



























# What makes good places / housing?

Overview of findings from 6-yr research programme

Public Health Scotland | Place & Wellbeing Alliance (P&WA) webinar on Thursday 22 May 2025

@ Teams platform | Session; 10:00 – 12:30

#### **Daniel Black**

Research Director

Daniel Black + Associates | db+a University of Bristol (Medical School - Population Health) University of Reading (Henley Business School - Real Estate & Planning) Some context



# HEALTH AND PUBLIC POLICY EXPLAINER

## What 'health' means and why that matters

#### This policy explainer is split into three sections.

- 1. The first section explains why it is important that that we ask what 'health' means;
- 2. The second examines three main areas of contemporary debate linked to 'health'; and
- 3. The third sets out the implications of these for policy and for political responsibility.

We pay particular attention to preventative policies: those that aim to create the right conditions in society for both a lower incidence of ill health, and better and fairer enjoyment of good health by all.

#### 1. Why ask what health means?

At different times in our lives, we will think about our health and the health of those around us. If asked, we would all agree that health matters. This is health's 'intrinsic value'.

Being in good health is also important for what it allows us to do for ourselves, our families, communities and society. This is health's 'instrumental value'.

Of course, the opposite of these points is also true. Being in poor health is intrinsically bad, and it brings costs and limitations for individuals, families and society.

Given that health is so evident as a value—as something that matters—why do we need to ask what health means? It is because 'health' is a surprisingly slippery term and to achieve good health policy we need to understand it better. Consider as a starting point that:

- Health is not a single thing: it refers to lots of very different sorts of physical and mental conditions and situations.
- Health problems vary in how they arise: as a result of injury, infection, genetic disorder, exposure to an unhealthy environment or engagement in healthharming behaviours.
- Health problems vary in presentation: severity, stage and predicted progression.
- Health problems vary in how they may be addressed: whether and how they can be prevented in the first place, whether and how they might be treated when they arise, and at what cost.

In the next section we highlight some of the contentious issues affecting our understanding of health. These are also illustrated in our timeline, where we highlight some key writers and policy organisations who have researched what it means to address the determinants of (ill) health.

https://truud.ac.uk/briefings/



"Our definition of planetary health is the achievement of the highest attainable standard of **health**, **wellbeing**, and **equity** worldwide...

...the health of human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends."

Rockefeller Foundation-Lancet Commission (2015)

# Urban

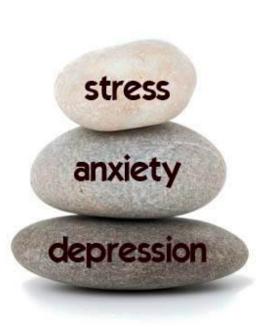








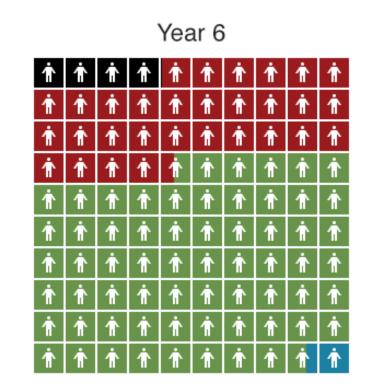




## Severely obese children in England

Severely obese 🛕 Overweight & obese 🛕 Healthy weight 🛕 Underweight

Reception										
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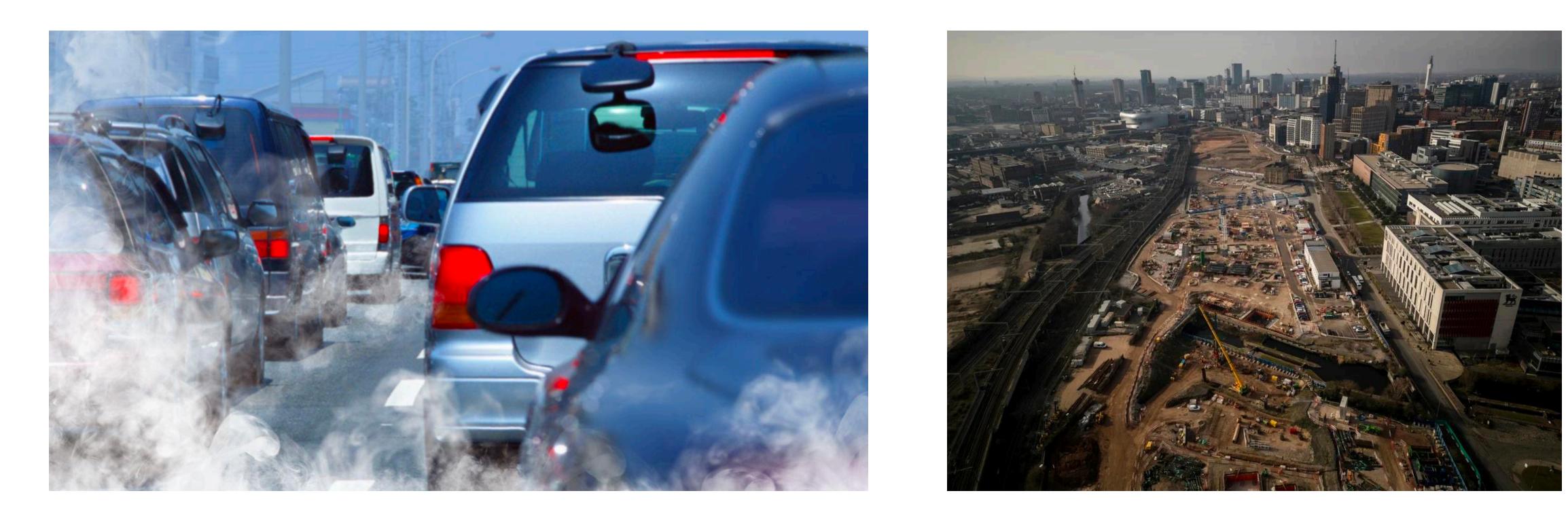


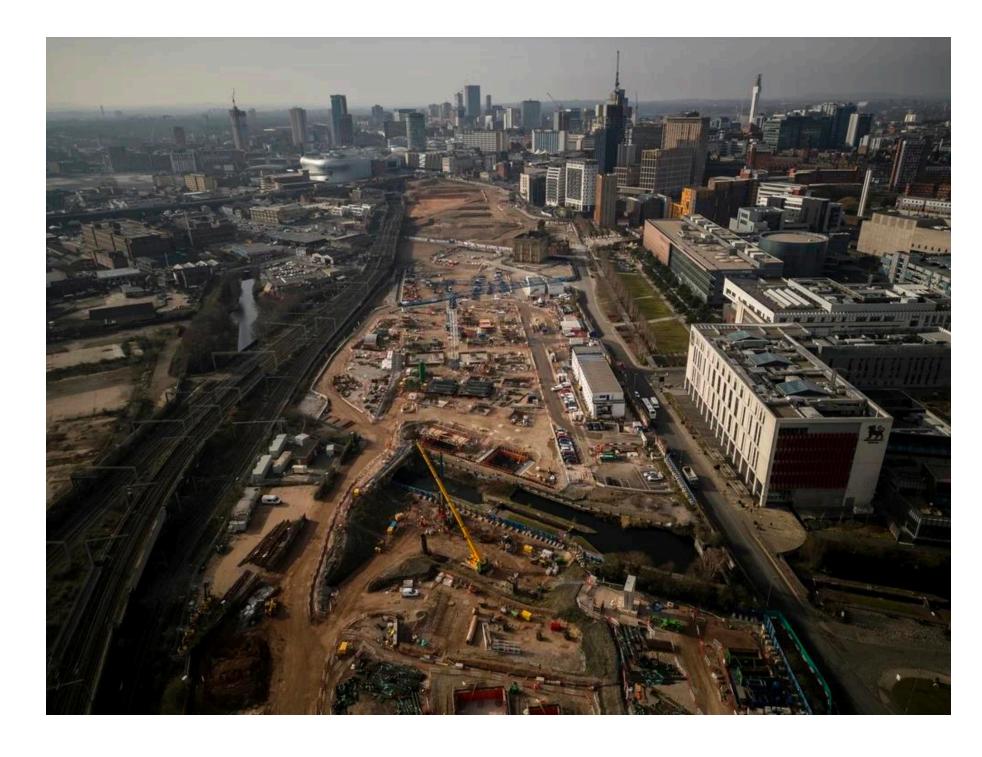
# Cities

**Consume 75% of its natural resources** 

Produce 70% of global CO2 + 50% of its waste

(OECD, 2023, UN Habitat 2018, EMF, 2023)

