

# THE CLEAB REPORT

## Launch of Future Cities programme

The Department of Land Economy is leading a University of Cambridge initiative on the topic of "Future Cities".

The three-year programme, supported by London property company Capital and Counties Properties PLC (Capco), comprises an annual conference, a visiting fellowship by an expert in the field, and a grant for eight postgraduate fellows to conduct bespoke research on issues shaping future cities and related policy.

The inaugural Future Cities Conference will take place on Wednesday 29 June at the University and will focus on the challenges and opportunities for cities. It will tackle subjects such as the impact of technology on cities, high-rise living and density, resilience to climate change, and what makes cities and developments work well in terms of "happiness".

The programme has also awarded the Capco Visiting Fellowship to Professor Edward Ng, who will spend a fortnight in the Department this year developing ideas and building research networks with a focus on sustainable architecture and design. Professor Edward Ng will deliver a keynote at the conference.

Finally, the programme will support some of the best postgraduate talent from the University to develop research papers on subjects related to delivering successful sustainable cities ranging from sub-soil management to community engagement and from configuration of green spaces to decision-making around demolition and re-use of buildings. Eight PhD students were awarded the Prize Fellowships in 2015, following a competition held by the University. Their work will be presented at the conference in June.

Nick Mansley, Executive Director - Cambridge Real Estate Research Centre, said the programme is an great example of a multidisciplinary approach across the University with collaboration with many departments contributing to the debate including architecture, engineering, geography and mathematics. ■



## Strong application levels for 2016

Land Economy application levels are being maintained and attracting good quality students, despite undergraduate humanities and social science applications to Cambridge generally falling. Early indications are that there will be a 2016 cohort of between 50 and 60 students.

Applications to the full time masters programmes at the beginning of May stood at 493, of which 276 were for the Real Estate Finance (REF) Masters. This represented an increase of 7.5% overall and 9.1% for the REF programme.

Doctoral applications have remained constant this year. However, the Department has only accepted 17 applications compared to 27 last years. ■

## C-EENRG takes part in Energy reForum

The Cambridge Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (C-EENRG) is a partner for the Energy reForum in Vilnius, Lithuania in June.

The international energy forum will bring together government representatives, scholars and practitioners to discuss the recent developments in the EU energy markets as well as challenges related to implementation of infrastructure projects.

As part of the event, C-EENRG will organise a side session with the World Trade Institute for young energy experts to enable researchers to present their work in the field of energy. ■

## Welcome to the CLEAB newsletter

This is the first edition of The CLEAB Report, which will be published in time for each advisory board meeting.

The aim of this newsletter is to be a useful way to keep the Board informed on the wide range of activities undertaken by all parts of the Land Economy Department, as well as CLEAB activities. If you have topics that you would like the newsletter to cover, please contact Ali Young on [ali@cleab.org](mailto:ali@cleab.org). ■

## BRIDGE project by C-EENRG wins grant from Newton Fund



The Cambridge Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (C-EENRG) has won a grant to develop the BRIDGE project.

“Building Resilience In a Dynamic Global Economy: Complexity across scales in the Brazilian Food-Water-Energy Nexus”, under the scientific direction of Dr Jean-Francois Mercure, will look at the important challenges Brazil faces for energy, water and food production and consumption.

It will look at critical issues such as the impact of low water levels in a predominantly hydro-oriented electricity system; how the productivity of the land is likely to change excessively with climate change due to significant expected changes in rainfall, affecting the viability of agricultural practices, and the effect on the Brazilian economy being highly focused on exporting agricultural products and food, which makes it

vulnerable to global economic changes.

The research will look at these issues through the complex Water-Energy-Food (WEF) nexus. This will help with sensible policy for improving the resilience of the Brazilian economy and environment to internal and global environmental and socioeconomic change.

The BRIDGE Project will bring together partners in Cambridge (C-EENRG, 4CMR and Cambridge Econometrics), the Netherlands (Radboud University) and Brazil (UNISUL) over a period of three years to address the complex interactions underpinning the FWE nexus in order to assess and develop appropriate policy responses.

Although the project focuses on the case of Brazil, the knowledge and tools generated have wider implications and use. C-EENRG is already bidding for a parallel project in China. ■

## New building plans move forward

Plans are under development for the Department to move out of its awkward Silver Street location to a new building proposed as phase three of the New Museums site redevelopment

In the current plan, Land Economy would occupy the top three floors of a building in the centre of the development, with space for all academic staff, research centres, post-doctoral students and postgraduates.

The lower floors would contain shared

library space and teaching rooms. There is strong support for the plans within the University and detailed design discussions are under way as a precursor to planning permission.

However, the department is unlikely to be moving until 2020, given the difficulties associated with the site. Board members will be briefed more fully as the scheme develops including discussions on sponsorship opportunities to support the Department in its new home. ■

## CRERC wins bids

The Real Estate Research Centre (CRERC) has successfully bid for two pieces of research and been shortlisted for a third.

