

Social Science Making a Difference



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The Social Science Making a Difference event in the Scottish Parliament 18 March brought together more than 100 people from a variety of organisations working with and benefiting from social science research and academic researchers from the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

This leaflet provides some more details of the 11 projects and centres that were on display, including upcoming events, contact details and links to their websites and social media channels.

These projects only provide a very small snapshot of all the excellent research conducted within the two institutions addressing societal challenges. Both universities are keen to develop innovative collaborations between researchers and colleagues outside the higher education sector to increase capacity, encourage the use of evidence and deliver benefit to society.

If you are interested in following up discussions with any of the centres and projects featured last night, please contact them directly using the details provided.

If you would like to discuss opportunities for collaborating with other areas within the Universities of Edinburgh or Glasgow we would be delighted to hear from you!

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Administrative Data Research Centre – Scotland



A new opportunity for administrative data research

The Administrative Data Research Centre – Scotland provides a free, safe, secure and transparent data linkage service for accredited, approved, non-commercial researchers in the UK.

We are part of the UK Administrative Data Research Network, enabling researchers to carry out social and economic research using administrative data – the information that public organisations collect every day. The Network is a partnership between universities, national statistics authorities, the Economic and Social Research Council, government departments and agencies, and researchers.

Led by the University of Edinburgh, ADRC – Scotland works to:

- Facilitate the effective use of a wealth of valuable existing data for research that could benefit the public good.
- Encourage research projects that have the potential to inform government policy and decision-making.
- Contribute to the Scottish Government's drive for a 'wealthier and fairer Scotland'.
- Enhance Scotland's capacity in the international arena of big data and data linkage for social science research.

Benefitting society

- Efficient and economical – Government and other public organisations already collect a wide variety of administrative data. This information can be very valuable for understanding our society better and for informing policy making.
- Socially responsible – These data collections often contain information about people who are under-represented in conventional surveys, but who are equally important when key policy decisions are being made.
- The bigger picture – Administrative data often cover the whole of the UK's population, enabling us a detailed picture of our society, leading to greater understanding and better-informed government policy.
- Providing a trustworthy service – The Network trains researchers to access and use administrative data safely. We also work with government departments to help researchers gain permission to access the data.

Protecting privacy

We make sure all the information that can directly identify a person, household or business is removed from the data before researchers can access it.

- Integrity – An independent panel reviews and approves all research proposals. All researchers are trained to use the data safely, lawfully and responsibly.
- Secure – We provide a secure environment where researchers can access the data, and we review research outputs to make sure privacy is always protected.

Linking data

The data from different government departments is matched and linked by a trusted third party in a secure environment. Any directly identifying personal information always remains separate from the research data.

- Innovation – We are the first service to establish a UK-wide Network to enable the increased use of linked administrative data for research purposes.
- Cooperation – We make sure the proposed projects have potential for public benefit. By improving our understanding of society, the Network helps researchers to inform governments, councils and charities to target better their funding and policies.

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Our event programme is continuously refreshed; please keep up-to-date [here](#).

You can also request updates, by emailing us at adrc-s@ed.ac.uk

Applied Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN)



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AQMeN
Applied Quantitative Methods Network

The Applied Quantitative Methods Network (AQMeN) is a Research Centre that aims to develop a dynamic and pioneering set of projects to improve our understanding of current social issues in the UK and provide policymakers and practitioners with the robust independent research-based evidence to build a better future.

AQMeN runs a dynamic programme of research based on analysis of existing data in the areas of crime and victimisation, education and social stratification, and urban segregation and inequality. We have a multidisciplinary team from the UK, Europe and the US.



Crime and victimisation

Exploring the changing nature of crime in Scotland in the context of demographic, political, social and economic changes to inform the development of effective criminal justice interventions.

Dramatic drops in crime have been observed across many countries worldwide, although research has focused mostly on the US. This research fills an important gap in knowledge about factors that explain crime trends in Scotland, utilising an innovative approach that takes account of other demographic, political, social and economic changes. We are also investigating patterns of victimisation and offending in order to get a clearer picture of why and for whom crime has changed in Scotland, which will enable us to assess the potential impact of different forms of intervention and national crime reduction policies.

