displacement. The findings highlight notable shifts in children's access to open areas, the emergence of new boundaries between "safe" and "unsafe" spaces, and changes in the materials and social conditions that shape their play. Children's narratives reveal how they reconfigure entrance ways, roads and shared compound areas into play spaces, and how peer networks and community relationships influence their spatial decisions. By foregrounding children's accounts of spatial disruption and adaptation, the paper contributes to debates in children's geographies, urban geography and geographies of displacement. It offers empirically grounded insight into how children understand and produce space within rapidly changing urban environments, and demonstrates the value of participatory methods for capturing young people's spatial knowledge.
	Michi Ochiai The University of Manchester 'Filling the Void: Community Resilience and the Precarious Survival of Social Infrastructure in Newcastle Upon Tyne.'	In post-industrial UK cities like Newcastle upon Tyne, the provision of "Social Infrastructure" (SI)—vital communal spaces such as libraries, pools, and community centres—has shifted dramatically from a model of public welfare to one of precarious reliance on the Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector through leases, public-private partnership contracts and outright closures in name of rationalisation. This research draws on a qualitative case study of three recreational SI facilities in different parts of Newcastle city to examine how communities navigate the dual pressures of long-term de-industrialisation and recent austerity under neoliberal trends. Through semi-structured interviews with facility managers and directors, the research documents the "undoing" of public provision, where local public assets and services were closed/sold as part of budget cuts and austerity. The findings highlight emergence of VCSE as vital, positive local agencies that fill in the gaps made by public sector retrenchment, but its abilities hindered by profound systemic barriers including local policies, funding competitions and spatial inequalities in "community capacity": while some facilities, like Elswick Community Pool, successfully foster local employability and health skills, many, including them, operate in a fragile landscape where they must compete for funding and users under limited resources in both budget and skills. The research reveals a "local trap," where the survival of essential services increasingly depends on a community's ability to self-organise, inadvertently penalising deprived areas that lack the professional networks found in more affluent neighbourhoods. This paper questions the sustainability of relying on local agency to fill systemic voids and argues that current models of provision may be reinforcing intra-regional uneven development within what's already seen as "left-behind" region in inter-regional context.

	Zainab Alhajji University of Leeds 'Rethinking Urban Safety: Tracing Spatial Transformation in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester.'	Safety has increasingly become a primary concern in response to persistent urban crime and global threats. Consequently, contemporary urban environments have come to be shaped by evolving safety concerns, prompting the implementation of physical measures such as fences, bollards, walls, and hostile architecture, as well as surveillance technologies including CCTV and facial recognition. In Britain, persistent crime and rising fear have made safety a primary goal of urban development. However, the adoption of security-focused spatial measures has altered how built environments are perceived and how people utilise public spaces in British urban cities. While all those measures are intended to create a safer environment, a critical question has arisen regarding whether they influence the sense of comfort and safety in public spaces, or if they unintentionally create environments that are attractive to crime, inaccessible, and socially isolated. This study critically examines the spatial transformations in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester. This study uses a qualitative, interpretive approach grounded in urban theory, combining a critical literature review with a document analysis of Manchester's urban policies and strategies. Spatial analysis, site observation, archival images, and mapping from 2002 to 2024 reveal that successive redesigns have produced contradictory outcomes, shifting the Gardens from an open civic space to a semi-closed environment that affects the usability and social cohesion. The research contributes to a better understanding and reconceptualisation of safe spaces that integrate the physical built environment, social, and technological aspects.
	Mingzhe Yuan Bartlett, School of Planning, University College London 'Fashioning Urban Femininity: Negotiating Agency, Structure, and Modernity through Dress in Contemporary Chinese Cities.'	China's modernising cities provide a unique spatial context where state ideology, global capitalism and evolving gender norms intersect. These urban spaces function simultaneously as sites of aspiration and surveillance, making fashion consumption a critical lens for understanding contemporary Chinese modernity. This research examines how young, middle-class women in urban China navigate fashion consumption amid tensions between individual expression and structural constraints. While post-reform China celebrates consumer freedom, women who dress "too freely" face moral policing and public harassment. The project investigates a central question: how are gendered identities shaped by and in turn shaping fashion consumption in urban 'socialist' China? Theoretically, I engage with Foucauldian concepts of power and governmentality, feminist critiques of consumer culture (particularly McRobbie's postfeminism), and Bourdieu's cultural capital to analyse how fashion operates as both a technology of self-regulation and a site of identity construction within China's distinctive political-economic system. Methodologically, the research aims to combine semi-structured interviews with urban women, observations in retail and public spaces, and discourse analysis of

		marketing materials and social media. Preliminary findings reveal key tensions: the displacement of freedom within marketed "choice"; navigation between global modernity and accusations of "worshipping foreign things"; and paradoxes of bourgeois consumer aesthetics within socialist rhetoric. This research contributes to feminist geographies of the body, cultural economy scholarship, and geographical understandings of Chinese modernity, while aspiring to inform more inclusive urban policy and socially responsible fashion industries.
Climate Change, Infrastructure, and Renewable Energy Chair: Ed Armston-Sheret, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)	James Vigni University of Hertfordshire 'The Geopolitics of the Green Transition: a sociopolitical, economic, and ecological risk analysis of Green Hydrogen projects in Tunisia.'	The race for green hydrogen has started. Much of green hydrogen production is expected to take place in solar and wind-rich regions in the Global South to meet the energy needs and climate targets of the Global North. Tunisia is quickly emerging as a key player in this space, leveraging its vast renewable energy potential and proximity to European markets. However, the risks the country faces are multitudinous, from extreme water scarcity to high public debt, political upheaval, and corruption. This project seeks to expose and evaluate the geopolitical, economic, social, and environmental impacts of green hydrogen projects in Tunisia, most notably the Amarenco Green Hydrogen Hub, the Green Hydrogen-to-Ammonia Pilot, and the H2 Notos Project. The main objective will be to assess these impacts domestically (i.e. the impact on local communities, tensions between civil society and the government, issues of corruption and public debt, water struggles defined along class lines, neo-Gramscian theories on hegemony in water politics, etc.) and internationally (i.e. green hydrogen exports to Europe, neocolonial relations between the EU and Tunisia, the impact on Tunisia's trade deficit, land-grabbing, etc.). Interdisciplinary scholarship when exploring the geopolitics of green energy has for the most part focused on the Global South more broadly and failed to centre research around non-Eurocentric perspectives. This project will seek to adopt a postcolonial, Afrocentric, Gramscian, and eco-socialist framework. Embedding this framework within the broader interdisciplinary approach of this project, which includes, inter alia, a study of the international political economy, geopolitics, energy governance, and development studies, will enable the project to address asymmetries in green hydrogen production with the objective, ultimately, of setting out a path for a more just and equitable transition.
	James MacDonald Liverpool John Moores University, 'Assessing Low-Carbon Housing Policy in the UK's Private Rented	The UK is legally required to reach net zero emissions by 2050. To achieve this, greenhouse gas emissions from homes will need to be dramatically reduced through the widespread installation of insulation, low-carbon heating and renewable energy technologies. The government has introduced multiple policy and funding initiatives to encourage the installation of such measures. However, these initiatives have often failed to meet stated targets. The private rented sector

	Sector: Early Insights.'	(PRS), comprising 20% of the UK housing stock, has proven especially challenging in this regard. This presentation will share early insights from a PhD project that seeks to critically assess low-carbon housing policies in the UK and overseas, in order to pinpoint key factors that determine policy success. More specifically, this presentation will provide 1) A concise summary of contemporary literature on the key drivers and barriers towards PRS properties, incorporating examples of former retrofit-based policy initiatives and stakeholder perceptions; 2) Initial findings of ethnographic fieldwork, specifically interviews, and also participant observation with local authority actors; and 3) Outline of forthcoming ethnographic data collection methods that will help determine stakeholder perceptions and suitable recommendations. This project will also draw from European countries including Germany, and the Netherlands, where there has been success in improving the energy efficiency and standards of their PRS housing stock. This research will provide impactful, policy-relevant findings that contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and help ensure that people residing in the PRS are able to live in a warm and healthy home.
	Eva Haire Ulster University 'Solar PV Suitability.'	Global net-zero targets demand rapid changes in energy consumption patterns, particularly within buildings. However, many low-carbon technologies require large spaces for installation or infrastructural changes for grid connection. Rooftop solar photovoltaic (SPV) can be readily retrofitted to existing building infrastructure and can significantly reduce household energy costs, thus facilitating a just and fair energy transition. This research aims to map SPV potential for residential and commercial rooftops in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The approach incorporates high-resolution Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data with building footprints within a Geographic Information System. Yearly electricity (kWh), CO_2 savings, and payback periods were calculated for each rooftop, while existing installations were validated. In parallel, Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) was used to analyse the social likelihood of SPV adoption. Technical results highlighted strong suitability in Belfast at 82%, with particular suitability for terraced housing. Census zones with high technical potential are concentrated in areas with large commercial units, while areas with a high social likelihood of SPV adoption often occur in peripheral urban areas. The results indicate that a combined techno-social approach is critical to understand potential SPV adoption at large spatial scales. The approach offers policymakers a high-resolution model from which tiered initiatives can be targeted to groups of buildings based on technical and social suitability.
	Adrian Julius Herzberg	Scientists in China approach climate futures with an optimistic focus on carbon neutrality and a strong belief in technology and market mechanisms. While China's

| | London School of Economics and Political Science & Peking University

'Scientists' Monsters and Desires: China's Carbon Neutrality Climate Imaginary.' | role in global climate governance is significant and heavily influenced by scientists, the normative assumptions and perceptions of Chinese scientists remain underexplored. To address this gap, we examine climate imaginaries reproduced by Chinese scientists and ask: What climate imaginaries are held by climate and environmental scientists in China? Climate imaginaries are collectively held visions of desirable futures that reveal the values and problematisations shaping climate knowledge production. Drawing on qualitative content analysis of 44 survey responses and 17 interviews with scientists from elite Chinese universities, we identify one hegemonic Carbon Neutrality Imaginary, which problematizes emissions and favours techno-market solutions. The Carbon Neutrality Imaginary is complemented by the Harmony and the Human Well-Being Elemental Imaginaries, which offer the ideological framework and represent the cultural context. While we suggest an interconnected perspective on the imaginaries based on policy developments, the hegemony of the Carbon Neutrality Imaginary indicates the importance of China's carbon neutrality pledge over other policy discourses, such as the ecological civilisation or harmonious society. These imaginaries are accompanied by widespread confidence in China's capacity to address climate change through state-led technological and market innovations. However, this optimism risks naturalizing market-based governance rationalities while foreclosing alternative socio-ecological pathways, warranting critical scrutiny of how scientists' normative assumptions shape and constrain climate futures. |
| | Kaustubh Jagtap