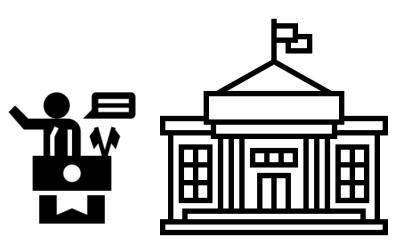




# **Urban sectors / infrastructures**

# MULTI-SECTOR PLANNING

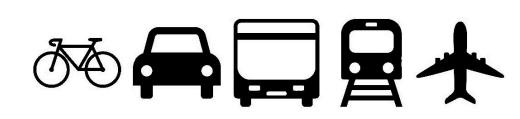
**ADMINISTRATIVE** 



**BUILDINGS** 



**TRANSPORT** 



**WATER & WASTE** 



**DIGITAL** 



**EDUCATIONAL** 



**HEALTHCARE** 



**CULTURAL** 



# Low quality sprawl

### **Building Design.**

Intelligence for Architects

NEWS

# Housebuilders lambasted for producing overwhelmingly bad designs

By Joey Gardiner | 21 January 2020

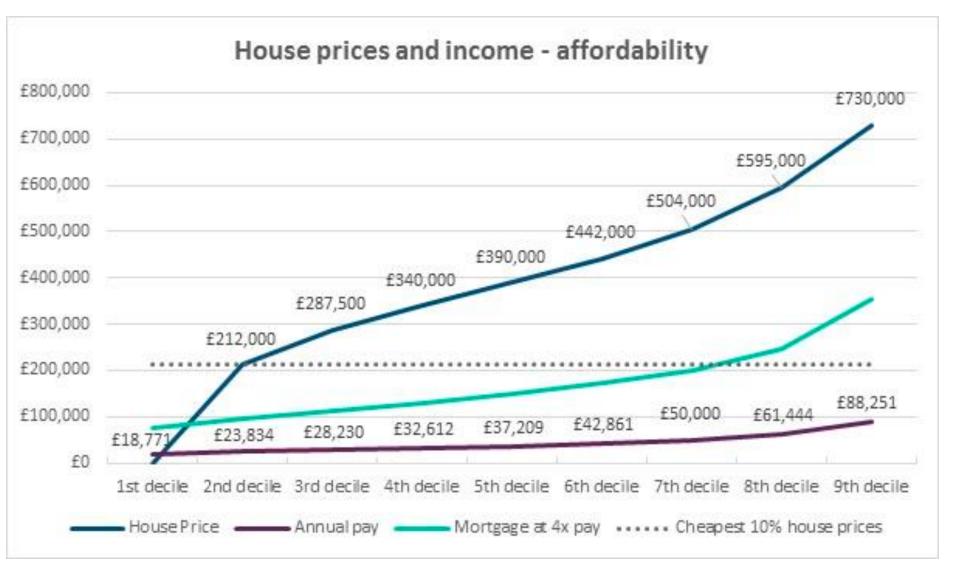


"The design quality of homes built by "greedy" volume housebuilders are overwhelmingly poor or mediocre...

...three-quarters of new homes constructed by large builders are of mediocre or poor design quality, with one in five so bad they should never have been given planning permission."

# Unaffordable city centres





"...only the top quarter of earners in the capital can afford even London's cheapest homes (bottom 10% of house prices)"

- Erhart K (2018)





Home > Europe's Most Sustainable Town

## Europe's Most Sustainable Town

The Most Sustainable City District in Europe



- Rural farmers and liberal city dwellers unite against nuclear facility proposal
- Socialist/green then Green mayor
- **Devolved** control of **infrastructure** (transport, energy, water)
- University town within commuting distance of Zurich
- Tax relief and match funding for 'Baugruppen'
- Character, expertise and power of Freiburg 'oligopoly'