For the IPF, it will carry out a “major” research project on how hurdle rates are used in a real estate context. The research, in collaboration with the University of Aberdeen, will be led by Colin Lizieri and Nick Mansley with support from Rachel Portlock. **The team would appreciate help from CLEAB for interviews and surveys.**

A piece of academic research supported by EPRA will investigate the potential advantages that scale has given larger real estate companies and whether there is evidence of these economies of scale in data on returns, costs of capital, costs and other indicators. **Support from CLEAB on ideas and data would be appreciated, specifically the potential to use real estate company databases that go back to the late 1990s.** Nick Mansley is leading the project team.

Finally, the Department has been shortlisted by ULI to submit a more detailed proposal to investigate the impact of different urban forms/density of cities and the implications of investment returns, public sector costs per resident and carbon emissions. ■

## CCHPR to examine SMEs and PRS

The Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research (CCHPR) has started a project on the role of small and medium enterprise (SME) investment in the private rented sector (PRS). The project, commissioned by Lloyds Bank Group (LBG), aims to raise the profile of this part of the PRS to add to the understanding of its impact and inform policy discussion.

The SME investor aspect of the PRS is an area which has little recognition, especially in policy debates, and is under-researched. LBG's loans to SME investors in the private rented sector being an important aspect of the group's business, and this project will help with the understanding of the overall impact of this lending as well as the ability of LBG to influence the quality of the PRS offer through this business. ■

## Policy impact of “bedroom tax” research

A research project on the removal of the spare room subsidy by the Cambridge Centre for Housing & Planning Research (CCHPR) has had a significant policy impact following its release in late 2015.

The study, which was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions, evaluated the impact of the so-called “bedroom tax”, which puts in place a housing benefit cut for those judged to have a spare room.

The research found that the areas hardest hit by reform are those least equipped with appropriate housing stock. This included “high pressure” areas such as London and the South East. In addition, those still affected reported cutting back on food, while 46% had cut back on energy use, in order to pay the shortfall.

The findings of the research were used extensively in a House of Commons briefings paper, which was published in February 2016. In addition, it was cited in evidence in decisions over the allocation of funding to mitigate the consequences of the benefit cap.

The research was also picked up by national newspapers including the *The Guardian* and the *Mirror*. ■



LUIS GARCÍA

Calle Serrano, Madrid

## MPhil students head to Madrid

A group of 26 MPhil real estate finance students visited Madrid earlier this month to get a first hand impression of the city’s property markets.

The trip was an opportunity to understand the Spanish market in the run up to, and during the crisis, as well as the rebound seen in the last couple of years. The case study of Colonial provided for an excellent example of successfully navigating the cycle and turning around a commercial property investor.

The group were also able to get a real-life look at some topics that are not covered in-depth during the course. For example, they had two presentations on the hotel investment market in the country. They also studied the dynamics of the retail market at street-level with a tour of Calle Serrano to get first-hand case studies of successful and underperforming retail.

The trip was supported by industry companies that provided presentations and tours including CBRE, JLL, Azora, Aguirre Newman, Grosvenor and Colonial.

Dr Thies Lindenthal, who accompanied the group along with Gillian Barclay, said the students really appreciated the opportunity to study and experience such a different market. “The students were very active, asking lots of good quality questions, and it was also a chance for them to bond better as a group.” ■

## CRERC launches new masters



The first cohort for the Master of Studies in Real

Estate will start in September.

The two year part-time masters course is designed for those with several years of professional experience, and will include some distance learning. It allows potential students to continue their studies while taking a research degree covering much or what is included in the MPhil Real Estate Finance but with an additional focus on business and leadership.

The aim is to have a small group of around 15 students with both strong academic qualifications and substantial market experience. Applications close at the end of May and we expect a very strong group mixing those based in the UK with others from the US, Canada, Russia, China/Hong Kong, South Africa and Continental Europe.

**The Department is looking for support from CLEAB for speakers, site visits, data, and case studies. These can be transactions and developments but other perspectives such as the use of technology in property and global partnerships/globalisation would be welcomed.** ■

## C-EENRG supports debate on Paris climate negotiations

The Cambridge Centre for Environment, Energy and Natural Resource Governance (C-EENRG) jointly hosted a conference in January about the impact of climate change and energy following the Paris summit in 2015.

Together with the Energy Policy Research Group (EPRG), part of the Judge Business School and the Department of Politics and International Studies and Centre for Rising Powers, C-EENRG brought together a wide range of experts to discuss the implications on Paris on four main themes. These examined whether we were any closer to avoiding dangerous climate change; who had the power to deliver the low-carbon transition; where the money would come from for change and who should pay for the impacts. ■