University of Sheffield

'Governmental Rationalities and the Production of Infrastructural Vulnerability across Mumbai's Sanitary Assemblages.' | Sanitation provisioning in Mumbai's informal settlements is commonly evaluated through technocratic performance metrics, participation-oriented governance frameworks, or single-policy assessments. Such approaches underplay how sanitation infrastructure is shaped by contradictory governing rationalities and everyday political practices, and how these interactions generate persistent infrastructural vulnerability and decay. This paper examines sanitation infrastructure not as implementation failure, but as a field of contradictory relations through which governance, materiality, and everyday life are continually reassembled and undone.

By focusing on three coexisting sanitation policy regimes enacted in Mumbai since the 1970s, emerging through reconfigurations in urban governance—including the participatory turn and market-oriented logics—the paper traces how policy logics are carried into everyday infrastructural practice. It argues that interactions between governmental sanitary rationalities and everyday infrastructural practices produce subject positions (users, managers, service providers, stakeholders) and shape their relations to sanitation infrastructure. Focusing on one key dimension of vulnerability—the susceptibility of sanitation infrastructure to political practices |

		such as rent-seeking, co-optation, electoral projection, and institutional hijack—I argue that pathways for politicisation are coded within policy regimes themselves. These pathways manifest differently as policy logics encounter field realities and are reworked through everyday infrastructural practice, helping to explain recurrent resilience and decay, as well as uneven intervention outcomes. Methodologically, the paper combines genealogical discourse analysis of state-produced and subaltern archives with multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Mumbai between July 2025 and January 2026.
Palaeoclimatology Chair: Catherine, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)	Jessica (Bela) McCoy Northumbria University and Newcastle University 'Temperate to tropical palaeoclimates on the northwest margin of Europe during the middle Cenozoic (~34-16 Ma).'	Palaeoclimate reconstruction of the Oligocene to Early Miocene (33.9—15.97 Ma) allows for better understanding of the climate dynamics of an earth system with similar pCO2 levels, palaeogeography, and an Antarctic ice sheet, to present-day. Previous studies suggested that Late Oligocene sea-surface temperatures, in the North Atlantic, increased whereas corresponding pCO2 levels declined from 700—300 ppm. The recent IPCC AR6 report identified the Miocene as an interval of interest, thus reconstructing its climate dynamics has implication for better understanding 21st century anthropogenic climate change. My study considered the British Isles for study, given the site's ability to provide a unique perspective on terrestrial climate, as influenced by the heat outputs of the North Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. Through applying the Bayesian probability-density-function-based reconstruction model, Climate Reconstruction Software (crestr), on the nearest living relatives of listed fossil taxa from secondary sources, I present the first Oligocene to Early Miocene palaeoclimate record of the northwest edge of Europe. My study suggests Oligocene to early Miocene palaeoclimates were mostly warmer than present, as reconstructed by K-G classifications ranged from a temperate, warm-summer signal with no overall dry season (Cfb) to that of a tropical rainforest climate (Af), the latter climate type's appearance in our Chattian records being paced by orbitally forced long eccentricity (400-kyr) pulses. Monsoonal K-G classifications (Cwb) were driven by precessional (26-kyr) forcing. All Early Miocene reconstructions were assigned a temperate palaeoclimate with no dry season and warm summers. My reconstruction of the Mochras borehole, reconstructed large, rapid declines in Mean Annual Temperature which may suggest the presence of sediment deposited over the Oligocene to Miocene Transition. This may be the first instance of this boundary being recorded in northwest European strata.

	Alice Gate Durham University 'Constraining the landscape evolution and past ice sheet behaviour of central North Greenland.'	The Greenland Ice Sheet (GrIS) lost 21mm sea-level equivalent from 1992-2020 (Otosaka et al., 2023), with this contribution projected to continue to increase through the 21st century, though large variations between model projections persist (Goelzer et al., 2020). Robust understanding of past ice-sheet behaviour is essential to improve GrIS modelling and reduce uncertainty in future sea-level projections. The exposed landscape around the edges of the GrIS is a valuable record of past-ice sheet behaviour (Leger et al., 2024) but understanding of geomorphology and ice-sheet history in North Greenland remains limited due to the region's inaccessibility, remoteness, and historical lack of high-resolution digital elevation model (DEM) data. 51% of central North Greenland is ice-free and is a polar desert with markedly low erosion rates; it therefore has potential to preserve early or pre-glacial landscapes, further elucidating our understanding of ice sheet history. Using 32m resolution ArcticDEM data, this research investigates the processes leading to the formation of the present-day North Greenland landscape, examining to what extent this was shaped by palaeo-fluvial and -glacial processes. This research is the first to systematically characterise the subaerial landscape in North Greenland, potentially revealing important details on past ice-sheet behaviour, including basal thermal regime, flow direction and topographic steering. Preliminary analysis identifies widespread dendritic valley networks across North Greenland, with deep, narrow channels characteristic of fluvial erosion. Results indicate widespread preservation of palaeofluvial valley systems, with patterns of valley incision controlled predominantly by differences in local geology. Further analysis focusses on the characterisation of individual valleys, using long- and cross-profile morphologies to ascertain the extent (and distinct phases) of glacial modification of the inherited fluvial landscape.
	Zenobia Kusi-Afrakoma Trinity College Dublin 'Isotopic Pathways from Atmosphere to Archive: Building a Modern Framework for Irish Blanket-Bog Hydrology and Climate Interpretation.'	Blanket bogs act as dynamic water reservoirs and long-term climate archives, yet their resilience under a warming and drying climate, coupled with anthropogenic activities, remains poorly understood. Water stable isotopes ($\delta18O$, $\delta2H$, and d-excess) offer a direct means to trace moisture sources and evapotranspiration, but Ireland lacks an isotope framework spanning atmosphere to peat. The central question is how modern isotope-climate relationships in Irish blanket bogs can be used to interpret both contemporary hydrological stress and past climate variability. The 1960-2022 Global Network of Isotopes in Precipitation record from Valentia is re-evaluated using time-series decomposition, regression and wavelet analysis to quantify climatic controls on isotopes in precipitation and to define an Irish local meteoric water line, revealing any existing seasonal and long-term signal modulated by climate indices such as North Atlantic Oscillation. Building on this

		baseline, a three-year field data collection in the Wicklow Mountains measures monthly precipitation and blanket bog runoff isotopes, supplemented by hydrochemistry, continuous microclimate monitoring via an installed weather station in the Wicklow Mountains and event precipitation sampling in other parts of Ireland, to capture the isotopic response of blanket bogs to precipitation inputs, evaporation and hydrological disturbance. These modern relationships underpin the interpretation of existing peat-core cellulose isotope records from dated bogs, linking down-core $\delta18O$, $\delta2H$ and d-excess variations to changes in evapotranspiration intensity and atmospheric moisture sources over late-Holocene timescales. The emerging Irish water stable isotope framework provides a scientific baseline for paleoclimate reconstruction and a practical tool for assessing hydrological stress and peatland restoration success, supporting evolving peat-management and climate-adaptation strategies in Ireland and the wider UK.
	James Johnson University of St Andrews 'Assessing the vulnerability of marine sedimentary Organic Carbon to anthropogenic pressure in Scotland's coastal waters.'	Coastal seabed sediments are critical to climate regulation. Despite this, their capability as a carbon store is being overlooked. Research has identified coastal seabed sediments as carbon burial hotspots. Yet, little attention has been drawn towards the vulnerability of these sediments under the effects of anthropogenic disturbance (bottom trawling), particularly on carbon storage. Bottom trawling resuspends sediments which may be remineralised, altering the natural carbon cycle. This study seeks to understand the impacts of bottom trawling on seabed sediments situated in the Firth of Clyde, on Scotland's West coast. With a rich trawling history, the Clyde has been subject to repeat disturbance since the industrial revolution. However, the ongoing impact on sedimentary Organic Carbon is still relatively unknown. This research seeks to better understand the impact of bottom trawling disturbance on seabed carbon dynamics though a series of laboratory experiments. By undertaking a primary assessment of its benthic sediments, this study utilises biogeochemical data in order to devise a resuspension experiment. Primarily, this will explore the physical impacts of trawling on muddy sediments which store greater quantities of labile carbon. This study expands the science basis used to inform future policy and protection in the Firth of Clyde, critical to ensuring its long-term suitability as a marine ecosystem whilst driving its economically profitable status.
	Robert Kenyon University of Sheffield 'A Multi-Proxy Palaeoenvironmental	The complexity of human evolution in Mainland Southeast Asia remains poorly understood, yet fossil and genetic analyses indicate it was a key area of Pleistocene adaptation, speciation, and admixture. Nevertheless, palaeoenvironmental understanding lacks resolution and is based on limited sites.

| | Investigation of Middle Pleistocene Northern Vietnam: Implications for Hominin Evolution and Mobility.' | Such analyses in the region typically focus on changes between open (savannah-like) or closed (rainforest-like) environments; using this measure, hominins appear to have favoured mosaic landscapes. However, Mainland Southeast Asia is potentially unique in the speed and magnitude of its environmental variability, and there are concerns that fluctuations may have been more rapid than current archaeological dating resolution can detect, potentially biasing results towards mosaic landscapes. Moreover, whilst current research focuses on canopy cover, changes between tropical and subtropical landscapes and their impact on hominin evolution remains unexamined.