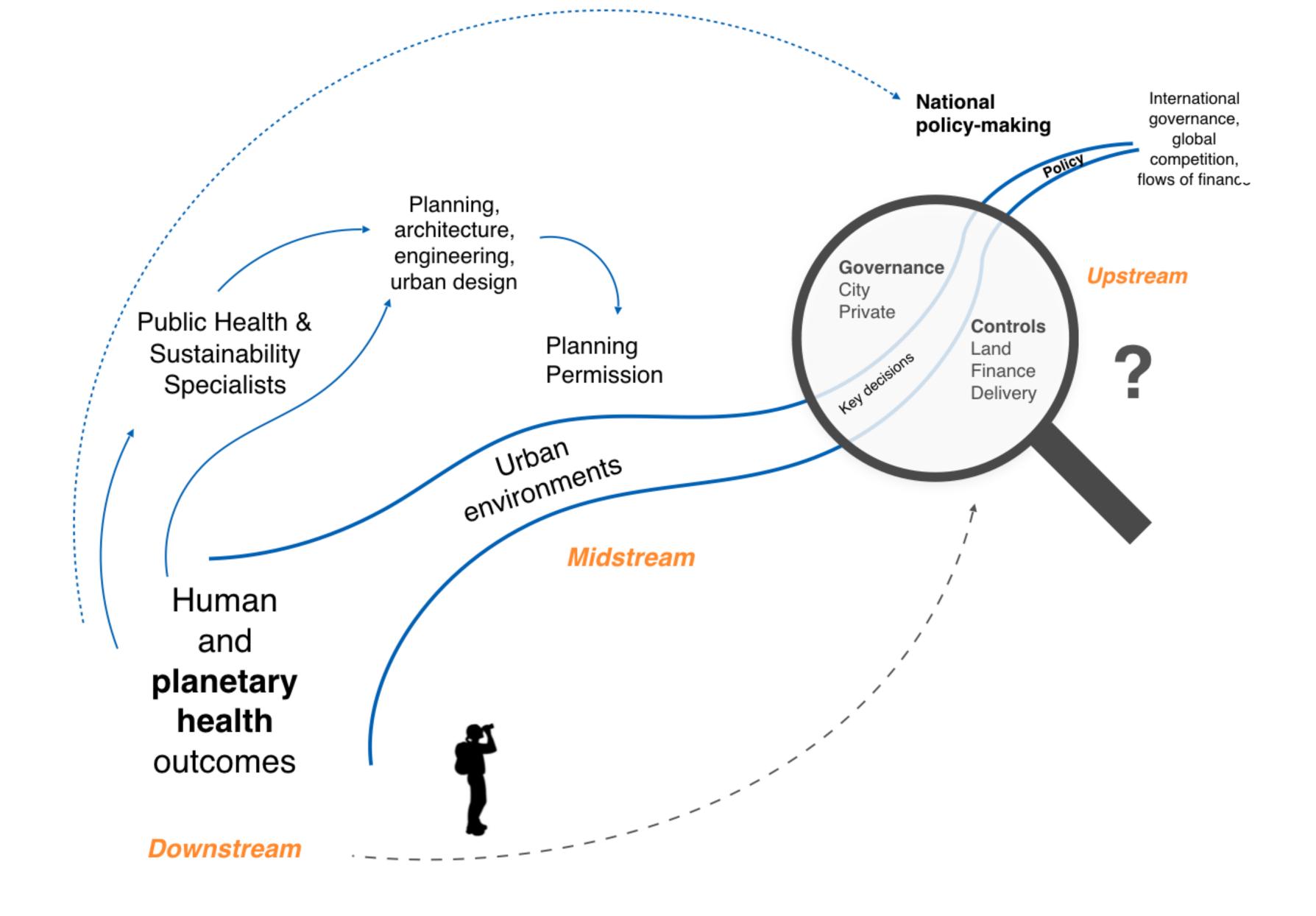


# **UPSTREAM**

# **Moving Planetary Health Upstream**

in Urban Development Decision-Making

# Pilot illustration of 'problem space'

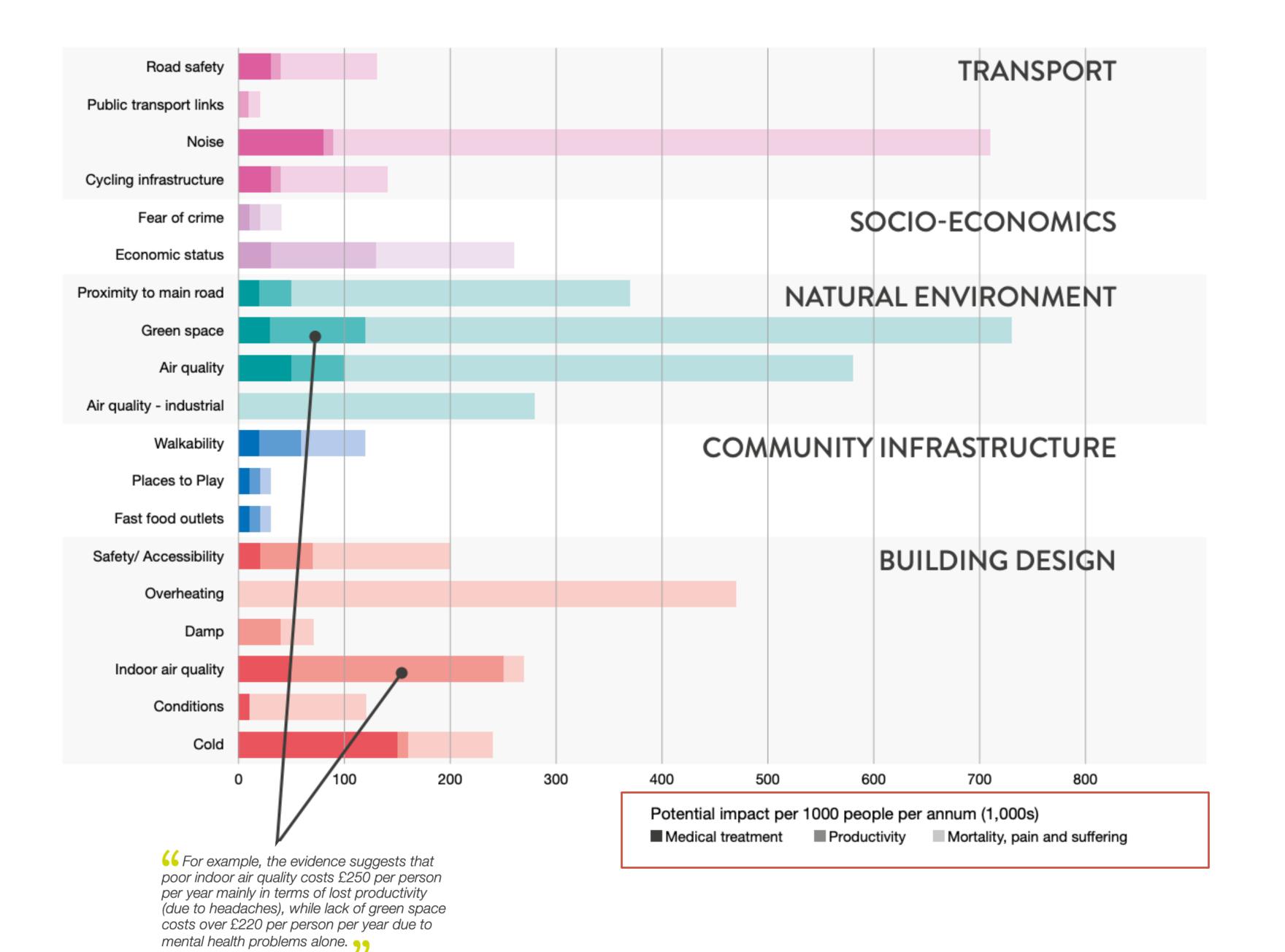






Scally G, Black D, Pilkington P et al (2021) **The Application of 'Elite Interviewing' Methodology in Transdisciplinary Research: a Record of Process and Lessons Learned during a 3-Year Pilot in Urban Planetary Health Research.** Journal of Urban Health. Springer. Open Access.





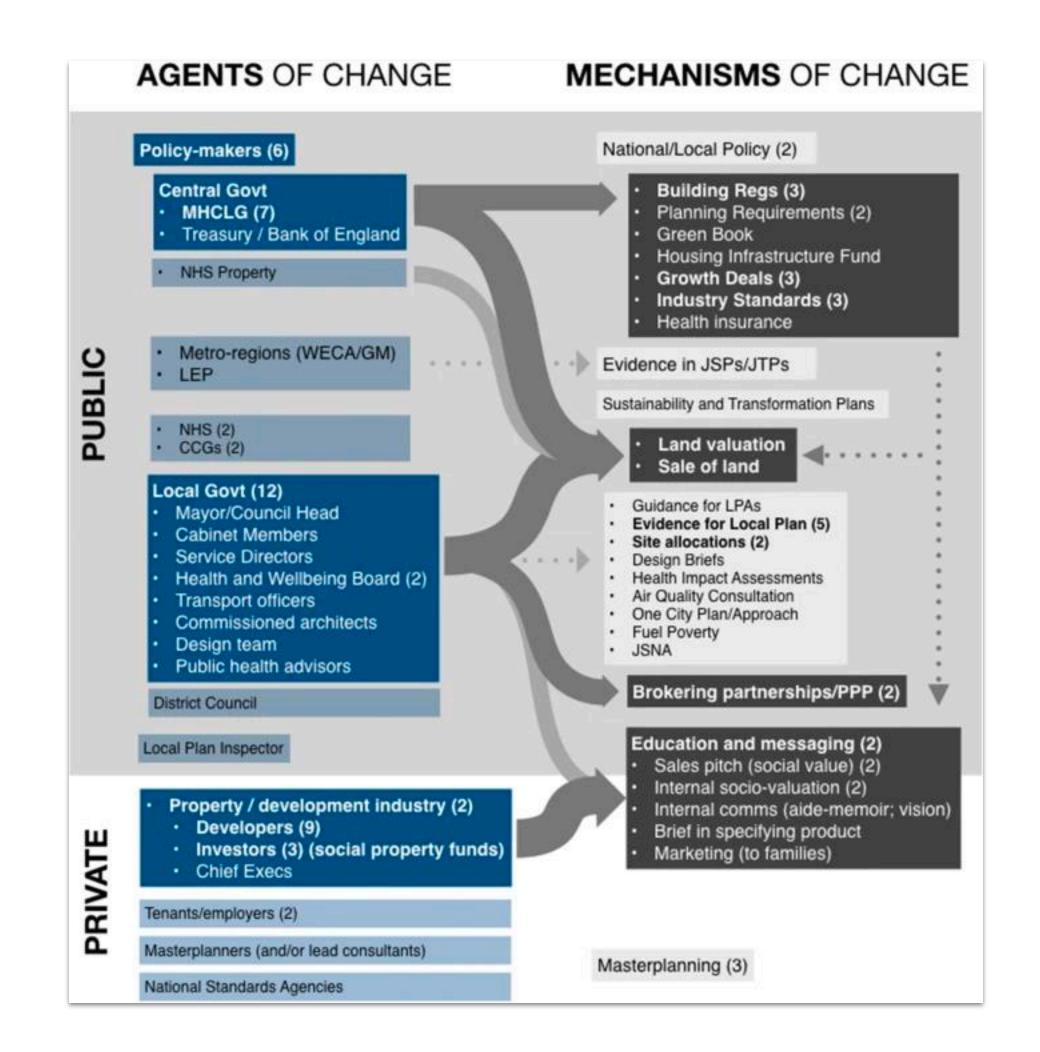


# Pilot Study: Findings

- 1. Both public and private sector well aware of health challenges
- 2. Also recognised health not factored adequately into the urban planning
- 3. Considerable support for greater use of nonmarket economic valuation
- 4. No silver bullet: 110 barriers and 76 opportunities identified across highly complex systems
- 5. Eight main themes identified: (i) valuation, (ii) finance, (iii) land, (iv) partnership, (v) politics, (vi) public realm, (vii) policy, and (viii) capacity.

- Black D, Pilkington P et al (2021)







Tackling Root Causes Upstream of Unhealthy Urban Development

# Disease prevention > property + transport systems





supports novel research into

the primary prevention of non-communicable diseases ...and health inequalities.





























How health is valued and integrated at root-cause decision-making points

(in property and transport systems)













## 6 universities, 40+ people, many areas of expertise:

## public health, policy, economics, engineering, law, management, spatial planning, real estate investment...





Professor Matthew Hickman (Research Director - Academic)

Head of Population Health Sciences and Deputy Head of Bristol Medical School University of Bristol



Professor Gabriel Scally (Research Director -Impact)

Honorary Professor of Public Health Bristol Medical School University of Bristol





Daniel Black (Programme Director)

Specialist in Urban Development for Planetary Bristol Medical School University of Bristol



Dr David Williams (Senior Project Manager)

Bristol Medical School University of Bristol



Professor Sarah Ayres (Intervention Area 2 Lead)

Professor of Public Policy and Governance School for Policy Studies University of Bristol



(IA4 - Urban Health Data)

Professor in Public Health **Economics and Director** Centre for Public Health and Wellbeing Department of Health & Social Sciences University of the West of

England



Dr Andrew Barnfield (IA2 - Urban Studies/Policy)

Research Fellow School for Policy Studies University of Bristol



Dr Geoff Bates (IA2 -Policy)

Research Associate Institute for Policy Research University of Bath



Dr Emma Bird (IA4 -Urban Health Data)

Senior Lecturer in Public Health Department of Health & Social Sciences University of the West of England



Dr Rosalie Callway (IA1a & IA4 - Planning)

Senior Research Fellow University of Bristol



Dr Eli Hatleskog (Meta-Research/Systems)

Senior Research Associate Department of Civil Engineering University of Bristol



Dr Anna Le Gouais (IA4 - Researcher in Residence)

Senior Research Associate Bristol Medical School University of Bristol



Dr Sian Peake-Jones (Intervention Area Lead 3 - Researcher in Residence)

Research Fellow School of Environment, Education & Development University of Manchester



Martha Jordan (IA1a & Cat Papastavrou IA4 - Management) Brooks (IA4 - Health)

PhD in Management TRUUD PhD Institute for Policy Candidate/Research Associate Research University of Bath Bristol Medical School University of Bristol



Dr Krista Bondy (Intervention Area 1a Lead)

Associate Professor Stirling Management School University of Stirling



Dr Alistair Hunt (Economics Lead) Lecturer

Department of Economics University of Bath



Dr Andy Gibson (Public Engagement Lead)

Associate Professor in Patient and Public Involvement Department of Health & Social Sciences University of the West of England



Dr Ges Rosenberg (Meta-Research/Systems Lead)

Research Fellow Department of Mechanical Engineering University of Bristol



Professor Cecilia Wong (IA3 – Spatial Planning) Professor of Spatial

Planning School of Environment, Education & Development University of Manchester



Dr Tracey Farragher

(IA3 - Health)

Lecturer in Healthcare Sciences Division of Population Health, Health Services Research & Primary Care University of Manchester



Dr Edward Kirton-Darling (Law - Socio-Legal)

Lecturer School of Law University of Bristo



Dr Caglar Koksal (IA3 -Planning & Environmental Management)

Research Fellow & Lecturer in Urban Planning School of Environment, Education & Development University of Manchester



Danielle MacCarthy (IA4)

Research Associate Health and Social Sciences University of the West of



Dr lames McIntosh (IA1a)

Research Fellow Stirling Management School University of Stirling



IA4 - Economics)

Research Assistant Department of Economics University of Bath

Campbell (Complex

Systems)