Education and social stratification

Building a better understanding of the mechanisms by which social inequalities in individuals' educational attainment, employment and civic participation are reproduced.

Building upon existing work on educational differentiation and social inequalities and the role of education for social mobility, for holding liberal social values and for civic participation, the research advances knowledge by providing an in-depth analysis of individuals' educational and labour market trajectories and how they have changed over time. In particular, it examines the role that institutional differentiation of curriculum and status within education has in shaping individuals' life chances.

Urban segregation and inequality

Advancing understanding of the measurement, causes and consequences of segregation and inequality in Scotland and the UK.

The UK has some of the best data resources in the world for estimating the nature and consequences of neighbourhood inequality and fragmentation. Yet, they remain under-utilised, and there is a dearth of systematic, longitudinal comparisons with other countries. This research combines innovative measures of social segregation with cutting-edge longitudinal and sorting-model techniques to explore the drivers of, and constraints on, household location choice, the effect on life chances and wellbeing and the implications for how we design interventions.

Quantitative methods training

We also continue to build capacity in the use of intermediate and advanced level quantitative methods among the UK social science community. We offer practical quantitative methods training on a range of techniques developed as part of our programme of research.

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www.aqmen.ac.uk

[Events](#)

Prof. Susan McVie
Director

Prof. Cristina Iannelli
Co-Director

Prof. Gwilym Pryce
Co-Director

Upcoming Events
May 2015 | *Seminar*
Social inequalities in
graduates' job opportunities

June 2015 | *Seminar*
School subject choice and
inequalities in Higher
Education entry

24 March 2015 | *Training*
Statistical Modelling for
Administrative and Social
Survey Data

13 May 2015 | *Training*
Statistical Models for
Aggregate Crime Data

18 May 2015 | *Training*
Stata Fast Track

Centre on Constitutional Change



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Centre on Constitutional Change – Researching the issues. Informing the debate.

Who we are

The fellows who comprise the Centre on Constitutional Change (CCC) are academics in the fields of political science, economics, social policy and constitutional law. They are based at UK universities and research institutes, with a network of international partners. Our fellows are globally recognised leaders in their fields, working at the cutting edge of the social sciences and humanities, together with younger scholars breaking new ground in their disciplines.

By drawing together this expertise from across institutions the centre has established itself as the preeminent academic hub for investigating the UK's evolving constitutional and territorial relationships. The variety of our fellows' fields of study is matched by the diversity of their international experience, including North America and Europe. The resulting research, analysis, output and dissemination is, quite simply, world class.

What we do

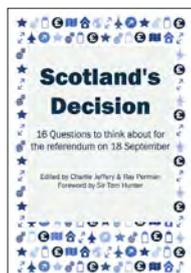
CCC fellows assess the likelihood of possible constitutional developments within the UK and beyond, the viability of proposals as they emerge from political and civic discourse, and the institutional, social, economic and legal impact implications of constitutional change. Increasingly, they also look beyond the borders of the UK at the relationships of devolved UK governments with European and global institutions and at the experience of other multilevel states around the world.

By examining constitutional and territorial questions from the perspectives of different disciplines, we are able to both take forward academic debate on the issues and inform public discussion. By bringing the skills of scholarship to bear on questions of popular concern, we seek to provide answers that are both academically informed and socially useful.

How we do it

Our fellows both undertake original research and build on existing knowledge. Working in project teams, they focus on areas such as constitutional processes, taxation, the economy, intergovernmental & external relations, public policy, and political behaviour to build up a coherent picture of current constitutional developments.

Our research is made available to, and scrutinised by, the wider academic community through peer-reviewed publications and conferences. We also work with partner organisations as well as the traditional and digital media to inform and encourage a broader public debate about our constitutional future. Underpinning our work is a belief in a democratic scholarship that is vigorously impartial and civically engaged.