To address these issues, multiple environmental proxies are used to quantify the speed and magnitude of changes to the Northern Tropical Margin throughout the Middle Pleistocene. Northern Vietnam was the focus, containing known hominin and faunal sites and being located adjacent to the present-day ecological margin. This study aims to identify how stable and continuous environmental conditions were across northern Vietnam throughout the Middle Pleistocene, and what mechanistic role the environment and resulting changes have played in hominin evolution.

Time-series ecological niche modelling methods were used to test responses of exclusively tropical flora to climatic changes over 800ka, supported by faunal dental mesowear and community structure analyses from specific sites in northern Vietnam. Early results suggest the frequency and magnitude of ecological changes were substantial, potentially challenging current site analyses and the efficacy of archaeological techniques for investigating palaeoecology in the region. |
| **Critical and political geography**

Chair: Sam Browning, University of Liverpool. | Enji Thomas

University of Cambridge

'Bad research is a worry for us all.' | The Cass Review/Report (CR) was commissioned by NHS England in September 2020, producing its final report in April 2024, with amendments in December 2024. Since its publication, the CR's recommendations have been uncritically accepted and implemented by successive governments. This includes its most controversial recommendation: the ban on puberty blockers for transgender, but not cisgender, children. This is despite wide-ranging critique of the CR's methodology, methods and conclusions (see Horton 2025; Kennedy 2025; Noone et al. 2025). While many of us within, and outwith, our discipline may be disappointed with bad research being used to set state policy, with this critical intervention, I contend that this disappointment must congeal into action for two interrelated but distinct reasons.

First, a failure to highlight our opposition to poorly designed, structured and articulated research denigrates our own efforts to do good research. If the CR is |

| | | permitted to avoid peer review while masquerading as academically rigorous, this becomes an existential worry for academia. What use are we if our words can be ignored or selectively chosen to support a violent status quo?

Second, our unactioned disappointment becomes a form of tacit violence itself. In the context of the CR, a (re)entrenchment of gender essentialist thought runs counter to the efforts of constructivist thinkers who have deftly articulated, decades ago, the importance of critiquing that which is seen as essential. Returning to an unproblematised notion of gender and sex is an active form of violence unto bodies which refuse, or are refused, those static conceptualisations of identity.

So, what can we do? To oppose the CR, we must always reflect on the gender essentialism that permeates our language, practices and research. To oppose bad research, we must interrogate the reasons that poor 'research' may give in its justification of its findings. And to prevent harm, we must all be activist-academics. |
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| | Stacia Carrington

University of St Andrews

'Giraffeonomics: A political ecology of giraffe conservation and trade in Botswana and Zambezi, Namibia.' | This presentation investigates how the giraffe geographies of Chobe National Park, Botswana and Salambala Community Conservancy, Zambezi, Namibia have been produced and reproduced, respectively, into spaces of conservation where elite political-economic actors are the beneficiaries. Previous inquiries into capitalist entangled conservation in Botswana and Namibia have explored how communities have failed to benefit at the level of other elite actors or from a species perspective have focused on other wildlife such as elephants and cheetahs. However, the role of giraffes – a charismatic keystone and umbrella species whose overall wild numbers have seen significant declines – and their capitalist enrollment and are a form of lively capital. Theoretically drawing from Ecological Marxism and Latourian ANT, this presentation will present a political ecology of the role of power and influence of the capitalist system of and on conservation in Zambezi, Namibia and Botswana while highlighting the heterogenous human-wildlife networks make up the giraffe conservation and trade regime and how these networks' actors are enrolled. This paper will draw from empirical data collected via semi-structured interviews and first-hand observations during my PhD fieldwork in Eastern Zambezi, Namibia and Botswana (2024) and desktop research. This presentation will argue that these spaces are geographies of capital and bio(diversity) accumulation, the later a concept I will introduce, through giraffes' enrollment into the capitalist political economy via non-consumptive and consumptive wildlife tourism. This presentation will add to our understanding of how capitalist driven conservation is coupled with economic, political, and power inequalities and how wildlife becomes enrolled as lively capital. |
| | Gemma Róisín Jolliffe | This submission is part of a broader PhD project that engages wind and the |

	University of Cambridge 'Towards the windscape: On methodological curiosity for performing the seanchaí, storyteller.'	banshee as two queer objects from which to consider the position(ing) of F/folklore and the audio(-visual) within the academy. In writing a new cultural geography of wind, this presentation specifically develops the 'windscape' as methodological intervention and means of scéalaíocht. This is to advance lively debates on the constitution of 'academic' material and broaden extant argumentation concerning the inclusion and validity of soundscape as both method and output. F/folk and the audio(-visual), as 'modes' of knowledge, continue to be relegated to the peripheries of the Western intellectual tradition. Attempting to undo this 'ontological freezing', this work rejects the neo-Kantianism structuring the Anglo-American academy that protects the dominance of textuality. As methodological intervention, then, this paper critically interrogates and problematises the normative use of the wind muff / shield. Attempting to apprehend the environment in its 'chaos' and 'excess', it seeks to undo (and deconstruct) the epistemological silencing and sanitisation of wind otherwise. The development of novel 'windscapes' works to this end; in writing a new cultural geography of wind, the anthropocentric is destabilised by attending to the interconnected agencies of the more-than-human. This allows for the conceptualisation of new ways of apprehending and knowing (Irish) landscapes, emerging from multiple and mutable experiences of dwelling. Importantly, these are landscapes in which lurk serious traces of dispossession by the British; this more-than-textual work seeks to articulate those strange encounters overflowing from the Atlantic Irish coast, testifying to the centrality of scéalaíocht, story-telling, and defending an Oral tradition carried with, in, and through the wind.
	Julia Lurfova Birmingham City University 'Listening out for queer musical (dis)comforts.'	During my doctoral ethnographic fieldwork situated in Glasgow's music venues, living rooms, and an instrument library, listening has emerged as a key methodological orientation and an entry way into the realm of bodily micro-politics. My research explores how improvised musicking – jamming – brings bodies and more-than-human entities intimately together in space. I draw from queer geographical and phenomenological work (Ahmed, 2006) to deconstruct how differently normalised bodies take up space and access comfort in unstructured musical settings. Attuning to my field site by way of listening to resonances, dissonances, and silences has helped me expand my discussion in ways that vision-centric research fails to register. A "word-of-mouth" ethnographic approach means moving between field sites by listening to the unexpected detours of everyday conversations and encounters. In jams themselves, where music is improvised on the spot, listening to each other is not just a matter of musical practicality; listening out for one another became a marker of a caring, empathetic atmosphere. However, lived experiences of bodies "out of place" expose how feeling heard is far from a

		universal experience. Jams, despite being fluidly improvised, (re)produce Western, white, cis-hetero-patriarchal norms that affect what sounds and what sounding bodies are un/desirable. Following sounds and stories of (dis)comfort allows me to tune into how different bodies take up space during jams, situating feminist discussions of gendered and otherwise normalised comportments in the context of sonic jamming environments. I argue for the relevance of listening in geographic research more broadly. As a perspective shift, it can attune us to how bodies inhabit, move through, and produce space beyond what is visible to the eye.
Migration Chair: Shriya Bajaj, University of Sheffield	Emma Etim University of Nottingham 'When waste travels: Memory and material responsibility beyond compliance.'	Contemporary waste governance in England is dominated by a compliance-based regulatory model, where participation is driven largely by formal instructions, collection schedules, and penalty-based enforcement. This approach assumes that behavioural change follows regulation. However, it neglects how deeper cultural meanings, social memory, and environmental value systems shape everyday waste practices. Drawing on 32 semi-structured interviews with Nigerian expert migrants, waste professionals, policymakers, and community leaders in both England and Nigeria, this study addresses the gap by exploring how Nigerian migrants in England navigate, reinterpret, and sometimes enrich waste management systems through culturally informed practices that predate migration. The study uncovers how participants anchor their waste-related decision-making not in regulatory obligation but in cultural logics that frame waste as a resource. These practices indicate that effective waste governance cannot rely on enforcement alone. When formal regulation is reinforced by culturally embedded values of reuse and responsibility, compliance becomes durable and self-sustaining. The findings demonstrate that migrants often practise a form of environmental responsibility that exceeds formal compliance, challenging the assumption that sustainability must be state-driven. By positioning waste as a site of cultural negotiation, this paper contributes to debates on environmental governance, transnational sustainability practices, and regulatory adaptation. It argues that England's waste policy would benefit from a shift toward cultural sustainability, while Nigeria can draw on migrant experiences to revitalise indigenous waste wisdom through locally grounded systems. The study calls for a move to balance compliance with culture as the foundation for meaningful and inclusive waste governance.
	Edith Adamson Northumbria University 'Diasporic Memories:	This project aims to explore how diasporic memory is shaped generationally and experienced across space in South Shields. Based in the North-East historic port town of South Shields, I am using oral histories to engage with geographical conversations about multiculture, diaspora and memory across the variety of communities present in the area. This paper will reflect on my research thus far, as