Professor of Public Health

Bristol Medical School

University of Bristol



Michael Chang (IA1a & IA4 - Engineering)

PhD Student Department of Engineering University of Bristol

Professor Jonathan

Dovey (Creative Arts)

Professor of Screen Media

Industries & Education

University of the West of

England



Verma (IA3 - Health)

Health & Epidemiology Division of Population Health, Health Services University of Manchester

(IA1a - Engineering)

Professor of Mechanical

Department of Mechanical

Engineering

University of Bristol



Ireland (Socio-Legal/Corporate)

Professor of Law School of Law University of Bristol



Professor Nick Pearce (IA2 - Westminster)

Director of the Institute for Policy Research and Professor of Public Policy Institute of Policy Research University of Bath



Professor John Coggon (Socio-Legal Lead)

School of Law University of Bristol



(Intervention Area 1b Lead)

Professor Kathy Pain

Professor of Real Estate Development Henley Business School University of Reading



(Systems Approaches

Dr Neil Carhart

Lecturer in Infrastructure Systems Department of Civil Engineering University of Bristol



(Economic Valuation)

Department of Economics University of Bath



Pablo Newberry (IA2, IA3 & IA4 - Systems)

Department of Civil Engineering University of Bristol



Dr Helen Zheng (IA3-Spatial Planning)

Environmental Management School of Environment, Education & Development University of Manchester



Dr Habtamu Ali Beshir (IA3 - Economics)

Department of Economics University of Bath



Janet Ige (IA4 - Urban Health Evidence)

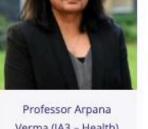
Department of Health & Social Sciences University of the West of England



Dr Jo White (Public Engagement)

Department of Health & Social Sciences University of the West of England





Clinical Professor of Public Research & Primary Care



(Intervention Area 4 Lead)

Senior Research Fellow Health Bristol Medical School University of Bristol



Student in MSc Data Science - Urban Analytics Spatial Policy and Analysis Laboratory University of Manchester



Spatial Planning)

Student in MSc Data Science - Urban Analytics Spatial Policy and Analysis Laboratory University of Manchester



# Phase 1: Methods, findings



## **Methods & Data**

#### **Interviews**

- 30 pilot interviews
- 123 interviews (132 interviewees)
- Purposive, snow-ball sampling (Phase 1)
- Large-group TD design and analysis

### Workshops (x4 in Phase 1)

- Participatory mapping
- Causal loop diagrams

### **Economic valuation (environmental, health)**

- Systematic reviews (urban-health evidence)
- Agent-based modelling
- GIS/Quality Outcomes Framework
- Database/tool development
- Testing and refining on case study projects

#### **Intervention identification**

- MRC Complex Intervention Framework
- Bespoke TRUUD Template
- Iterative, participatory selection

#### Phase II

Emergent (participatory co-design)

## **Identified problem areas**

National Govt: e.g.

Lack of: integration (health compartmentalised), comparable evidence, funding/long-term thinking/investment

Local Govt: e.g.

Resource, agency, lack of evidence

Private sector: e.g.

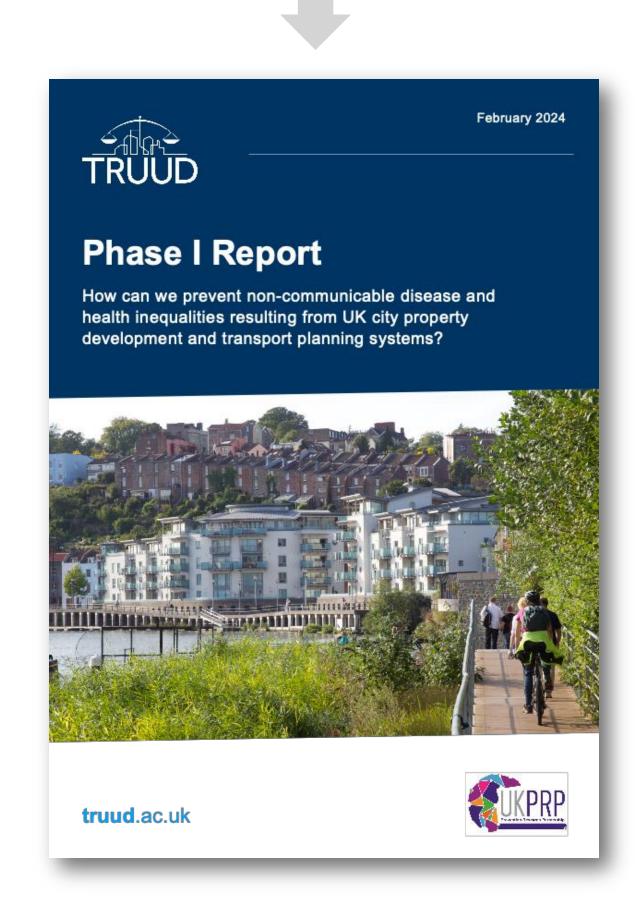
Dominant property delivery models, investment risk appetite, lack of incentives, short-termism

Third: e.g.

Land control/value, 'hope value', tax arrangements

Law: e.g.

Power asymmetry, resultant risk aversion, siloed legislation, systemic inertia



## SYSTEMS ANALYSIS: ACHIEVING HEALTHY URBAN DEVELOPMENT

P roperty Sector

2. Health agencies not effectively involved

3. Centre-local relationship - imbalance of power

Clusters of potential intervention areas, the 'problem holders' and sectors





## PROBLEM HOLDERS

			<u> </u>		
	POLICY: PRIVATE SECTOR		1111 11111 1111	REGULATIONS	
P	Viability appraisal locks in bare minimum			Lack of quality public and private rental	
P	2. Shareholder short-termism		Government	2. Health is not prioritised in urban development	
P	3.Land too expensive			3. Lack of regulatory requirement for valuing health	
P	4. Lack of incentives			4. Inadequate regulations (e.g. space, land disposal)	
P	5. Lack of diversity in property delivery methods				
P	6. Developers too powerful		Private Sector	PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	
	POLICY PUPLIC SECTOR			1. Lack of public understanding and trust	
П	POLICY: PUBLIC SECTOR		1111	2. Consultation not early or deliberative enough	
	1. Different interpretations of planning policy			3. Community engagement not valued	
	2. Short-term political cycles		Local Government	4. Unclear what "good" public engagement looks like	
	3. Responsibility split across different departments			5. Lack of public engagement with national policy	
	4. Health not prioritised by senior decision-makers				
P	5. Large-scale regeneration schemes unpopular			MECHANISMS / STANDARDS	
P	6. New-build prioritised over retrofit		Public Sector	MECHANISMS / STANDARDS  1. Lack of tool/mechanism for valuing health	
T	7. Health not prioritised consistently			2. Health not sufficiently represented in KPIs	I.
PIT	8. Lack of leadership, culture and ambition		WWW		
Р	9. No one wants to pay for public realm		Senior	3. Health poorly accounted for in transport appraisal	I
PT	10. Prioritisation of cars		Decision-Makers	4. Contract mechanisms not prioritising health	
Р	11. National agencies ineffective	1/ /////		5. Land acquisition mechanisms not prioritising health	
PT	12. Lack of systems thinking			6. Professional standards insufficient	
PT	13. Lack of shared agenda and resource		Asset Owners	7. Health insufficiently prioritised in national funding	
PT	14. Lack/use of health evidence in policymaking			8. Urban development standards ineffective	1
	DATA				
ы	DATA	44-11-11		AWARENESS	
	1. Lack of data on local residents' perceptions	Pr	ofessional Bodies	Naive as to how decisions impact on health	
<u> </u>	2. Lack of health data linked to developments			2. Lack of legal confidence of local authorities	
P	3. Lack of health impact from buildings' emissions			3. Lack of active travel expertise at key points	
				4. Unclear on healthy development looks like	
	PARTNERSHIP		Developers	5. Unclear on who is responsible: public or private	
P	1. Lack of partnership between development partners			The state of the s	
БТ	( 2 Haalib a samaisa mat affa ati salu incabus d				

**Transport & Highways** 

Bates G, Black D, Ayres S, Bondy K, Carhart N, Kidger J (2024) **Identifying intervention areas** in the urban development system to prevent noncommunicable diseases. PLOS Sustainability & Transformation.

# Visit www.truud.ac.uk for papers, videos, presentations...



#### 2024

Dan Black, Geoff Bates, Rosalie Callway, Kathy Pain and Ed Kirton-Darling (September 2024), Short-termism in urban development: The commercial determinants of planetary health, Earth System Governance

Pablo Newberry, Heeseo Rain Kwon and Neil Carhart (September 2024), A systems approach to improving health considerations in UK urban development: a real estate perspective, Cities and Health

Cat Papastavrou Brooks, Judi Kidger, Matthew Hickman and Anna Le Gouais (August 2024), The role of emotion in urban health development decision-making: A qualitative exploration of the perspectives of decision-makers. Health and Place

Eleanor Eaton and Alistair Hunt (July 2024), Does Willingness to Pay differ for mental and physical health?, Value in Health

Anna Le Gouais and Marc Cooper (June 2024), Who can influence healthy urban development?, Cities and Health

James Stewart-Evans, Caglar Koksal, Michael Chang (March 2024), Can the implementation of net gain requirements in England's planning system be applied to health? The Lancet Planetary Health

Md Nazmul Hasan and Krista Bondy (March 2024), Reframing Informal Institutional Voids as the Attempted Remaking of Contested Social Spaces: Evidence from England, Journal of Management Inquiry

Eleanor Eaton, Alistair Hunt and Daniel Black (March 2024), Developing and testing an environmental economics approach to the valuation and application of urban health externalities, Frontiers in Public Health e-book

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Geoff Bates, Md Nazmul Hasan, Andrew Barnfield, Krista Bondy (October 2023) Urban policies and the creation of healthy urban environments: A review of government housing and transport policy documents in the United Kingdom Journal of

Pablo Newberry, Neil Carhart (September 2023) Constructing causal loop diagrams from large interview data sets System

Sarah Ayres, Andrew Barnfield, Geoff Bates, Anna le Gouais and Nick Pearce (July 2023) What needs to happen to 'level up' public health? Contemporary Social Science.

