

OPTION: URBNG007 – Community Participation in City Strategies

Term 2 Wednesdays 1100h-1400h

(15 credits)

Staff: Michael Edwards (Planning), Jenny Robinson (Geography) with support from Richard Lee and Robin Brown (Just Space)

Aims:

- To review the politics of long term strategic city planning in theory and practice, within an international and comparative perspective
- To develop an understanding of community participation in strategic and local urban planning in London
- To build skills of participatory and community-based research through direct contributions to the activities of community-based organisations

Content:

The course will start with an historical overview of strategic planning in London, and place this within a broader international understanding of the politics of long term strategic city planning. It will then focus on the role of community participation in local and city-wide planning processes, with close reference to the London experience. It will use an innovative teaching model based on participation in the work of local community groups, contributing to analysis of the London Plan and of Borough-level and local planning. Students will be expected to read widely on the politics of spatial and strategic planning, and engage in developing a research project in collaboration with local community groups concerned with an aspect of London planning. Early site visits will place students in contact with groups in different selected areas of the city. Seminars will involve some staff input, as well as an opportunity to discuss the research projects with representatives from community organizations who have been active in making submissions to the London Plan Examination in Public (EiP) and other planning processes. Group and individual work will be based on engagement with community organisations and researching issues of importance to them. The assessment will be based on production of written and/or web-based materials relevant to the community groups in the selected areas, to be developed in association with the Just Space network (<http://justspace.org.uk>).

Assessment:

Individual contributions to submitted assessed work should be the equivalent of a 3000 word essay (but could be a report, website, video, or other output agreed with course tutors). Submitted work will be planned and initiated by groups of between 2 and 5 students in collaboration with local community groups. Submissions can be as individuals or groups and will be assessed on the basis of BOTH the individual's contribution and the effectiveness of the group's co-operation internally and with the designated local community groups. Each individual will need to submit a further note to staff outlining their individual contribution and what they consider they have learned from the assignment. In addition to the usual marking criteria, assessment will consider efforts made to: engage with community contacts and to devise and execute work which is useful to them; draw out the strategic implications of the work and/or aspects which might feed in to London Plan consultations; undertake effective collaboration in the work group. Some examples of essays produced in earlier years of the module are on the web site <http://ucljustspace.wordpress.com/>

Format:

One-third lectures, seminars and group discussions of reading materials; two-thirds group-based project planning and attendance at community-led meetings. Students will receive hands-on training in research skills such as participatory research, maintaining a dialogue with community groups, interviewing, and analysis of planning and policy documents.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will:

- Attain advanced critical knowledge of the politics of strategic city planning and specifically of the urban politics of London
- Develop understanding of the value and challenges of community-based research
- Build and apply research and writing skills to work with local community groups

Preliminary Reading

Bowie, D (2010) *Politics, planning and homes in a world city: the Mayor of London and strategic planning for housing in London 2000-2008*, London: Routledge

Robin Brown, Michael Edwards, Richard Lee (2014) Just Space: Towards a just sustainable London, ch 3 in Rob Imrie and Loretta Lees (eds) *Sustainable London?* Bristol, Policy Press [e-print <http://justspacelondon.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/edw-brown-lee-20140308.pdf>]

Healey, P. 2007. *Urban Complexity and Spatial Strategies: Towards a relational planning for our times*. London: Routledge.

Robinson, J. 2011. Spaces of Circulating Knowledge. In E. McCann and K. Ward (eds) *Mobile Urbanisms*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press.

Just Space Network, <http://justspace.org.uk>