		Multigenerational Multiculture Within and Through South Shields.'	well as framing my work in the current climate of hostility towards migrants and minoritised groups. I will highlight how historic migration has shaped a community and formed key pillars of a town's identity. I aim to discuss not only how multiculture is evident now, but also how it was shaped historically, looking at how memory and current events can shape how narratives are formed, and which narratives become dominant. I intend to highlight the "hidden histories" of South Shields, by questioning which voices are most present in current historical documents, and which voices lack representation. In doing so, the paper will contribute to ongoing scholarship across historical and social geography, reflecting wider conceptual work on race and racism, everyday multiculture and diasporic communities.
		Yaotian Chen London School of Economics and Political Science 'Articulating Chineseness: The Transformation of Shanghai Street in Choryang-dong, Busan.'	Busan's Chinatown in Choryang-dong (today branded as "Shanghai Street") has never been a stable ethnic enclave. Instead, it has been repeatedly reshaped by geopolitical rupture, regulatory exclusion, and state-led redevelopment. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Busan between July and August 2024, this paper examines how "Chineseness" is produced, negotiated, and reconfigured through layered interactions among migrant practices, governance agendas, and transnational politics. Rather than treating Chineseness as a cultural essence, the paper conceptualises it as an articulated process that is only temporarily stabilised in specific urban contexts. It traces three interlocking layers: (1) historical temporariness shaped by wartime displacement, institutionalised exclusion (notably in property and finance), and territorial stigma, which hollowed out community reproduction and collective capacity; (2) post-1990s state-led branding that reterritorialised Shanghai Street through landscape-making and festivalisation, producing a culturally legible yet socially "hollow" Chinatown; and (3) the pragmatic remaking of Chineseness through everyday economic practice under legal ambiguity, particularly the rise and eventual formal recognition of Chinese foot massage, alongside PRC–ROC geopolitical contestation in Chinese-language education. The paper argues that in an ordinary city marked by social hollowing and temporariness, Chineseness is not reproduced through stable community continuity or inherited place-based identity. Rather, it is continuously rearticulated as a flexible and utilitarian resource through layered interactions among state-led redevelopment, migrant economic practices, and transnational political forces. In doing so, the paper shows how ethnic urban space can remain legible and operative even without durable enclave reproduction.
		Teresa Irigoyen-Lopez University of Oxford	It took me months to realise why I slept so poorly during my 16 months of ethnographic fieldwork in Qingtian, southern Zhejiang, China. I initially blamed the loneliness of fieldwork, the emotional toll of listening to migration stories, and constant jetlag from following participants across borders. I overlooked a more

	'Architecture of Insomnia: Illuminating Absence in a Chinese Overseas Migrant Village.'	obvious factor: the blinding lights of my residential high-rise, which glowed bright orange each evening, followed by strobes, lasers, and moving head beams that often shone directly into my wall-length windows until well past midnight.
		I had been paying close attention to Qingtian's built environment—European-style architecture, grand bridges, and modern high-rises financed largely by remittances from its vast overseas population. More than 70% of Qingtian's residents live abroad, mostly in southern Europe, making it a quintessential qiaoxiang, or hometown of overseas Chinese. By day, the urban landscape reflects pragmatic ambitions: a modernised hometown for migrants to return to. By night, however, Qingtian transforms into a surreal light spectacle—an excessive, nightly performance in an almost empty town.
		How should we understand this flamboyant display of light? For whom is the spectacle staged when so few remain to see it? And how does its repetitive, empty performance reflect a growing disillusionment with once-grand imaginations of migration? Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2023 and 2025, and engaging Henri Lefebvre's theory of space, Guy Debord's notion of spectacle, and China-focused scholarship by Julie Chu and Aihwa Ong, this paper examines what it means to illuminate an empty space, how Qingtian's disorienting light architecture underscores migrants' permanent absence.
Social Justice Chair: Shadma Ahmed, University of Bristol	Nic Cook Newcastle University 'Cripping Active Travel Futures.'	There is an urgent need to transform walking, wheeling, and cycling environments to support the participation of those most marginalised. This research centres disabled bodyminds and draws on feminist, queer, crip, theory and critical disability theory. Critical Access Studies, in particular, challenges dominant notions of accessibility by asking who gets access, under what conditions, and why, enabling more intersectional analyses. Critical disability perspectives help unpick normate assumptions about who is considered 'active' in active travel and by what means. Recent research has highlighted the diverse experiences of the built environment and how disabled people are often disadvantaged by design. Planning practices frequently reproduce ableist norms by defaulting to "Reference Man" or a "prototypical disabled body", reinforcing idealised notions of the productive, non-disabled citizen. This results in the systemic designing-out of disabled people from active travel infrastructure.
		These planning imaginaries are powerful: they shape policy and material outcomes, affecting who benefits and who is excluded. It is therefore vital to centre disabled people's lived expertise in active travel policy and for Critical Disability Studies to engage more deeply with urban and transport geographies that might assume normative models of health. Disability justice offers a crucial shift, framing accessibility not as a universal technical fix but as a complex, relational, and political process shaped by power and context. This perspective critiques

		compliance-focused standards in favour of justice-oriented, situated approaches. This research uses ethnographic methods and long-term engagement with active travel planners to explore how accessibility is understood and practiced. Findings are expected to reveal significant gaps in planning knowledge around disability and accessibility, for more inclusive, justice-informed practices.
	Sam Browning University of Liverpool 'Amplifying Neurodivergent Voices: Doing Care-full, Flexible, Mixed Methods Research into Students' Experience in HE.'	This presentation builds on work by geographers adopting care-full and flexible methodologies (Budworth, 2023), applying this to research investigating the everyday lives of neurodivergent students at Universities in England. Flexibility has already become embedded in both the design and deployment of qualitative methods in geographical research (Briggs, 2024). Nevertheless, in student geographies, the access opportunities desired by neurodivergent folk remain seldom explored, and neurotypical voices continue to be privileged. Drawing inspiration from crip theory (McRuer, 2006) and crip time (Kafer, 2013; Sheppard, 2020), this talk reflects on the use of flexible online interviewing (Budworth, ibid) and autoethnographic methodologies (Kašparová, 2025) to catalyse conversations about the unique strengths and barriers encountered by neurodivergent students at a range of Universities. I outline how I have aimed to conduct research with caring principles in mind to amplify the voices of neurodivergent students in relation to their dynamic, everyday student livelihoods. I suggest that, drawing on lived experience of neurodiversity provides a framework for designing and executing flexible research that produces cripistemologies (Johnson and McRuer, 2024), which enable students to envision neuroinclusive University environments under the ethos of 'Nothing About Us Without Us' (Kingsbury et al, 2020).
	Donata Kika University of Nottingham, 'The Production and Experience of Territorial Stigma: Westminster's Council Estates.'	The City of Westminster is synonymous with political power and extreme wealth. However, it also contains some of Britain's starkest spatial inequalities. Across its 40 council estates, residents experience intense deprivation in close proximity of some of London's most expensive properties and world-class cultural institutions. This research investigates how territorial stigmatisation, the symbolic defamation of place that marks residents with a "spoiled collective identity" (Wacquant, 2007), operates in this unique context of extreme affluence and poverty. While territorial stigmatisation has been extensively theorised in contexts of peripheral, isolated disadvantage, less attention has been paid to how it manifests when stigmatised estates exist within prestigious postcodes that elsewhere signify status and privilege. This creates a 'double bind' where residents navigate both borough-level prestige and estate-level stigma, raising crucial questions about the impacts of this spoiled identity on the average resident. This study examines three Westminster council estates, employing mixed methods to understand both spatial patterns and lived experiences of territorial stigmatisation. Quantitative approaches include GIS spatial analysis, statistical

		analysis of census data, and longitudinal analysis tracking how the 1980s Right to Buy scheme accelerated social housing residualisation. Qualitative work involves 15-20 semi-structured interviews with estate residents exploring their experiences of stigma, how they navigate it, and what it means for daily life. This is supported by surveys (200-300 responses) to gage how widespread these experiences are, alongside ethnographic observations documenting the boundaries that mark these spaces. Early findings suggest that living next to extreme wealth may actually intensify stigma rather than reduce it, with residents navigating barriers in employment and services whilst developing complex strategies to manage this.
	Camille Rantz-Mc Donald University of Sheffield 'The impacts of urban planning on nomadism.'	This paper contributes to debates on race and urban planning through a long-term perspective on the experiences of Gypsies and Travellers. English nomads live at the sharp end of both the so called 'last acceptable form of racism', and the national housing crisis. However, the 'Traveller problem' is largely absent from housing and social justice debates. Nomadism is inscribed in sedentarist planning legislation, yet, the historic undersupply of accommodation is compounded by systemic ambivalence and racism towards Gypsies and Travellers, forcing many families to abandon this central tenet of their culture. Literature reveals nomads as perennial outsiders subjected to historic persecution and policies of assimilation and sedentarisation (Taylor, 2014). Resultant spatial segregation is thus imposed and, concurrently, a form of resistance. Today 'hundreds of mini ghettos' (Powell, 2013) are situated in liminal locations often next to environmental hazards having detrimental impacts on these communities' health and wellbeing (Quarmby, 2025). This research retraces planning legislation from 1960 and examines the wide-ranging impacts by employing a mixed methodology. Oral histories centre Gypsies and Travellers perspectives. Analysis of hard-to-reach planning data provides empirical context, evidencing the scope of the contemporary problem. Counter-mapping of policy discourse interrogates decision making and their spatial implications. Preliminary findings reveal policies influenced by politics, normative values and a widespread lack of cultural awareness. An unattainable evidential burden, and a protracted planning process across decentralised institutions contributes to widely held negative stereotypes ascribed to nomads. These adversely impact inter-community relations. Disproportionately high refusal rates for private provision and oversubscription and mismanagement of public provision leave long-term economic, social and health impacts across multiple generations.
	Emily Aisthorpe University of Lincoln	Post 2008 financial crash, housing in the UK has been characterised as precarious and unaffordable. Particularly as welfare and public spending cuts through austerity have made housing increasingly unattainable for those is marginalised communities (Preece et al, 2019). Home is fundamental to our wellbeing, providing