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Heeseo Rain Kwon and Kathy Pain (June 2023) Searching for Health and Wellbeing Commercial Real Estate Actor Encounters with Planning in the Urban Decision-Making 'Black Box' . Built Environment.

Amy Burnett and Kathy Pain (June 2023) Linking Environmental and Human Health in English Urban Development Decision-Making: The Human Health Literacy of Environmental Policy. Built Environment.

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Sian Peake Jones and Anna le Gouais (June 2023) Meaningful Engagement an Approach to Healthier Urban Development and Planning. Built Environment.

Black, D., Bates, G., et al. (June 2023) Operationalising a large research programme tackling complex urban and planetary health problems: a case study approach to critical reflection. Sustainability Science.

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Callway, R., Le Gouais, A., Bird, E., Chang, M. and Kidger, J. (2023) Integrating Health into Local Plans: A Comparative Review of Health Requirements for Urban Development in Seven Local Planning Authorities in England. Environmental Research and Public Health. Available from: https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/20/5/4079.

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**HEALTH AND PUBLIC POLICY EXPLAINER** 

What 'health' means and why that matters

and affordability issues as well as the major economic crises

of the last few decades. However, without quality assurance

and strategic incentives, this risks becoming a 'quantity at all

a focus on place-making. Unhealthy places add to the burden

of disease, increase healthcare costs in the medium to long-

term, and reduce productivity. They also risk making us more

vulnerable to shocks such as Covid (due to underlying health

achieve quality as well as quantity, but 💋d examples are

for policy makers

rare. Health needs to be prioritised across government to get

off to the right start. Read our explainer on the meaing of health

89%

Non-communicable diseases (NCL cancers, diabetes,

- cause 89 per cent of deaths in the UK, most of which are

## 2022

Daniel Black, Sarah Ayres, Krista Bondy, Rachel Brierley, R Eleonora Fichera, Andy Gibson, Eli Hatleskog, Matthew H Pilkington, Ges Rosenberg, Gabriel Scally (2022) Tackling I (TRUUD): Protocol of a five-year prevention research cons

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Le Gouais A., Peake-Jones S., (2022) Researchers-in-Reside in Public Health. Available from: https://journals.sagepub

#### New towns and grey belts: healthy placemaking or just housing numbers?

#### 1. Why ask wha

This policy ex

1. The first section

The third set

We pay particular

in society for both

The second e

At different times in health and the heal would all agree that 'intrinsic value'.

Being in good healt us to do for oursely society. This is hea Of course, the opport Being in poor healt

Given that health is something that mat health means? It is slippery term and to to understand it bet

**Definitions** 

**NEGATIVE** 

costs and limitation

are a major drain on our economy abour's pledge to jump start housing delivery through New Towns and 'grey belts' is an important response both to housing The urban environment is not solely responsible for these

but it is only one part of a much wider urban environment environment, the amount of traffic noise and air pollution, crime (and fear of crime), ess to nature and amenities. In other osts' approach. The focus on housing provision must become words, housing provision is not the same as healthy place-

#### New towns lesigning out chronic illness?

New towns have, alongside planning reform been a policy common to both main political parties for everal decades. In the 2000s, we had 'Eco-Towns' (and the Zero Carbon initiative). In the 2010s - after the 2008 financial crash - we had 'Healthy New Towns' (linking ostensibly to the NHS and healthcare). Now we have simply: 'New Towns'.

The dominant focus on growth and housing numbers from the new Labour administration risks missing major opportunities to realise sustainability and health benefits.

#### 'Grey belt' - more traffic?

green belt conservation. This is arguably long overdue. example, those concerned with biodiversity collapse over the last half century have long pointed out that intensively farmed agriculture has less life in it than brownfield scrubland. Others show that that development has simply leap-frogged the green obesity, cardio-vascular, respiratory illness, anxiety, depression belt and increased travel times.

The term 'grey belt' is a welcome disruption of sacrosar











POLICY BRIEFING SEPTEMBER 2024 **Planning Reform and Public Health Tackling Health Inequalities** with Healthy Urban Development **Empowering mayors for preventative** deregula Since the health in the rig every Lab pressing rebalance of deaths the ambition The structural challenges recent dec The issue a 5-year ir Joining up government for public health between I health mis A deregu The role of As the Ma targets v not be unde are only p the institutions most able to deliver join-up. budget and and seek t There is growing recognition that tackling complex social with statuto In recent years, two new approaches have been favoured of delive is dwarfed problems, like climate change and health inequalities, can Missions: the levelling up missions and now mission care and p only happen by building strong interconnections across policy driven government seek to mobilise all policymakers on the NHS jurisdictions and sectors. Over the decades, a slew of initiatives around key outcome metrics. fraction this have sought to achieve more joined-up government in the in the OE( UK, from Churchill's abortive system of 'overlords' through to Pilots: since 2021, through the Shared Outcomes Fund need to and it saw the short-lived levelling up agenda. Despite these and many has provided pilot funding for a wide-range of interover the d similar attempts, Whitehall retains a structure of competing departmental initiatives It tells the departmental fiefdoms. a one-be Our analysis of the 60 pilot initiatives found that partnerships The new government will only be able to succeed on its Integra between the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local ambitious healthy life expectancy (HLE) targets if it finds for the ch Government (MHCLG) and the Department of Health and solutions to this notoriously difficult governance challenge. This is because improving HLE and tackling health inequalities will cross-government working. Using social network analysis, affected ar require action on the wider determinants of health: education, Figure 1 shows how government departments are linked up the built environment, workplace conditions, community support through their shared involvement in the Shared Outcomes Fund etc. And the only way to galvanise health oriented policymaking rise. The g pilots. These pilots provide an important foundation for joining across these diverse sectors is with an institutional framework slightly in t that links a diverse constellation of government actors. stands at Understanding the problem Joined-up policy entails two distinct sets of issues. Currently t Whitehall: the horizontal integration of Whitehall departments and agencies. Devolution: the vertical integration of the UK's many government tiers, from national to local. Horizontal integration Over the years, every joined-up government initiative in truud.ac.u the UK has sought to enact change through some sort of central coordinating body. Some have disappeared without trace, others have left institutional legacies, such as Cabinet Committees, Task Forces and cross-department units.

Ultimately, No.10, the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury remain