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[@CCC_Research](https://twitter.com/CCC_Research)



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[Follow events here](#)



[Future UK Scotland](#)

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Sign up to the Centre of Constitutional Change [email list](#) to receive fortnightly digest & event alerts.



CREATE

RCUK Centre for Copyright and New Business Models in the Creative Economy



CREATE is the RCUK Centre for Copyright and New Business Models in the Creative Economy, based at the University of Glasgow. It is funded jointly by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). CREATE investigates the future of creative production in the digital age, and in particular the role of copyright.

The Centre brings together an interdisciplinary team of academics from law, economics, management, computer science, sociology, psychology, ethnography and critical studies within a consortium of seven UK universities (Glasgow, East Anglia, Edinburgh, Goldsmiths University of London, Nottingham, St Andrews, and Strathclyde), and over 80 industry, public sector and civil society partners.

Early societal impacts of CREATE research include i) the development of CopyrightUser.org aimed at making UK copyright law accessible to primary creators, media professionals, entrepreneurs, SMEs, students, and members of the public; ii) changing behaviour of memory institutions such as archives by innovating a reform agenda based on a risk managed approach to making in-copyright and public domain works more accessible; and; iii) contributing key evidence for the introduction of copyright exceptions for Parody and Quotation, Personal Copying for Private Use and Research, Education, Libraries and Archives in the UK Copyright Regulations 2014.

March 2015 Suite of Events
New Business Models | IP and Cultural Heritage | CREATE Open Day
Experiments in Creativity | Copyright History
<http://www.create.ac.uk/marchevents>

19 March | 10:00 – 13:00

London

Workshop: Understanding UK Copyright Law: An Interactive Workshop for Music writers and composers (organized by Digital Catapult Centre, co-sponsored by CREATE)

26 March | 14:00 – 17:00

CREATE Hub, 10 The Square

CREATE Open Afternoon: Posters, Exhibitions, PhD Presentations, meeting the CREATE team, LLM IP society and more

26 March | 17:30 – 19:30

Humanities Lecture Theater

Public Lecture: Copyright at Common Law in 1774 based on the [recent article](#).
Speaker: Professor Tomas Gomez-Arostegui, (Lewis & Clark Law School, Portland, Oregon)
(chair: Dr Elena Cooper, CREATE, School of Law)

27 March | 10:00 – 13:00

Yudowitz, Seminar Room 1

Wolfson Medical Building

Roundtable: What is the point of Copyright History? (chair: Prof. Hector MacQueen, Edinburgh Law School)

27 March | 13:00 – 13:30

Yudowitz, Seminar Room 1

Wolfson Medical Building

Re-launch of Digital Archive: Primary Sources on Copyright (1450-1900)

www.copyrighthistory.org

Speaker: Dr Stef van Gompel, (IViR, University of Amsterdam): Introducing the Dutch section

(chairs: Prof. Lionel Bently, Cambridge and Prof. Martin Kretschmer, CREATE)

31 March 9:30 – 1 April 17:00

Conference: Designing Smart Cities: Opportunities and Regulatory Challenges



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[@copyrightcentre](https://twitter.com/copyrightcentre)



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Subscribe to the CREATE updates through email [here](#).

Glasgow End of Life Studies Group



End of Life Studies

Led by Professor David Clark, holder of a Wellcome Trust Senior Investigator Award, the group addresses pressing issues of end of life care delivery, locally, national and globally.

The world is facing a number of challenges in relation to the delivery of appropriate, effective and sustainable end of life care, which will have major importance in the 21st century, as the population ages and as individual patterns of disease, symptoms and disability in later life become more complex.

Recent estimates suggest that 91m people will die worldwide in 2050, compared to 56 million in 2009.

We contend that the world is sleep-walking into a global challenge of unprecedented proportions.