	'A Housing System That Cares? Exploring the gendered impact of housing precarity in the UK's marginalised communities.'	a sense of belonging and ontological security (Hiscock et al, 2001: Blunt and Dowling, 2006). Therefore its precarity its detrimental not only to our lives and physical wellbeing but to our mental and social wellbeing. Simultaneously in austerity Britain public spending cuts are removing care infrastructures forcing them into the individual home (Power and Mee, 2019). As these care practices move into the home they systematically fall upon women to carry out this unpaid work (Franklin, 2019). Therefore at this intersection of housing precarity and individualised care practices it is saliant to understand, how are women navigating care on a day to day and how is this impacting their feelings of home? The presentation will focus on my master's research exploring how these complexities play out in the UK's marginalised communities. Using a case study of Grimsby: a deindustrialised town on the mouth of the Humber Estuary. The research uses ethnographic and creative methodologies to explore how housing precarity is impacting women's caring practices and feelings of home, including participant observations diary methods and walking interviews. The early finding of which will be presented, including a discussion of implementing these research methods. Finally the presentation will touch on feminist reflexivity and how this has been implemented when researching marginalised communities.
Sustainability and Resilience Chair: Mingzhe Yuan, University College London	Gabriele Radzeviciute Liverpool Hope University 'Communities living in (multi)hazard environments: construction and operationalisation of a local context-specific vulnerability and resilience framework through the island Stromboli, (Aeolian Islands).'	Although the research addressing different vulnerability dimensions and resilience capacities of populations living in natural hazard settings in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) has evolved considerably over the last 30 years, a significant gap remains: the absence of a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and multidimensional approach to assess vulnerability and resilience, specifically tailored to local communities living in (multi)hazard environments. This PhD contributes to addressing that gap by developing a holistic local context-specific vulnerability and resilience framework. The purpose of this novel framework is to integrate the target community's social dynamics, hazard risk perceptions, lived experiences, and (multi)hazard conditions, which all shape and influence various vulnerability dimensions and resilience capacities. By capturing complex interdependencies between those components, the framework aims to address the target community's overall vulnerability and resilience. The framework is conceptualised through a non-traditional and novel research approach of methodological bricolage, which whilst drawing on information and data from diverse sources, offers interdisciplinary and multidimensional perspectives, and fosters flexibility. The research details contextualisation and operationalisation of the framework through the island of Stromboli and discusses how methodological bricolage enables a systematic and iterative comprehension of the Strombolani community's overall vulnerability and resilience. The main emphasis is placed on

		how in-depth and robust evaluation of different components within the framework, including specific community dynamics, (multi)hazard conditions, and Strombolani's hazard risk perceptions, provides thick description(s) and insights to achieve a nuanced and holistic vulnerability and resilience assessment of the Strombolani community.
	Abdullahi Tijjani University of Salford 'Climate Change, Biodiversity and Airport Sustainability.'	Airports are essential elements of international transport infrastructure and significantly contribute to global carbon emissions. This investigation examines the potential to implement infrastructure at airport estates to enhance sustainability, providing benefits such as temperature regulation, energy conservation, improved public health, enhanced ecosystem services, and support for urban biodiversity. Nevertheless, a primary challenge associated with these initiatives is that vegetation attracts bird species, thereby increasing the risk of bird strikes and associated issues. To optimise environmental benefits while ensuring aviation safety, it is vital to employ effective bird-deterrent strategies in conjunction with airport greening initiatives. The study will also review selected exemplary greening initiatives, identify best practices, and evaluate the potential for their replication across various contexts, particularly within the United Kingdom.
	Chiyasmi Devi Alumni (King's College London) 'Blue Urbanism: Sustainable Water Transport for Growing Cities.'	Rapid urbanisation in emerging economies is intensifying pressure on land-based transport systems, demanding innovative and sustainable mobility solutions. This paper explores blue urbanism as an alternative transport paradigm, using Guwahati, the largest city in Northeast India, and the River Brahmaputra as a case study. As a critical economic, cultural, and ecological hub, Guwahati plays a significant role in regional development. However, decades of fragmented urban planning and permissive development controls have resulted in extensive urban sprawl and severe traffic congestion. Recent state-led interventions have prioritised flyover construction to redistribute vehicular traffic, yet these measures remain reactive and land-centric. This research argues that Guwahati's most underutilised asset is its blue infrastructure, which offers a transformative solution. The Brahmaputra, alongside the city's network of streams and canals, presents opportunities to develop an integrated boat metro system aligned with global marine sustainability standards. Drawing inspiration from cities such as London, Amsterdam, and Venice, this study proposes adapting water-based public transport models to Guwahati's socio-environmental context. The proposed solution integrates brownfield blue spaces into a metro-style transport network, redistributing commuter dependency from buses alone to a multimodal system combining road and water transport. Selected routes are designed to support tourism-driven mobility, including a direct water connection between the city's airport and its wedding tourism hub, enabling public–private

		partnerships between transport authorities and hospitality stakeholders. Challenges such as seasonal drying of waterways and siltation are addressed through rainwater harvesting reservoirs, sediment filtration at hill foothills, and reuse of silt in eco-friendly construction. While capital-intensive, project holds potential to redefine blue urbanism in India.
	Karen Brown Loughborough University 'The Road to Resilience: The Geographies of English Youth Centres Capacity and Capability.'	Are youth organisations fit for purpose within the current socio-economic climate of the country? On the 10th of November 2025, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) released the first National Youth Strategy in over two decades, which aims to confront immediate challenges raised by the 10.6 million young people within England. A large focus is on the development of out-of-school youth provisions that are and or not available to young people. Where my PhD is important is the study on the resilience of the current youth organisations that are available out-of-school hours for the young people. The research project aims to create a two-fold framework for 'resilience' that is applicable within human geography and wider social science disciplines where the type of resilience which should be undertaken and applied depends on the type of barrier which must be overcome. The development will stem from Holling's (1973) work on resilience, as he is one of the original key scholars on the topic. Furthermore, within out-of-school youth provision, there will be an analysis on DCMS's reasoning and justification for what constitutes a youth organisation and whether this is suitable or if it creates a bias. Continuing, I aim to undertake research on the geographies of workers at the request of DCMS. This will take place through the comparison of youth organisations which have staff models of fully paid, fully volunteer, and a hybrid of paid and volunteers. Alongside the comparison of the staff models, analysis on economic, social, psychological and infrastructural components of the youth organisations will also take place. The conclusive aim is to see which model works the best in the current socio-economic climate, and to provide DCMS with conclusive evidence on how to further improve out-of-school youth provision. Holling, C.S. (1973). Resilience and Stability of Ecological Systems. Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics. 4. 1-23.
	Halle Krieger University of Exeter 'Detecting Early Opportunity Signals in the Transition to Electric Vehicles Using Google Trends.'	This study investigates whether early opportunity signals (EOS) indicating a tipping point toward electric vehicle (EV) adoption can be detected using Google Trends data. Building on the work of Boulton, Buxton, and Lenton (2025), who identified EOS in online EV advertisement viewership, this study applies similar statistical methods to EV-related search queries across various geographies. The analysis shows a rising AR(1)

		trend across regions with high EV adoption, indicating declining resilience in online interest in internal combustion engine vehicles (ICEVs) and providing evidence of an approaching tipping point. The United States stands out as the only region not exhibiting these signs, aligning with its slower EV adoption compared to the other regions studied. These findings demonstrate the applicability of Google Trends as a tool for detecting EOS in sociotechnical transitions and provides insights into the potential tipping point of EV adoption across diverse regions with a novel social dataset.
Gender Chair: Sarah L. Evans, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)	Shriya Bajaj University of Sheffield 'Food Access Is Governed Before Markets: Women's Lived Experiences Negotiating Inequalities in Rural Bihar, India.'	Food access has traditionally been studied through economic and infrastructural lenses, emphasising availability, markets, prices, and household resources. More recent work has begun to acknowledge social determinants, yet access is still often treated as a measurable condition rather than an everyday social practice. Drawing on feminist approaches to food access, this research reframes access to nutrient-dense foods (NDFs) as a negotiated, embodied process shaped through women's everyday practices. The paper examines women's experiences of accessing NDFs across interconnected spaces; the household and the journey to food acquisition sites. By conceptualising food access as a process unfolding across these spaces, the analysis shifts attention away from markets alone toward the everyday social and spatial relations that structure who can procure food, when, and under what conditions. This study is based on in-depth interviews conducted in Bihar, India with women from different household contexts. The findings show that decisions about accessing NDFs are negotiated well before women reach markets. Within households, access is shaped by decision-making hierarchy and power dynamics. Beyond the household, the journey to food acquisition sites emerges as a critical and socially differentiated space of inequality. Remoteness is not experienced as a fixed geographical condition; rather, distance and accessibility are understood, navigated, and endured differently depending on a woman's caste, household composition, and socio-economic position. These inequalities are further exacerbated during extreme weather conditions, when mobility, safety, and physical endurance become crucial to accessing everyday nutrition. Reframing food access as a lived, relational process shows how women's everyday practices are shaped by social and spatial inequalities, positioning access itself as a key site of inequality within everyday foodways.
	Hannah Redman University of Sheffield	My PhD research aims to analyse the complexity of emotional responses women feel during and after a sexual harassment incident, through their reflections when sharing stories. Unlike previous scholarship ascribing a 'fear' response onto these