# Phase 1: Example Headline Findings





#### Earth System Governance

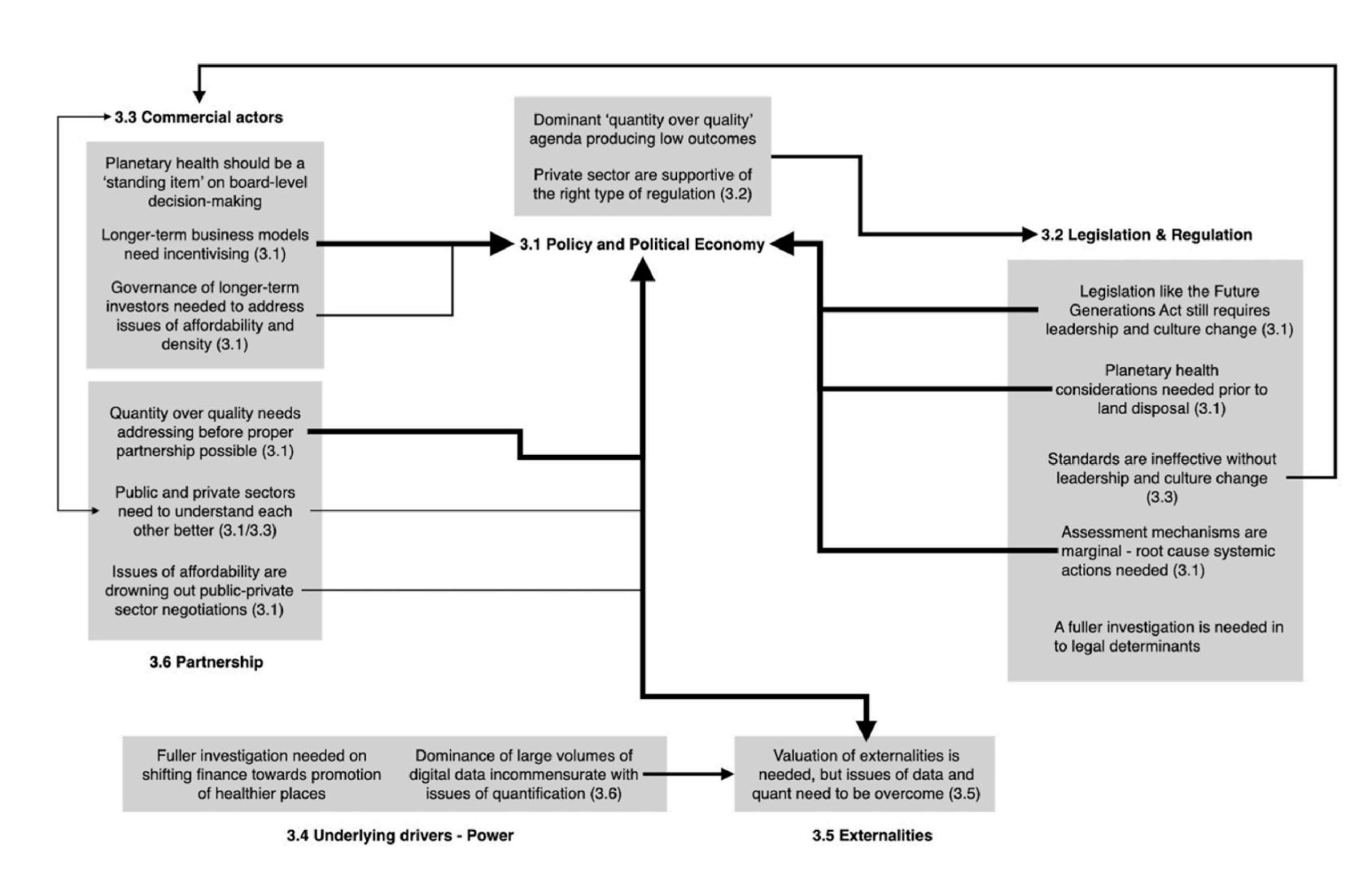
Volume 22, December 2024, 100220



Short-termism in urban development: The commercial determinants of planetary health

Daniel Black <sup>a b</sup>  $\stackrel{\triangle}{\sim}$   $\stackrel{\boxtimes}{\sim}$  , Geoff Bates <sup>c</sup>, Rosalie Callway <sup>a d</sup>, Kathy Pain <sup>e</sup>, Ed Kirton-Darling <sup>f</sup>

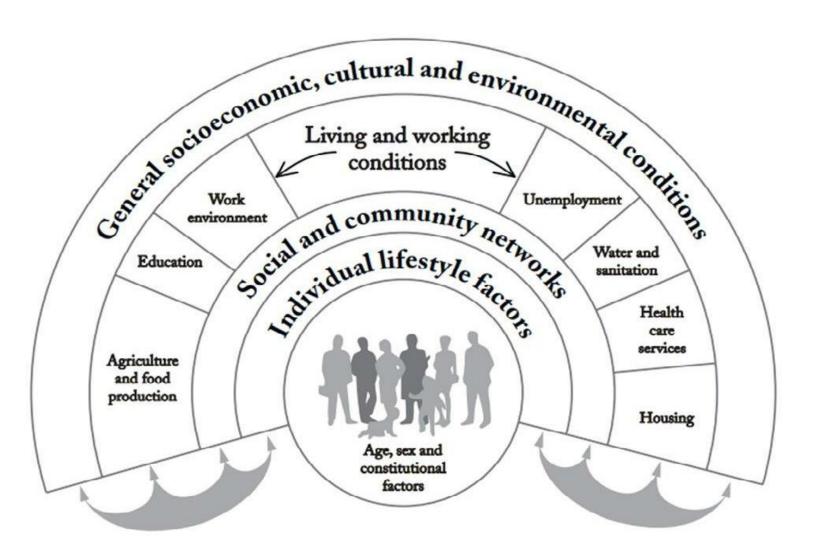
Themes	Sub-Themes
Policy & Political Economy	<ul> <li>Quantity over quality</li> <li>Deficit in systems/holistic thinking</li> <li>(The right kind of) state intervention</li> <li>Structural dysfunction</li> </ul>
Legislation & Regulation	<ul> <li>Land/property: acquisition, tax on value, externalities, 'hope value</li> <li>Fiduciary duty of private sector companies</li> <li>Potential for new legal initiatives (e.g. Wales' Future Gen. Act '15)</li> <li>Standards, voluntary or otherwise</li> </ul>
Commercial Actors	<ul> <li>Company culture/board-level interest</li> <li>Time horizons</li> <li>Stakeholder interest (i.e. local-level accountability)</li> <li>Size of organisation</li> </ul>
Underlying Drivers (Power)	<ul> <li>Dominance of private sector, esp. landowners, investors, developers</li> <li>Role of financial sector, albeit both positive and negative</li> <li>Disrupting influence of digital</li> </ul>
Externalities	<ul> <li>Lack of useable data, and specifically from post-occupancy evaluation (POE)</li> <li>Quantification challenge</li> </ul>
Partnership	<ul> <li>(Lack of) understanding between public and private sector: e.g. commercial viability (e.g. the perception of excess profits) vs planning restrictions (e.g. speed of action, slowness of decision- making).</li> </ul>



Research and analysis

## **Chapter 6: wider determinants of health**

Published 11 September 20





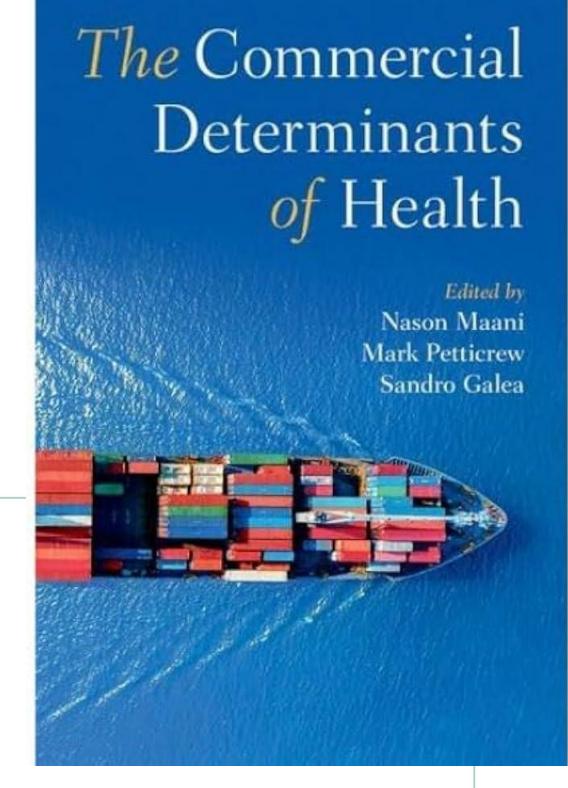
## THE LANCET

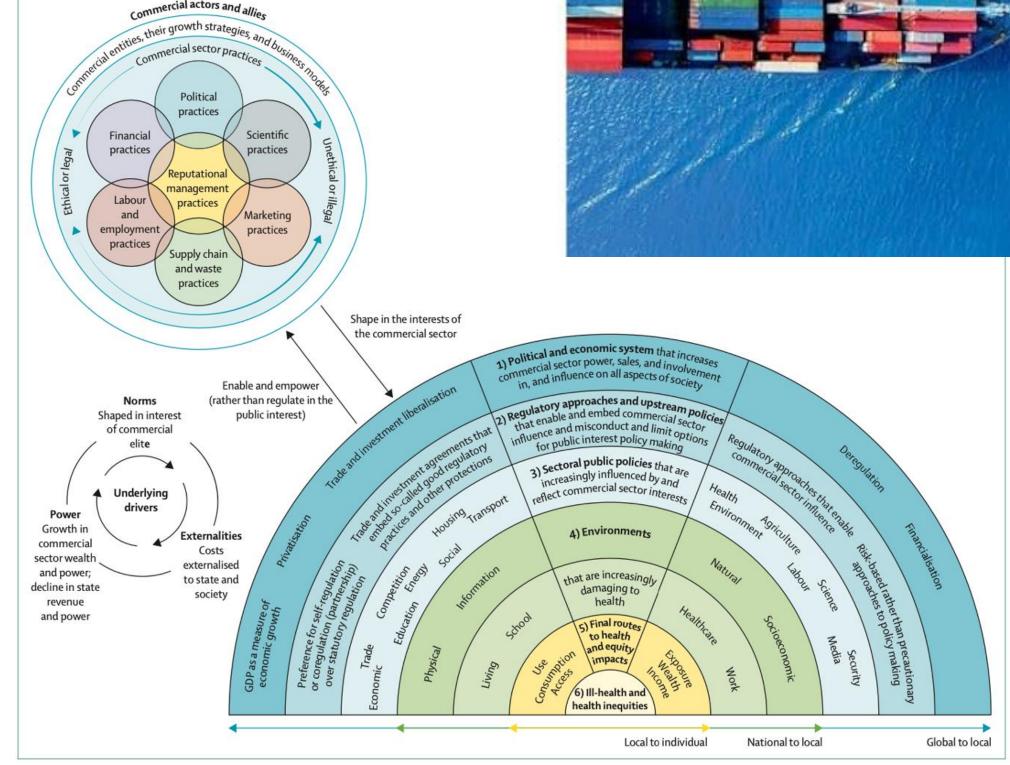
#### Commercial determinants of health

Published: March 23, 2023



"Companies shape our physical and social environments"