Activities:

- Our four-year flagship project Global Interventions at the End of Life uses innovative, interdisciplinary methods to identify a range of culturally relevant and sustainable models for end of life care that can meet future needs. Find out more here.
 - International mapping studies assess the levels of palliative care development which exist in every country of the world: our data supported the 2014 WHO Global Atlas of Palliative and End of Life Care.
 - Ongoing projects relate to the history of palliative care, including researching the life and work of key figures such as Cicely Saunders, and the analysis of key interventions using historical methods.
 - Our landmark study of imminence of death among hospital patients in Scotland, published in 2014, showed that one in three inpatients in a Scottish acute hospital on any given day will have died within 12 months.
- That study is now being repeated with collaborators in Denmark and New Zealand and results will be presented in 2015 through a policy seminar hosted by Marie Curie Scotland.
- We have studied changing patterns in place-of-death in Dumfries and Galloway. A fully-funded PhD studentship from the Crichton Foundation will now assess the changing needs for end of life care within the region.
 - We are championing a proposal for a Maggie's Centre to be incorporated into the plans for the new Dumfries and Galloway Hospital and for the creation of a Care Campus on the Crichton site.
 - We are committed to an extensive programme of public engagement, which has four dimensions:
 1. digital and interactive
 2. documentary film-making
 3. public events (including death cafes, exhibitions and seminars)
 4. open-learning educational modules and MOOCs

 0138 770 2007
 [@EndofLifeStudy](#)
 [endoflifestudies](#)
 [Blog: End of Life Studies](#)
 [Video](#)
 [End of Life Studies](#)

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Death Café
Our series begins with an evening of conversation about death and dying at Thomas Tosh, Thornhill, Dumfriesshire, 7–9pm on Wednesday 15 April 2015

Football Fans in Training:

Using Scotland's professional football clubs to help overweight male fans lose weight, become more active and eat a healthier diet



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The increasing prevalence of obesity and low uptake of weight management programmes among men needs innovative approaches to engage them in weight loss. Football Fans in Training (FFIT) offers one such approach by tapping into the loyalty and affiliation that many men feel for their favourite professional football team to engage them in losing weight through becoming more active and improving their diet.

FFIT is a gender-sensitised, 12-week, group programme delivered by community coaches at the home stadia of Scottish Professional Football League (SPFL) clubs. Each week, men aged 35-65 with BMI at least 28kg/m² are given advice on using behaviour change techniques (e.g. self-monitoring and goal setting) to incorporate healthy eating and physical activity into their normal daily routines. They also take part in a practical physical activity session using the facilities at their club, and receive a pedometer to help them incorporate brisk walking into everyday routine. The community coaches are fully-trained in programme delivery, including the use of banter to promote interaction, enjoyment, mutual learning and social support.

FFIT attracts men from across the socioeconomic spectrum whose weight puts them at higher risk of ill health than the general population of men their age. Most men who join FFIT are not attracted to other weight management programmes despite knowing they need to lose weight. They give two main reasons for wanting to take part: firstly, because it is at 'their club'; and secondly, because they know they will be comfortable with other 'men-like-me'.

In 2011/2012, a team led by researchers at Glasgow University and MRC's Social and Public Health Sciences Unit

conducted a world-leading, gold standard evaluation (a randomised controlled trial) of FFIT. 747 men were recruited across 13 SPFL clubs and assigned either to the intervention group, who took part in FFIT in autumn 2011, or the comparison group, who had to wait 12 months until autumn 2012 before taking part in the programme.

The results showed that FFIT was highly successful in helping men lose weight, and importantly, maintain their weight loss once the programme ended. Twelve months after they started FFIT, men in the intervention group lost on average 4.94kg more than men in the comparison group. Significant improvements in physical activity, diet, alcohol consumption and psychological outcomes were also maintained to 12 months by men in the intervention group.

FFIT has attracted huge national and international interest. In Scotland, the programme has been extended to include 27 SPFL clubs, and the research team has been working with prisons and the Forensic Mental Health Directorate to establish potential transferability to institutional settings. FFIT has also been tailored for delivery to rugby fans in England and New Zealand, and for ice hockey fans in Canada. The FFIT model is currently being extended to target physical activity and sedentary behaviours among male football fans in England, the Netherlands, Norway and Portugal. This programme (EuroFIT) will be evaluated in a randomised controlled trial from autumn 2015. Finally, men who took part in the 2011/2012 randomised controlled trial are now being followed up to find out how well they have succeeded in maintaining the changes they made on FFIT up to three and a half years ago.