		experiences, my research foregrounds a more diverse emotional framing. Feminist geographers have frequently oriented research toward the premise that women feel less safe when inhabiting and traversing through public spaces – most notably in the work of Gill Valentine (1989, 1990, 1992) and Rachel Pain (2000, with Koskela; 2001). Such research starts from a particular set of assumptions – or, perhaps, a prevailing narrative – about what an incident of sexual harassment looks like, where it takes place (primarily on the street) and how the 'victim' responds to the incident (with fear).
	'Problematising the 'street' of street harassment: A narrative analysis of sexual harassment testimonies.'	In this presentation, I problematise the spatial and emotive aspects of this sexual harassment stereotype. I will be presenting original research on sexual harassment testimonies, posted on the anonymous testimony-sharing website 'Everyone's Invited'. To group these testimonies, I use the term 'public sexual harassment', to refer to experiences of catcalling, wolf-whistling, indecent exposure, stalking and verbal & physical acts of unwanted (sexual) attention in public spaces. Through narrative analysis, I will note how the telling of these stories complicates traditional understandings of how so-called 'street harassment' is experienced, in particular where these incidents take place. This research contributes empirically to feminist research on sexual harassment, whilst advocating for an appreciation of the reflective power of the narrative form.
	Abbie Mathewson University of Nottingham 'Gendered histories of climate coloniality: Insights from colonial Kenya.'	In conjunction with the worsening climate crisis the importance of successful, equitable climate adaptation strategies is essential. Yet with the increasing urgency for adaptation interventions, policymakers and practitioners must be cautious of the potential for disaster colonialism and climate coloniality. Coloniality survives colonialism and remains embedded in societies long after independence, influencing culture, institutions, and social relations. To completely understand the long-lasting impacts of climate coloniality today, we must first examine how it came into being in different contexts. Often when investigating climate coloniality, factors such as gender are overlooked and their overwhelming influence ignored. This paper presents early results from archival investigations and oral histories to understand localised gendered histories of foodways, food security, and disaster relief in colonial Kenya whilst navigating the trials of the archives. The ultimate aim of this research is to provide context for present-day adaptation interventions in order to help avert maladaptive strategies that entrench inequalities brought about by colonial rule.
	Shadma Ahmed	This paper examines how Muslim girls and women in Mumbai experience and negotiate everyday forms of control, violence and insecurity, and how these

	University of Bristol 'Negotiating Insecurity, Practising Resistance: Muslim Women's Lives in Mumbai.'	encounters shape gendered and religious practices of mobility, belonging, and resistance. Drawing on ethnographic data across women-only piety circles, university campuses, playgrounds, gyms, it centers navigation of everyday Islamophobia, gendered scrutiny, and uneven access to public spaces. The paper attempts to document mundane and routine forms of control that shape everyday lives such as surveillance, moral policing, institutional exclusions, and anticipatory fears. Mumbai emerges not simply as a site of constraint, but as a terrain of constant negotiation where insecurity is unevenly distributed and continuously managed. This paper crucially foregrounds acts of resistance through space and place-making strategies as a response to control, and as an everyday, embodied, and relational practice. My participants respond to forms of control through moving their bodies, creating women-only religious/study spaces, reworking university norms, and using faith-based idioms to assert dignity and moral authority. These practices do not necessarily take the form of overt protest, but they operate through subtle acts of place-making through resilience, reworking, and resistance reshaping how spaces are used and inhabited. The paper shows how girls and women actively reconfigure spaces at multiple scales, from homes and campuses to religious spaces, producing alternative geographies of belonging, safety and solidarity. These forms of resistance are shaped by, yet not reducible to, existing inequalities as they reveal how marginalised urban subjects live with and push against insecurity in ways that are politically meaningful even when they remain informal or fragile.
	Lauren Powell University of Exeter 'Trans-exclusionary movements and moral panics.'	Over the past eight years, the UK has seen a rise in the prominence of trans-exclusionary movements – a moral panic that has embedded itself within parliamentary politics, media establishments and healthcare services. Understanding how the trans-exclusionary moral panic operates can help further our understanding of dehumanisation, othering and the weaponization of space. There have been significant developments to moral panic theory, in various social sciences, since its popularisation in the 1990's. However, geographic research into moral panics remains limited. The main objective of this qualitative research is to explore the mechanisms by which moral panics operate and develop. Using critical discourse analysis to examine 'gender-critical' materials and government legislation, this research study examines the key strategies and ideologies employed by UK-based 'gender-critical' groups and their allies.
Environmental Change	Cory Ettiene Durham University	This paper explores the fragile meeting point of ecology, migration, and heritage in Morocco's Drâa Valley, where Amazigh weaving traditions are now close to disappearing. For centuries, weaving relied on the desert's resources: pastures for

Chair: Zenobia Kusi-Afrakoma, Trinity College Dublin	'The Last Thread: Domestic Weaving as Evidence of Environmental Change in Southern Morocco.'	sheep, plants for natural dyes, and family spaces that served as both homes and workshops. These elements once tied craft to community and to the wider networks of the Sahara. Today, that balance is breaking down. Desertification reduces grazing land, dye plants are vanishing, and resource scarcity is driving migration that unsettles the communities who have carried these skills across generations. Drawing on my doctoral research and documentary project The Last Thread, I treat weaving as material culture that is both historical record and living archive. Each textile bears traces of ecological change, trade, and memory. Looms set up in courtyards or rooms are not only spaces of making but evidence of how women's labour has shaped identity and continuity in fragile environments. By combining archaeological attention to material culture with geographical concerns of ecology and mobility, this paper argues that the "last thread" of weaving signals more than the loss of a craft. It marks the unraveling of the ecological and social systems that once sustained it, raising urgent questions about how we preserve culture as part of the wider struggle for sustainability in the Sahara.
	Lily Innes-Jones University of Sheffield 'Microplastics in Mountain Water Towers: Current Evidence, Methods, and Uncertainties.'	Mountains act as nature's water towers, capturing water from the atmosphere and storing it as snow and glacial ice, as well as in wetlands, lakes and ponds. These water stores are crucial, providing food and water security for ~1.9 billion people globally. While changes in water quantity are well studied, water quality—particularly the presence of emerging contaminants such as microplastics (<5 mm)—remains poorly understood. Recent studies have detected microplastics in glacier ice, seasonal snow, proglacial lakes, rivers and sediments in remote mountain environments, spanning the European Alps to the Himalayas and the Ecuadorian Andes, suggesting that mountains may temporarily store microplastics. This presentation synthesises current literature on microplastics in mountain environments, with a particular focus on the methods used for sampling, extraction, and analysis. A critical review of these studies highlights substantial methodological inconsistencies, including differences in sampling mechanisms, contamination controls, size detection limits, identification techniques and classifications. Such discrepancies increase uncertainty in reported concentrations and particle characteristics, preventing a robust reconstruction of microplastic behaviour from atmospheric deposition, through proglacial catchments, to downstream rivers. Consequently, the potential implications of microplastics for downstream water security remain poorly constrained. By identifying these

		knowledge gaps, this review provides a foundation for ongoing research, which will investigate microplastic transport in mountain catchments, with the aim of improving understanding in ways that could benefit local communities who depend on this water.
	Catarina Angioni Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience (Coventry University) 'Rethinking Nature-based Solutions in Pastoral Drylands: Equity, Conflict and Knowledge Weaving.'	Climate change, land degradation and resource competition are reshaping the social-ecological landscape of East Africa's drylands, placing increasing pressure particularly on pastoralist livelihoods. These pressures are increasingly intertwined with local and regional conflicts which create new vulnerabilities. Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are frequently promoted as low-cost, ecologically aligned responses to these challenges. However, despite their rapid uptake in policy and conservation practice, a critical understanding of how NbS are being adopted in pastoral systems, and particularly the social implications of these interventions, is still largely lacking. Existing assessments largely centre on ecological metrics, while overlooking impacts on mobility, customary governance, Indigenous knowledge systems and the equity implications of externally designed interventions. As a result, many NbS risk reproducing postcolonial conservation logics, generating new exclusions or failing to support effective resilience building. This presentation outlines two major conceptual and empirical gaps in current NbS approaches for drylands. First, the limited and ecologically biased "menu" of NbS available to pastoralists. Second, the persistent misalignment between NbS design and the social, cultural and political realities that shape pastoralist adaptation. I introduce my proposed field research in Laikipia, Kenya, which will explore how knowledge weaving across Indigenous and scientific systems can inform more context-specific, equitable and socially grounded NbS. The talk highlights the need to reposition NbS within broader debates on climate adaptation, conservation justice and pastoral futures.
	Stella Nwawulu Chiemela University of York 'Assessing the Impact of Environmental Change and Conflict on Livelihood Security: Insights from Vulnerable Communities in Nigeria.'	Rapid environmental change, particularly declining rainfall reliability and land degradation, has intensified competition over natural resources in Nigeria, fueling farmer-herder conflict and undermining livelihoods. Despite growing recognition of the environment-conflict nexus, there remains limited empirical evidence on how these interacting stressors shape households' livelihood security in Nigeria. This study addresses existing research gaps by exploring how environmental change and farmer-herder conflict influence the household food and livelihood (in)security of farmers and herders in the Enugu and Benue states. Data were collected using questionnaires from a total of 161 crop farming households and 101 herding households. A total of 11 focus group discussions were also conducted. The data collected informed four household livelihood indices: Household Livelihood Security Index (HLSI), Household Food Security Index (HFSI), Household Adaptive Capacity Index (HACI), and Household Adaptation Strategies Index