# Phase 2:7 Intervention Areas





1 Government Valuation Tools

4 HIA + Legal Understanding





> dandara





- 2 Corporate Decision-Making
- Real Estate Investment

5 KPIs + Spatial Mapping





6 Valuation + HIA





'External' Costs

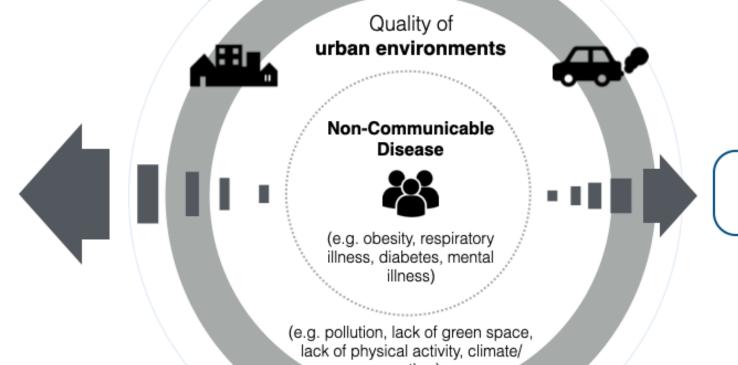
Medical treatment

Sick leave / productivity

Pain & suffering'

Climate impacts

Biodiversity impacts



CITY-REGION Transport

**UK GOV** 

CITY Planning

**PRIVATE** 

**SECTOR** 

7 Amplifying citizen 'voice'

drummertv





## 1. National Govt Appraisal

- Main barriers: lack of health outcomes in funding and joined up working; wider determinants not considered
- HAUS adopted in MHCLG Appraisal Guide [Summer 2025]
- New Cross-Departmental Working Group (future funding, wider adoption)







## Within TRUUD:

- Currently finalising MHCLG Technical Version
  - based on HAUS model (full form)
- Online Tool: prototype user interface developed to beta-stage

**Post-TRUUD:** (with follow-on funding)

- Stakeholder Version based on HAUS model (technical version), with further modifications to create a user-friendly tool
- Online Tool: User interface to be developed via R-Shiny application

# 2 & 3. Private Sector: Changing Mindsets & Real Estate Investment



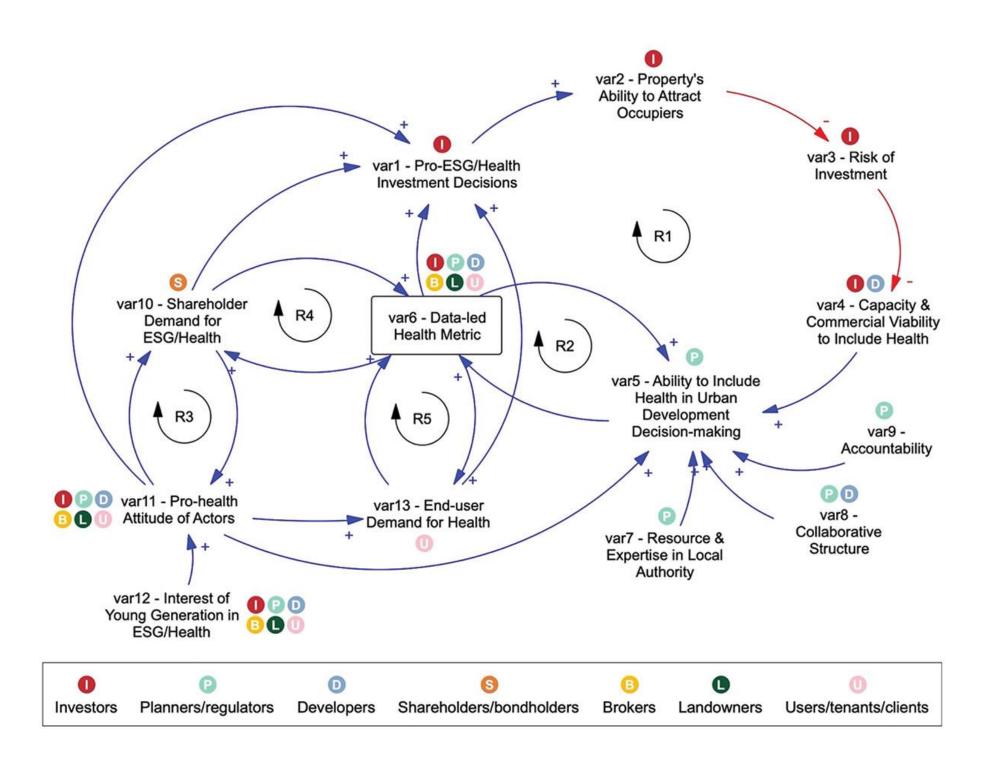
## **Changing Mindsets (private sector):**

- Two main barriers: health not prioritised, powerlessness.
- Key variables 'intention to act': proximity, collective efficacy, power, norms.
- 180 professionals reached over 6 events
- 30% reporting changes, both +ve and –ve (reason TBD)



## Real Estate Investment (private sector):

- Main barrier: lack of quantifiable data on health
- Anticipated effects on: i) portfolio-level appraisal and ii) current developments.

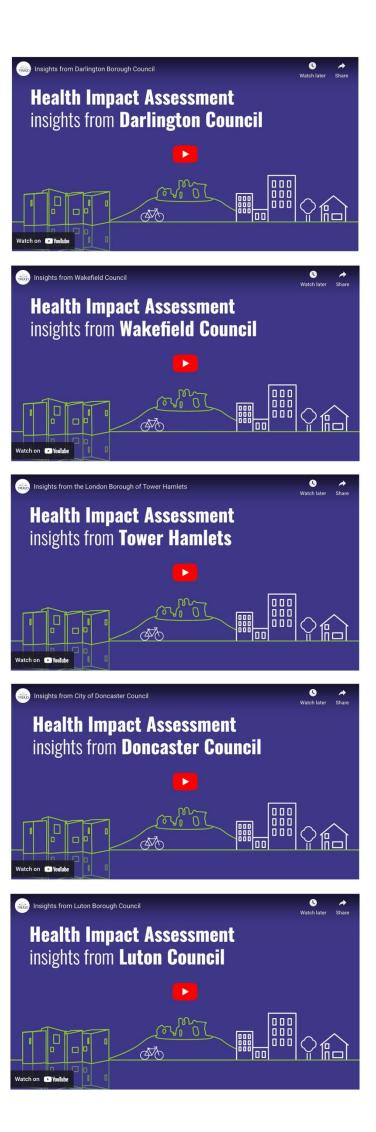




### 9 Videos

- 1 Introduction to HIA
- 5 x Local Authority Perspectives
- + Perspectives from OHID, LGA and Consultants





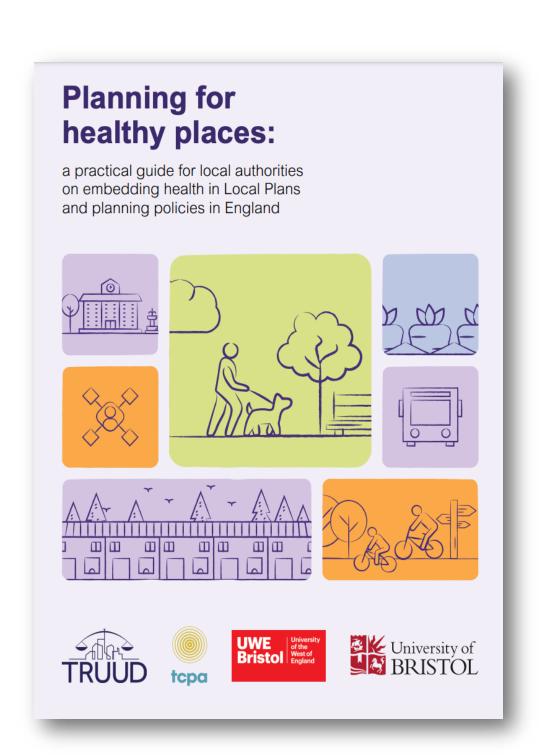


# 5 & 6. Spatial Planning & Transport Planning



## **City Spatial planning:**

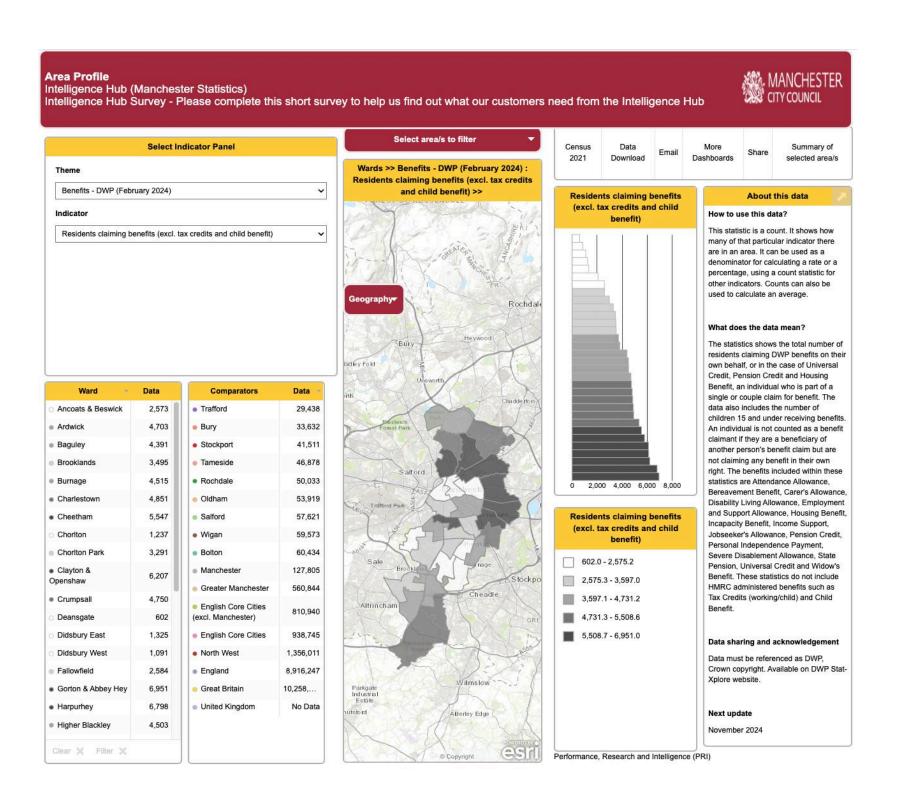
- Frome Gateway Adopted Spatial Framework adopted (TRUUD: HAUS + HIA)
- Planning for healthy places co-produced guidance with TCPA