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[@SPL_FFIT](https://twitter.com/SPL_FFIT)



[@eurofitFP7](https://twitter.com/eurofitFP7)



<http://www.ffit.org.uk/>

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The FFIT RCT and Follow Up Study are funded by the National Institute of Health Research Public Health Research (NIHR PHR) programme (project numbers 09/3010/06, 13/99/32).

The views expressed here are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NIHR PHR programme or the Department of Health.

The prisons research is funded by the CSO (grant number CZH-4-886), the EuroFIT project is funded by EU FP7 (grant agreement number 602170), and the MRC through core funding to the Gender and Health programme at Social and Public Health Sciences Unit (MC UU 12017/3).

OPENspace Research Centre



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OPENspace is an international research centre contributing new evidence on why inclusive access to the outdoor matters. We bring together experts in landscape architecture, environmental psychology, human geography, forestry, quality of life measures and design for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

Our work addresses the full spectrum of open space environments, from city parks and squares to remote rural landscapes. Our work informs policy on health and wellbeing, social inclusion, countryside access and sustainable urban development.

Since our formation in 2001, we have attracted over £5m in external funds, held three international conferences, published two books and presented widely, including in the US and Canada, Australia, Scandinavia, China, South America and the Baltic States.

We have established an international reputation for multi-disciplinary studies of the highest academic rigour that cut across a number of key policy areas; providing the evidence for decision makers to advance 'joined up' thinking and inclusive legislation.

We address strategic research needs and advise a range of public agencies and professional groups, from the people who plan our urban and rural areas to those tackling safety and crime, promoting tourism, enabling wellbeing and advocating environmental justice.

We are proud of our contribution to international knowledge exchange, engagement with non-academic audiences and the take-up of our findings by the World Health Organization, amongst many others.

Selected projects:

Mobility, Mood and Place (MMP) – a three-year, multi-disciplinary study exploring how places can be designed collaboratively to make pedestrian mobility easy, enjoyable and meaningful for older people. OPENspace leads the large team of four universities and 20 non-academic partners delivering this £1.6m project, which is funded by the major cross-council programme, Lifelong Health and Wellbeing.

Woods In and Around Towns (WIAT) – influences on psychological wellbeing in deprived urban areas – a longitudinal assessment of the effectiveness of Forestry Commission Scotland's programme to improve quality of life in deprived communities. OPENspace leads the four universities delivering this £1m project, funded by the National Institute for Health Research Public Health Research Programme.

GreenHealth – a four-year collaborative study on the contribution of green and open space to public health and wellbeing. OPENspace's contribution to this Scottish Government-funded study, led by the James Hutton Institute, was to research levels of residential green space, stress and mental wellbeing in deprived communities, including through an innovative use of cortisol testing techniques.

Inclusive Design for Getting Outdoors (I'DGO) – a project delivered over a ten year period in two key phases exploring if, and in what way, the ability to get out and about impacts on older people's quality of life and what barriers there are to achieving this day-to-day. OPENspace led both phases, each of which were funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC).



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Habitats for Happy Ageing – a series of two events and a photography competition to promote ageing and place.

Events will be held on Friday 20th March 2015 and Wednesday 8th April 2015.

For further information visit: www.mobilitymoodplace.ac.uk

Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research

Distant Voices



The Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research (SCCJR) is a collaboration between four Scottish Universities – Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling and GCU. Established by funding from the Scottish Funding Council and the Scottish Government, SCCJR brings together an interdisciplinary team of academics from criminology, law, sociology, social work and psychology in its aim to produce excellent research and develop excellent researchers so as to better the development of policy, practice and public debate about crime and justice. Our work is international both in its influences and in its influence. We work for, with and through fellow academics, policymakers, practitioners and others involved with justice all over the world, believing that Scottish criminology and criminal justice has much to learn from and much to teach others.