		(HASI). The households' perceived direction of change for livelihood security and food security indices were captured using -1 (decreasing), 0 (no change) and 1 (increasing), while number codes were assigned to the indicators for adaptive capacity and adaptation strategies indices depending on the response. The results suggest that the impacts of environmental change and farmer-herder conflict on household livelihood security were greater for Benue State and for herders. The findings revealed no statistical and statistically significant alignment between HACI, HASI and HFSI for farming and herding households, respectively. These findings can be used to understand the interplay between environmental change, resource use conflict, and livelihood security, suggesting that conflict-sensitive approaches and interventions are necessary to effectively address the interconnectedness between environmental change, conflict, and livelihood security.
	Naina Agrawal-Hardin University of Cambridge 'Grassroots Climate Resilience in Small Island States: Three Case Studies from the Maldives.'	The Maldives's first democratically elected president, Mohammed Nasheed, brought international attention to small island states' intense vulnerability to climate change in 2009 when he hosted an "underwater cabinet meeting" to raise awareness about the risks facing the Indian Ocean archipelago. Since then, significant scholarly attention has been paid to the Maldives's role in international climate negotiations and to its national resilience initiatives, many of which have unfolded in the past decade against a backdrop of democratic backsliding and recentralization of national governance. Comparatively little scholarship has examined grassroots and decentralized climate resilience efforts in the Maldives, many of which are led by local NGOs and take place outside of the country's densely populated capital city of Malé. This project draws upon fieldwork, semi-structured interviews, and a literature review to contextualize three case studies of grassroots, decentralized climate resilience initiatives in the Maldives. The case studies include Noonu Atoll's Regionally Integrated Sustainability Initiative; EcoCare Maldives's Citizens' Climate Assemblies; and LandSea Maldives's Strategic Advocacy for Environmental Rights (SAFER) project. The case studies highlight how the archipelago's dispersed atoll geography, coupled with its recent political history, prompt local leaders to view decentralized, grassroots participation in ecological governance as a climate resilience measure in and of itself. This project complements existing scholarship on centralized climate adaptation efforts in the Maldives and suggests avenues for future research on grassroots ecological citizenship as a form of resilience in small island geographies.

| **Development and Regeneration**

Chair: Chiyasmi Devi | Keegan Covey

Trinity College Dublin

'Customary Land Formalisation and the Political Economy of Aid in Liberia.' | Customary land formalisation has become an increasingly prominent focus of African development policy, as represented in Liberia following the 2018 Land Rights Act (LRA). While promoted as a means of enhancing tenure security, reducing disputes, and strengthening community agency, formalisation is also embedded within aid-driven agendas that emphasise investment, productivity, and market integration. This paper examines how foreign-supported customary land formalisation unfolds in practice, focusing on how it reshapes the political economy of land by reconfiguring authority, participation, and disputes within and between communities.

The study adopts a qualitative interpretive research design combining semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Ninety-five interviews were conducted in two counties across three districts, covering approximately sixteen towns engaged in USAID-supported land formalisation initiatives. Participants include customary leaders, community members, NGO workers, and state officials. Documentary sources include legislation and donor documents. Thematic coding is used to analyse land governance, dispute processes, and participation.

Preliminary findings suggest that formalisation may reduce the intensity of land disputes in the short term through structured dispute resolution procedures and training. However, significant challenges remain regarding community capacity for self-governance and continued resolution without continued institutional or donor support. At the same time, customary land is increasingly framed as a leasable and investable resource, even where alienation is formally restricted.

The paper argues that foreign-supported land formalisation in Liberia is reconfiguring the political economy of customary land, including community expectations around external investment, marketisation of land, and the meaning of "custom" itself. |
| | Jingjing Shi

London School of Economics and Political Science

'Socioeconomic Development Shapes the Effectiveness and Equity of Loss and Damage Finance.' | The establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund at COP27 raised expectations for supporting climate vulnerable countries, yet implementation remains constrained by unresolved questions on contribution rules, eligibility and evidence of effectiveness. Addressing these issues requires an analytical framework that links socioeconomic development conditions with impacts of financial transfers. This study develops a scenario-based approach to examine how socioeconomic pathways shape both the scale and effects of Loss and Damage transfers on energy, water and agricultural systems.

We focus on Shared Socioeconomic Pathways, SSP1, SSP2 and SSP5, to |

| | | quantify how differences in growth, vulnerability and sectoral structures influence fund size and allocation. For simplification, climate damages are imposed on national GDP to derive allocation patterns. Using the Global Change Analysis Model (GCAM), we simulate how fund inflows affect national CO_2 emissions, energy use, agricultural production and water withdrawals for both donors and recipients. Across all scenarios, Loss and Damage transfers lead to measurable sectoral changes, but their magnitude is small relative to variation driven by socioeconomic development. For example, primary energy use in vulnerable recipient regions in 2050 differs by about 70.8 EJ between SSP1 and SSP5, while the difference between fund and no-fund cases within SSP5 is roughly 7.9 EJ. Sectoral structures also diverge by pathway: fossil fuel shares reach 71% in SSP5 compared with 61% in SSP1, and fund transfers alone do not alter these trajectories. In some cases, fund inflows raise local energy, food and water prices.

Our results show that the performance and equity of the L&D Fund depend strongly on the socioeconomic context in which transfers are deployed. Climate finance assessment therefore requires greater attention to development pathways and their interactions with the broader system. |
| | Jiaxin Gu

Newcastle University/South China University of Technology

'Strategic Order in Ambiguity: Local Planning as Discursive Intermediation in the Desakota of the Pearl River Delta, China.' | Over the past forty years of reform and regional development in Southern China, a distinct type of mixed urbanCrural space has emerged, which are commonly conceptualized as Desakota, a term introduced by McGee to describe settlement patterns in rapidly urbanizing Asian regions.
Given the dual 'grey spaces'both in urban informality and cross-scalar discourse construction, this paper draws on discursive institutionalism and Healey's concept of institutional capacity to conceptualize local planning as strategic discursive intermediation, through which discursiveCspatial relations are selectively assembled to mediate between higher-level policy mandates and locally embedded interests.
The analysis employs participant observation and interview, focusing on how different actors and coalitions create, construct, and institutionalize these discursive formations in specific episodes, including planning making, negotiation, propaganda and meeting. Systematic analysis is conducted in three case studies to reveal how township-level governments respond to the top-down mandates through strategic discourse construction. A typology of three forms of discursive - spatial nexus is proposed - Alignment (Upward formal alignment), Reconfiguration (Discursive meaning reconstruction) and Decoupling (Nominality - actuality decoupling) - to capture different strategic relationships between formal discourse and situated practices under conditions of institutional ambiguity and informality. |

		By analyzing multi-actor interactions and discourse constructions process, the research reflects on how historicity, locality, discursive constructions and planning embedding vividly enact in local governance of China, highlighting strategic ambiguity as a constitutive feature and contributing to debates on planning and informality in the Global South.
	Tika Hasan University of Leeds 'Identity of place and mega event-led regeneration: What is this place allowed to become?'	Mega event-led regeneration is a highly visible form of urban transformation that reshapes not only the physical environment but also the meanings and identities attached to place. These regeneration strategies often prioritise attracting external audiences such as investors, tourists, and new residents, over addressing the needs of existing communities. The resulting homogenisation of urban spaces to appeal to outsiders raises critical questions about authenticity and whose identity is being represented. In such circumstances, urban design as public policy plays a key role in negotiating these tensions, aiming to guide development beyond market-driven priorities. Yet, translating policy aspirations into built form while balancing diverse priorities remain a complex challenge. My presentation frames mega event-led regeneration not simply as material change but as a contested process of redefining what a place is "allowed" to become. Drawing on the 2012 London Olympic legacy, the study employs qualitative methods, including local plan analysis and semi-structured interviews, with critical systems heuristic approach to investigate the construction of place identity through policy discourse, design strategies, and everyday spatial practices. Findings from this research aim to advance the understanding of urban regeneration that moves beyond design excellence toward a systemic, context-sensitive, and reflexive planning practice.
	Dion George University of Southampton 'Monitoring Uncontrolled Expansion of Small-scale Artisanal Mining in Ghana's Ashanti Region.'	Artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) has expanded in a rapid and incohesive way across Ghana, generating significant environmental impacts and changing land-use patterns. This study presents a first-stage detection framework that integrates multispectral remote sensing and deep learning over a seven-year period (2018-25) to identify and track the unmanageable spread of artisanal mining in the Ofin Basin, a heavily affected region of Ghana. The proposed approach is designed as an initial processing layer within a broader monitoring pipeline, providing robust and accurate footprint delineation for downstream spatiotemporal and causal analyses. The initial results indicate an uncontrolled expansion of mining-related surface disturbances with increased mining footprint growth, encroachment into protected areas, and increasing pressure on other land cover classes, including forests, agricultural land, and water bodies. Compared to a largely static industrial mining footprint, ASM area grew by ~20% over the seven-year monitoring period. As a first-stage framework, the proposed method provides

| | | a foundational dataset for subsequent research into noncompliance and socio-political factors in the growth of artisanal mining in Ghana. |