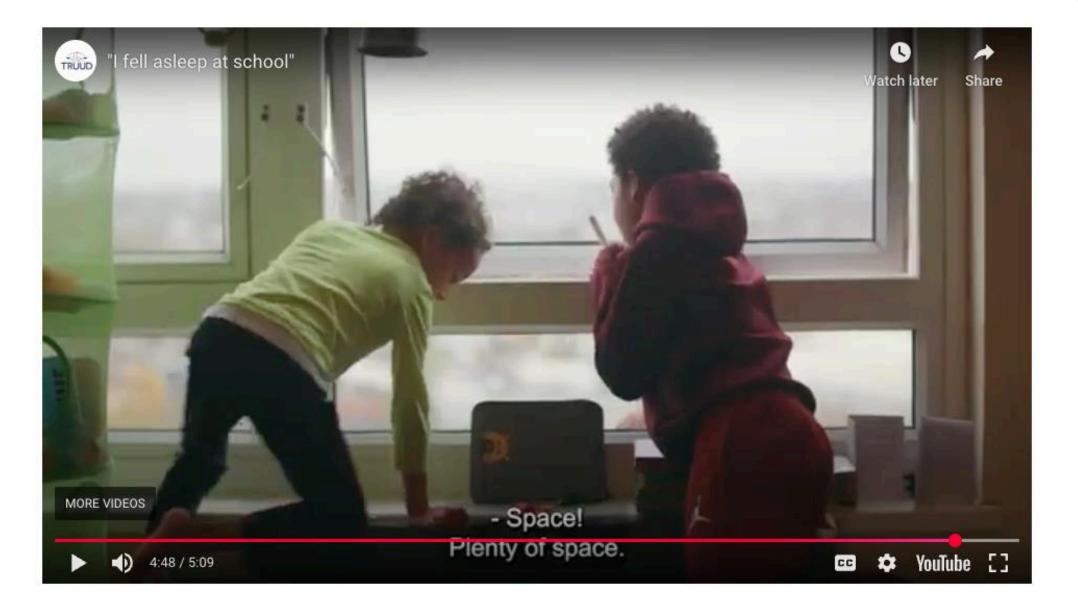
## **City-Region Transport:**

- HAUS data used in TfGM Checklist (e.g. noise)
- Low level area data on spatial mapping/GIS platform (evaluation Sept 2025)

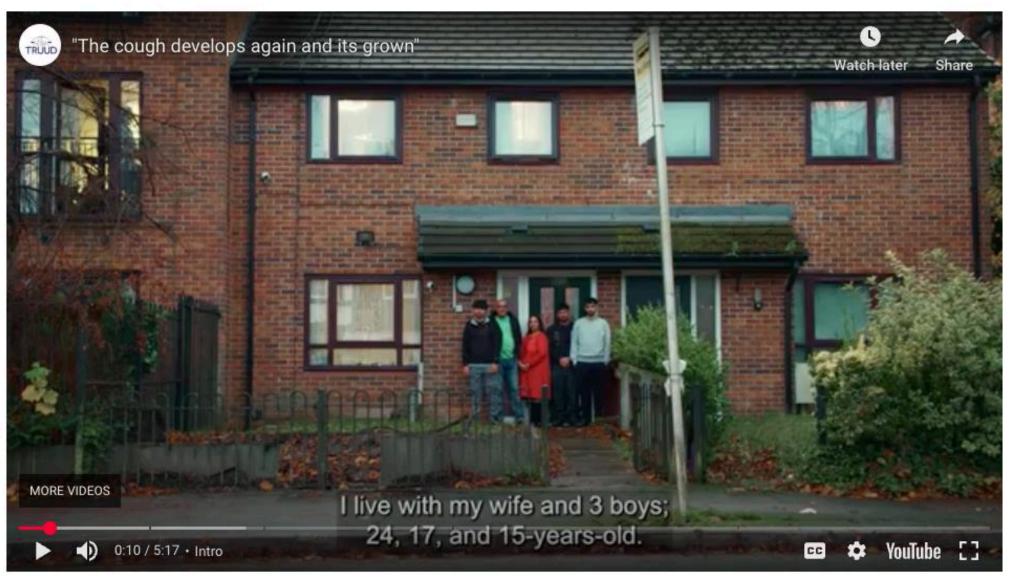




- Housing Damp & mould
- Transport Air pollution & noise
- Place Overcrowding & (lack of) outdoor access









## Final year comms

- Podcasts
- Animation
- Reports (Impact and Final)
- Event July 2nd
- Public event 'Fest of Ideas' style

## **PhDs**

- Environmental economics: the societal costs
- Power in management and urban systems
- Complex research operationalisation
- Systems approaches and town planning
- Impact of community violence



Valuing health



Policy & governance



Complexity and long-term change



Involving the public



• The future of urban development

# Blog: Health & resilience?



Health - of both our population and our planet - is critical for resilience and preparedness

Daniel Black, University of Bristol and Daniel Black + Associates | db+a Katie Barnes, Executive Director, National Preparedness Commission



Katie Barnes
Executive Director

https://nationalpreparednesscommission.uk/publications/health-of-both-our-population-and-our-planet-is-critical-for-resilience-and-preparedness/



Chair, National Preparedness
Commission: former Chair

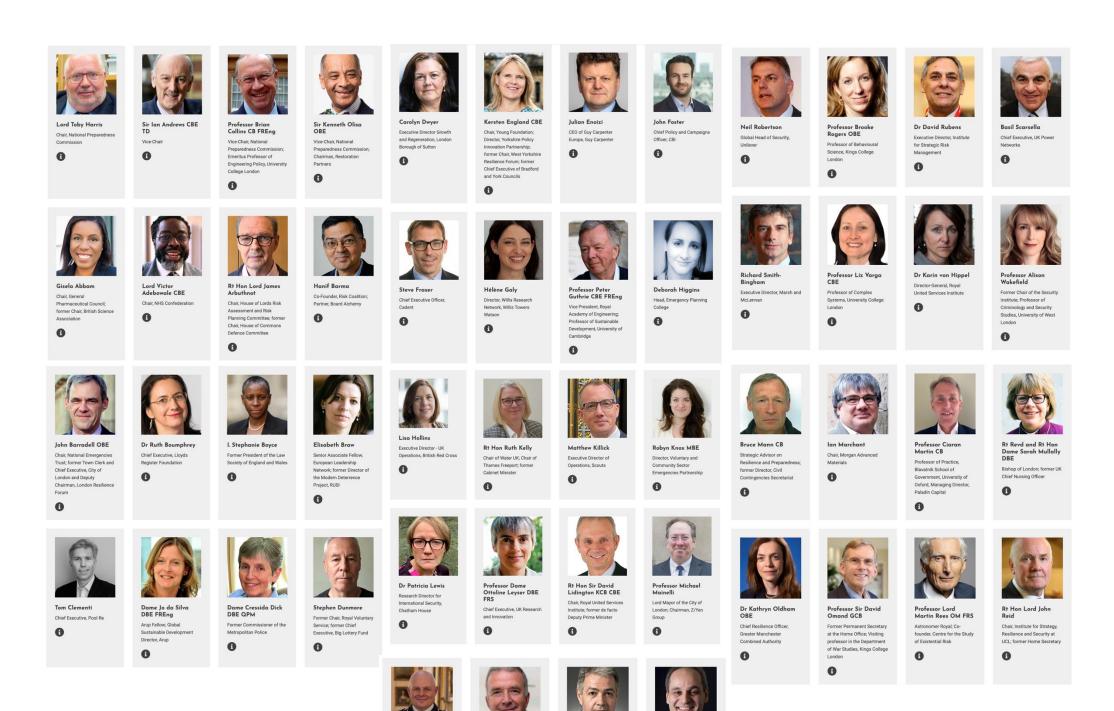
Chair, National Preparedness Commission; former Chair, Metropolitan Police Authority; former Reviewer of London's terrorist preparedness



## Professor Brian Collins CB FREng

Vice-Chair, National
Preparedness Commission;
Emeritus Professor of
Engineering Policy, University
College London

The National Preparedness Commission (NPC) is an independent and non-political body, whose fundamental objective is to promote policies and actions to help the UK be significantly better prepared to avoid, mitigate, respond to, and recover from major shocks, threats and challenges.





## www.truud.ac.uk



# Acknowledgements

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