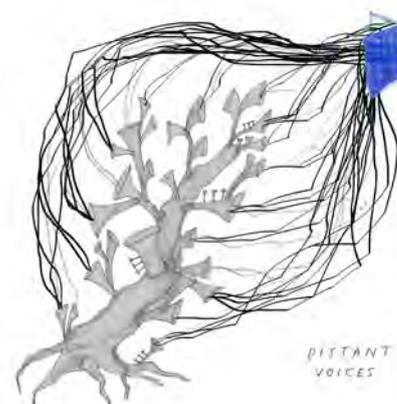
SCCJR's commitment to using excellent social scientific research for the public good spans the full range of our work. For example, our research on desistance from crime (which concerns how and why people stop offending) has had significant international impact. In particular, our '[Desistance Knowledge Exchange Project](#)', led by Professor Fergus McNeill at Glasgow, brought together world-leading academics, policymakers, practitioners and people with lived experience of punishment and reintegration to reshape penal policy and practice. Last year, [this project received an ESRC award for Outstanding Impact in Public Policy](#).

One of the project's key messages was that criminal justice needed to better engage with the public about processes of reintegration and desistance, since communities play a key role in these processes. That message provided a key source of inspiration for Alison Urie in her decision to establish a new charity, Vox Liminis (trans. 'voices from the threshold'), which aims to bring creative practice to criminal justice reform.

SCCJR and Vox are partners in the Distant Voices project which, in its first phase, brought together artists, criminologists, musicians, ex-prisoners and others in a creative exploration of attitudes to punishment and reintegration. We co-created a series of songs reflecting from different perspectives on a crime and punishment scenario, before using the scenario and the songs in a public event as a way of engaging a diverse range of people in deliberation about punishment and reintegration. We found that music communicated much more than words alone, producing a deeper quality of engagement with the issues, even motivating people to ask what they could and should do to facilitate reconciliation and reintegration, and to support penal reform.

The project has now entered a second stage with further funding from the ESRC, the University of Glasgow and the Scottish Prison Service. This phase focuses more specifically on the challenges and possibilities of reintegration, and involves song-writing workshops with prisoners in a range of prisons, with some of their families, and with community groups in areas affected by high imprisonment rates. These workshops will produce material that will be shared later this year in a series of high profile public events, through the media and online.

Distant Voices is just one example of SCCJR's innovative approach to knowledge exchange.



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27 May | [SCCJR Annual Lecture](#)

Playfair Library Hall

Old College, Edinburgh

Distant Voices events will be advertised in due course on the [SCCJR](#) and [Vox Liminis](#) websites (you can sign up to both for updates).

Tobacco and alcohol environments in Scotland

Centre for Research on Environment, Society and Health (CRESH)



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In Scotland, smoking and alcohol are two of the most important preventable causes of ill-health and premature death, where one in every five deaths is attributable to tobacco and one in 20 to alcohol. Furthermore, every 10 minutes someone in Scotland is hospitalised with a smoking related illness and every 15 minutes someone is hospitalised with an alcohol related illness. There is a significant socio-economic gradient to this harm. In 2012, 33% of adults in lower compared to 14% in higher socio-economic groups were smokers and there are 5 times as many alcohol related deaths in the most deprived population group compared to the most affluent.

The Scottish Government is committed to reducing both the prevalence of smoking, heavy drinking and related health inequalities. An improved understanding of retail patterning may enhance our knowledge of the relationship between place and risky health behaviours, leading to a better understanding of what creates inequalities in such behaviours. The neighbourhood availability of tobacco and alcohol products has been implicated in promoting smoking and drinking behaviours. It has been suggested that a higher concentration of alcohol and tobacco outlets in neighbourhoods influences consumption patterns in various ways, including increasing ease of access, reducing price of through local competition and normalising related behaviours. In this research we mapped both tobacco and alcohol outlets across the whole of Scotland and explored the relationship between outlet density, health behaviours and health outcomes in all neighbourhoods. Our research found that compared to residents of areas with the lowest tobacco outlet density, adults living in areas with the highest tobacco outlet density had a higher chance of being a current smoker, and a lower chance of being an ex-smoker. Adolescents living in areas with the highest tobacco outlet density are 47% more likely to smoke. Furthermore, alcohol-related death rates in neighbourhoods with the most alcohol outlets were more than double the rates in those with the fewest outlets.