Full Listings for Online sessions

Session Title and chair	Presenter, Institution, and paper title	Abstract
Cities and Infrastructure Chair Ed Armston-Sheret, Royal Geographical Society (with Institute of British Geographers).	Sophie Laidlaw Liverpool John Moores Univeristy 'Establishing Resilient Community Flood Groups to Reduce Flood Impacts in England and Wales.'	Flooding is one of the most common natural hazards within England and Wales. Focus within the flooding sector is currently on reducing flood risk, however, a more progressive approach is required. Community Flood Groups are one way to achieve this, by ensuring that communities are represented and have a voice. These grassroot community groups are vital in providing a platform for flood affected communities, however, the sustainability of these groups is precarious, with many becoming dormant or disbanding over time. Therefore, it is important that we improve the sustainability of these groups, through the creation of a Community Flood Group Sustainability Model. This research identifies initial key factors that can influence community flood group sustainability, through an online survey distributed to all known flood group members, asking questions regarding the group's demographics, practices and relationships with key flood actors. 132 responses were collected from 102 groups in England and Wales. Reflective thematic analysis was used to identify reoccurring themes within the responses, that were then used to identify initial community flood group sustainability factors. A range of both positive and negative factors were identified, such as age of group members, which can be detrimental to group longevity if younger generations are not involved, which is the case in many of the groups. Other factors include the groups communication methods, being able to reach residents in time of need and use of social media, perceived active status of the group and their relationships with key flood actors. These are all determined as factors that may affect the groups sustainability. These preliminary factors will be taken forward to phase 2 of the research, where further research methods, including interviews and workshops, will be used to confirm and identify further factors, ultimately resulting in the creation of a Community Flood Group Sustainability Model.
	Nancy Brett Linköping University 'Beyond Distance: Boundary-Making and the Negotiation of Localness in a Swedish City-Regional Food System.'	Local food systems are increasingly promoted as pathways to sustainable consumption and food security; yet, the concept of "local" remains fluid, contested, and deeply contextual. This paper examines how localness is constructed, negotiated, and operationalised within a local-regional food system in Östergötland, Sweden. Drawing on a case study comprising interviews with farmers, retailers, restaurateurs, and policy strategists, we examine how spatial, relational, and values-based proximities intersect to shape the definition of local food. Localness emerges through ongoing negotiations among actors, shaped by moral geographies, infrastructural arrangements, and institutional frameworks rather than predefined spatial boundaries. While actors invoke distance-based criteria, relational trust and symbolic associations such as quality, fairness, and

		national identity are equally central. These definitions influence business practices, where small-scale ideals coexist with reliance on centralised distribution systems, and lose connection with the expected properties of but stripped of relational proximity. Policy frameworks at the EU, national, and regional levels further complicate these dynamics, as strategies aimed at scaling local food often prioritise efficiency and standardisation, inadvertently marginalising small producers. Our results indicated that national and regional circularity, along with resource self-sufficiency, remain peripheral in both practice and policy, despite their potential to enhance resilience, which is a key feature of local food systems. We argue that integrating sustainability into everyday food system practices requires moving beyond fixed spatial metrics, embracing the negotiated, socio-material nature of localness, and recognising its relational and symbolic dimensions alongside structural constraints
	Micaela Mancini Gran Sasso Science Institute 'Fast (and furious) policy: The 15-minute City in Oxford.'	The 15-minute city (15mC) has gained global traction as a model for sustainable urbanism in post-pandemic times. However, the same features that facilitate its widespread adoption can also produce policy ambiguity, opening it to confusion, contestation, and ideological framing. This paper examines how the 15mC rationale mutates as it rapidly travels (the "fast"), focusing on how its uptake in Oxford, UK, provoked intense backlash (the "furious"). Drawing on the policy mobility literature and the concept of fast policy, the 15mC exemplifies an ambivalent urban rationale: a model subtly informed by neoliberal governance logics while also aspiring to reimagine urban life. Based on qualitative research, including the analysis of planning documents, media sources, and twelve semi-structured interviews, the paper traces how the 15mC became entangled with traffic-calming policy and became the target of a conspiratorial-populist backlash. The example of Oxford reveals how urban policies "on the move" can become symbolic flashpoints when intersecting with affective, institutional, and ideological fault lines. The study highlights the generative effects of policy ambiguity, and calls for context-sensitive approaches to urban governance. In doing so, this paper contributes to the critical urban geography of policy mobility by showing how global planning imaginaries are locally remade through struggle, resistance, and political reinterpretation.
	Ka Wing Pang Durham University 'Living with Density 101: Lessons from Singapore's Housing Landscape.'	Density is an ingrained characteristic of urban development and city living. At the state level, density serves as a tool to justify urban planning decisions, while at the ground level, density is a lived reality residents navigate and internalise in their daily lives. However, the processes through which residents learn to live with density remain underexplored. Studying this learning process is crucial for unpacking the politics behind how density is legitimised, understood, and experienced in everyday urban life. The presentation aims to unpack this learning

		process using Singapore's public housing landscape as a case study. In Singapore, public housing is not a stigmatised housing option. Rather, it has high levels of buy-in and satisfaction with over 80% of the population – across age, gender, and race – residing in it. As a result, state-sanctioned density is learned and inhabited through everyday residential life. Examining Singapore's public housing hence allows us to explore how high-density living is framed by the state as necessary and how residents, in turn, internalise, negotiate, or resist the dense living conditions through iterative everyday practices and perceptions. Thinking through McFarlane's concept of learning as an assemblage, the research conceptualises the learning of density as relational, assembled across sites, objects, and people, and structured by uneven power relations. Through discourse analysis of state rhetoric, resident interviews and mobile ethnography tracing residents' urban density experiences in Ang Mo Kio, one of Singapore's densest housing neighbourhoods, this research explores how density is mobilised by the state and learnt by its residents. By uncovering these processes, this research seeks to foreground the gradual, situated, and ongoing labour of living with dense urban forms. In doing so, the research contributes to informing planning approaches that better account for lived and learned experiences of density.
Bodies and Infrastructure Chair: Ed Armston-Sheret, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)	Clare Courtney University of Manchester 'An Appetite for Belonging' Food-centred Methodologies in Understanding Belonging in Migrant Provision Spaces.'	In a time of rising hostility and violence towards people seeking asylum and migrant communities in the UK, who belongs in the UK and who does not has remained a highly charged and polarised topic. Embodied experiences of belonging (and not belonging) play an increasingly dominant role in the public arena, calling for more attention to the role of emotions and the body in the current geographical debates surrounding migration. In the North of England in Manchester, solidaristic reactions take place within the charitable third sector, where volunteers and staff working with migrant communities in these spaces use food in a variety of ways as a tool for social change to try to push back against the rising dehumanisation and repression of migrant and refugee bodies. Drawing on original and ongoing research, as well as a wealth of sectoral expertise, this project uses food-centred methodologies to explore the senses, emotions and everyday activities of foodways (eating, making, growing and sharing) amongst the staff, volunteers and service users of alternative food projects in the third sector in Manchester, England. Multi-format food journals and ethnographic observation are used as further creative intervention within which to explore the poly-vocal narratives surrounding migration and belonging. This paper details its ongoing research towards exploring embodied subjects of food and belonging across migrant provision in Manchester, England and considers the opportunities and challenges posed when using food to explore these spaces.

	Rupankar Dey University of Groningen 'Geographies of Reproductive Capability: Disability, Space, and Autonomy in Kalangala, Uganda.'	This study explores how geography and identity converge to shape reproductive autonomy and health choices for women with physical, sensory, intellectual, and psychosocial disabilities in Kalangala, a remote island district of Uganda. It approaches reproductive health not as a measurable outcome but as a lived experience emerging within intersecting social, spatial, and cultural relations. Drawing on Sen's capability approach, the study examines what women are able to do and be in their reproductive lives, and how environments—material and symbolic—enable or constrain these possibilities. Geography here is more than physical distance; it embodies isolation, resource scarcity, and social marginality. The island's dispersed settlements, unreliable transport, and fragile health infrastructure intersect with gender norms, disability, and poverty to shape what forms of care are imaginable or attainable. These spatial conditions intertwine with histories of exclusion and stigma that mark certain bodies as less deserving of care or agency. Rather than isolating barriers such as stigma or inaccessibility, the study traces how inequalities accumulate across space, identity, and power. Women's narratives reveal negotiations between dependence and autonomy, silence and disclosure, constraint and resistance. Reproductive decision-making emerges as contingent, relational, and entangled with local moralities, kinship, and economic precarity. Through in-depth qualitative interviews with women, health workers, and community actors, the research foregrounds lived experience as a site of knowledge. It unsettles normative assumptions about access and agency, showing how reproductive health is co-produced through material environments, social relations, and structural conditions. The study aims to open space for more contextually grounded, justice-oriented understandings of reproductive capability among women with disabilities in geographically marginalized settings.
	Tuna Ogut London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) 'Trans infrastructures of organising: Urban production of political capacity.'	Under austerity, rising populism, and democratic backsliding, trans people are the first to lose access to public life and the political sphere. This exclusion is compounded by a post-democratic condition where the state reclassifies dissent as a security threat and evacuates the political space necessary for contesting these shifts. This paper takes organising efforts around trans politics as a pivotal site to start theorising a geographical notion of access to politics and introduces the concept of 'trans infrastructures of organising' as an analytical tool and a political project. I seek a material and spatial understanding of how trans people surpass the distributional inequalities in access to politics and synthesise a collective capacity to effect change in the public realm. While scholarship on political participation often treats 'being organised' as a static social state, this paper argues it is a geographical achievement dependent on specific urban configurations. I define infrastructures of organising as the networks of things and relations that facilitate access to the political realm, developing an integrative framework that

| | | connects an infrastructural notion to the production of political capacity. Grounded in urban politics, this framework reveals how trans people surpass political exclusion in the city and positions trans geography not as a niche subfield, but as a critical vantage point for understanding democratic backsliding, rising populism, and the effects of austerity politics. I argue that treating infrastructure as a generative condition allows for a geographical understanding of how political self-actualisation is materially constructed. |
| | Sambhavi Varadarajan

The Graduate Center, CUNY

'After Girlhood: Queer AFAB Youth and Urban Belonging in Chennai.' | Transmasculine, non-binary, and queer-gendered youth socialised as girls disrupt dominant narratives of urban mobility, challenging both feminised domesticities of normative girlhood and masculinised public spheres. Yet the ways they navigate public, private, and digital landscapes remain invisible.

Building on this, in my doctoral research I ask: How do queer youth assigned female at birth (AFAB) subvert normative gender and social structures to construct identities and negotiate belonging across contested urban environments? In this paper I introduce conceptual and methodological frameworks that will guide my future fieldwork in the South Indian metropolis of Chennai. Drawing on queer and trans phenomenological frames and poststructuralist critiques of the "inescapability" of womanhood, I centre the embodied experiences of queer individuals socialised as girls but who do not conform to normative expectations of becoming women.

I moreover read Chennai as a queer second city, where urban queer life is organised through proximity and relational embeddedness. Centring queer AFAB youth, whose mobilities are shaped by the afterlives of girlhood, renders their place-making practices legible and reframes rurality and urbanity in queer geographic scholarship. |