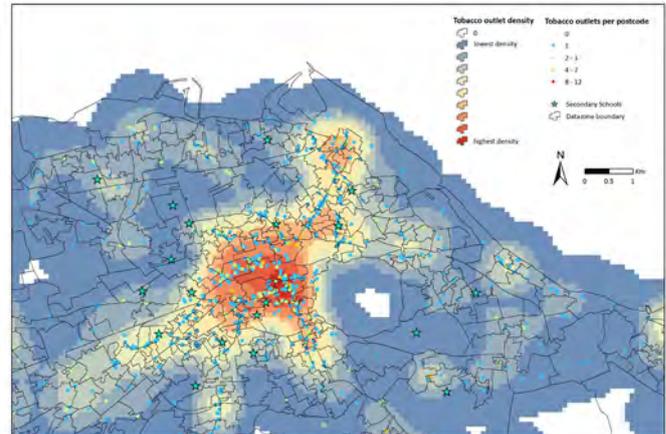


Figure 1: Off sales outlet density in Edinburgh

In collaboration with two charities (Alcohol Focus Scotland and Action on Smoking and Health Scotland), this project will make data on the association between tobacco and alcohol retail outlet density, health behaviours and health outcomes publicly accessible. We are creating a website that will allow users to download, map and interrogate this data, this will be available soon on www.cresh.org.uk. This project aims to ensure that the results of this research stimulate debate amongst policy makers on the supply of tobacco and alcohol in Scotland.

Since devolution, tobacco and alcohol control policies in Scotland have been characterised by impressive levels of innovation, from the introduction of smoke-free public places, through the commitment to minimum unit pricing for alcohol, to the ambition to reduce adult smoking prevalence to below 5% by 2034. An improvement in Scotland's health of this magnitude requires policy-makers to make a renewed commitment to addressing health inequalities – a task requiring political will, innovative policy and good data. An improved awareness of the relationships between retail availability and consumption of alcohol and tobacco could make an invaluable contribution in developing effective supply-side interventions.

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[@ASHScotland](https://twitter.com/ASHScotland)

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Urban Big Data Centre



Cities are complex and dynamic, constantly challenging urban planners, city managers and policymakers to develop and implement robust urban policy. City dwellers and organisations (government agencies, business, voluntary organisations, citizen scientists and more) generate a wealth of information. Through the analysis of such urban 'big data', analysts can develop a new understanding of trends, patterns and relationships regarding the social, environmental and economic activities in a city. This knowledge leads to data-driven urban planning, policymaking and business innovations by helping analysts better understand the challenges facing their city and potential solutions.

Considering these opportunities, the Urban Big Data Centre (UBDC) was established by the Economic and Social Research Council to address social, economic and environmental challenges facing cities. As a research resource promoting the use of innovative methods and complex urban data to address global city challenges, we support policymakers, businesses, third sector organisations and everyday citizens to harness the potential of big data to develop solutions for environmentally sustainable, economically resilient and socially just cities.

The UBDC is a unique facility that brings together the expertise of urban social scientists, data scientists and statisticians from the University of Glasgow and six partner universities in the UK and US (Edinburgh, Bristol, Cambridge, Reading, Sheffield and Illinois-Chicago). The UBDC supports strategies for urban planning and policymaking, business innovations, behavioural interventions for sustainable and engaged urban living, and advocacy and citizen participation relating to a wide spectrum of urban sectors such as economic development, transport, housing, education, environment and other areas.

We provide a framework and support for UK data owners and users to interrogate and extract useful information from urban data for policy, business and citizen engagement. Our work focuses primarily on the methods and technologies to manage, link and analyse large amounts of multi-sectoral urban big data. In addition to compiling and providing access to urban data through an online portal, the UBDC provides expert support and services in linking and curating data for a wide range of users, as well as training in advanced analytics. Additionally, the UBDC provides a range of data services and products to external stakeholders, including public events such as training, workshops and seminars.

In summary, the Urban Big Data Centre aims to support organisations through:

- **Data services** offered to a wide range of users, including academics researchers, policymakers, businesses, third sector organisations and citizen scientists
- **Access to a wide spectrum of data**, from open data to more sensitive information
- **Personalised and secure user environments** for data users to curate, manipulate and link data
- **Expert support for data users** who want to use our data resources, including tools and software
- **Consultative support for data owners** to help interrogate their data and extract useful information for policy, business and citizen engagement
- **Training and skills development**, including technical, methodological and policy-focused sessions for both academic and non-academic researchers
- **Knowledge partnerships** with organisations and members of the public to scope and develop solutions for substantive urban issues, both local and global

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All upcoming events can be found on our website [here](#).

[Sign up](#) to our e-newsletter and stay up to date with the latest UBDC news and events.

What Works Scotland



THE UNIVERSITY
of EDINBURGH



University
of Glasgow



What Works Scotland is a joint initiative funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, the Scottish Government and the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow to improve the way agencies in Scotland use evidence to make decisions about public service development, delivery and reform.

Central to our work is the new approach to developing public services adopted in Scotland, the Scottish model for public service reform, development and delivery. This vision for effective public service reform, building on the work of the Christie Commission, has become the accepted way forward. This emergent Scottish model prioritises:

- Service performance and improvement underpinned by data, evidence and the application of improvement methodologies
- Building on the strengths and assets of individual and communities rather than focusing on perceived deficits, and
- Services which are shaped and co-produced by both service providers and citizens and communities who receive and engage with these services

What Works Scotland is committed to helping operationalize the possibilities identified by the Christie Commission for the transformational and sustained reform of Scotland's public services to improve the well-being of its population and to achieve a significant step change in service design and delivery. To this end we are working with a range of partners and using evidence to transform public services for all of Scotland's communities to flourish. It aims to work with communities and organisations across Scotland involved in the design and delivery of public services to:

- learn what is and what isn't working in their local area
- encourage collaborative learning with a range of local authority, business, public sector and community partners
- better understand what effective policy interventions and effective services look like
- promote the use of evidence in planning and service delivery
- help organisations get the skills and knowledge they need to use and interpret evidence and embed its use in their everyday working practices
- explore how we can take what we know works from individual projects and interventions and translate this into sustainable, system wide change.

We have adopted a place-based approach to achieve these aims and our working with four Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) as case studies in a programme of collaborative action research, evidence synthesis and knowledge to action. We are also working with nine other CPPs who are our 'learning partners'. CPPs are key to public service delivery and reform, coordinating activities as they seek to meet targets set by National Government through the National Performance Framework.

To meet our aims we have identified the following key objectives;

1. Working with a range of different organisations across Scotland we will build the capacity to capture, analysis and use data and research evidence for planning, performance management and service improvement.
2. Working with Community Planning Partnerships and aiding them in the development, implementation and evaluation of preventative, assets based and co-productive approaches to practice that contribute to the achievement of identified National Outcomes in four case study areas.
3. Systematically capturing evidence across four case study areas as to 'what works' and doesn't work in the development of assets based, co-productive and preventative approaches and in building capacity in evidence use.
4. Critically analysing case study findings and broader evidence to determine the factors that support and hinder the implementation of improvement processes in organisations and communities.
5. Working with national and local delivery and sustainability partner organisations to explore the implications of the findings for future practice, policy and research and building on their existing work, develop and implement a range of approaches to sustain, scale up and spread approaches that work.
6. Utilising the Capabilities Approach as a tool for evaluating and assessing policy interventions and exploring its usefulness as a methodological tool for examining the impact of changes in public service reform.



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Blog:What Works Scotland

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Sign up to our mailing list [here](#).

Wednesday, 25 March | 09:30 – 13:00

**What Works Scotland & Health Scotland:
The Economics of Prevention**

Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Glasgow
232-242 Saint Vincent Street
Glasgow G2 5RJ

22 April, Edinburgh

Evidence for Public Service Reform