

INTERNATIONAL ECO-CITIES INITIATIVE

International Eco-Cities Initiative December 2016

Welcome to the latest issue of the International Eco-Cities Initiative newsletter. The bulletin (published three times per year) provides information about our research, events and publications, and contributes to analysis and discourse on 'eco-cities' and sustainable urbanism of various kinds across the world.

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Article: Eco-cities and Transferable Development Credits

A new report by Rick Pruetz explores the use of 'Transferable Development Credits' (TDCs), a market-based planning tool mainly applied in the US to achieve aims where more traditional approaches may struggle. Good planning encourages compact city development, the protection and promotion of green space and heritage assets, and the development of infrastructure that benefits the public. However, balancing these aims with economic development can be challenging. Planners may wish to create a public benefit in one area, for example, whilst developer profits may be generated in another. How can planners encourage developers to contribute to public benefits on the other side of the city, or at the far end of the region? Pruetz explores the functioning of TDCs and their practice experience in the US.

- [Read the full news item and download the essay.](#)

Essay: Cambridge Retrofit – mobilising a community

Professor Douglas Crawford-Brown reports on an ambitious energy efficiency initiative aiming to retrofit the city of Cambridge (UK). Energy efficiency represents a win-win for the environment and energy bill payers. With older or inefficient buildings making up a large proportion of building stock, it will be

aims to be "a landmark community-scale energy efficiency initiative to retrofit 65,000+ buildings over the next 30 years, helping make the Cambridge area the first to reach national carbon reduction targets". As the initiative is entering its crucial fourth and final phase, the key challenge now is mobilising the community and creating a demand for energy efficiency measures.

- [Read the full news item and download the essay](#)

Article: Strategic planning in the London metropolitan region

Duncan Bowie, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Planning and Transport at the University of Westminster, introduces a special section on strategic planning in London in the Journal of the Town and Country Planning Association. Arguing that recent debate in London has been excessively narrow, focusing either on the development of the green belt or on the redevelopment of existing council estates, he proposes strategies based on a more diverse range of options, including the densification of suburban neighbourhoods and new garden cities beyond the Green Belt. For a complimentary copy of the article email: d.bowie@westminster.ac.uk.

- [Read the full news item](#)

Feature: Smart cities at a crossroads

The latest issue of Public Sector Executive (PSE, Dec/Jan 17) features a special section on smart cities. Simon Joss has written the opening feature 'Smart cities at a crossroads'. Based on a recent review of over 60 smart city initiatives across ten UK cities, he discusses key practice trends. The articles outlines four distinctive functions of smart city initiatives ('service use', 'entrepreneurial', 'civic', 'political'); and it highlights some of the opportunities as well as challenges facing smart city innovation. Other articles in the series discuss the potential of smart cities to facilitate collaborative technological innovation, the benefits of digital standards for local government, and smart city practice sharing between the UK and India.

- [Read the feature article](#)
- [Read the related research report](#)
- [Subscribe to 'Public Sector Executive' \(free\)](#)

Essay: How stupid can 'smart' be?

In this essay, Jean-Paul Close challenges the use of the term 'smart', and proposes a new model of 'smartness', based on core values of citizen science and community engagement. The essay begins by reflecting on the fact that the city of Eindhoven was declared the 'smartest city in the world', and yet, paradoxically, has suffered from major problems, including crime and air pollution. How can this apparent contradiction be explained and, more importantly, what is the basis for a more meaningful approach to 'smartness'? Close offers up 'sustainocracy', centred upon citizen science and community engagement. This approach was developed out of the AiREAS project, which has improved awareness and facilitated action on air pollution in Eindhoven and other cities in Europe.

- [Download the essay](#)

Doctoral researcher: Rabea Willers

We are pleased to welcome Rabea Willers, our latest doctoral researcher, who will be investigating digital citizen engagement in smart cities. Rabea's project (supervised by Professors Graham Smith and Simon Joss) focuses on the emancipatory potential of ICT-enabled tools and initiatives for citizen participation, and the processes, structures and actors behind this pillar of smart city strategies. The project aims to shed light on the impact of emerging models of democratic governance in smart cities on citizen agency, and ultimately, to point out concrete ways to foster and, if necessary, increase the impact of civic engagement. The research will include a detailed analysis of this in two cities, including underlying challenges and barriers, thereby contributing to studies on digital democracy innovations. Email: rabeawillers@gmx.de.

- [Read Rabea's full profile](#)

Professor of Sustainable Urbanism: Michael Neuman

We are delighted that Michael Neuman will be joining the University of Westminster in early 2017 as

governance, institutions, policy and strategy. As well as having decades of experience in professional practice, he has held the positions of Professor of Sustainable Urbanism at the Faculty of the Built Environment, University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, and Associate Professor at Texas A&M University. He is known for his contributions to pioneering important concepts and practices in the planning and design professions. Michael has been recipient of Fulbright and Regents fellowships, among other awards. Email: barnasailor@gmail.com.

- [Read the full news item](#)

LinkedIn discussion forum

The 'International Eco-Cities Forum', our online discussion board, now has over 630 members, including researchers, policy-makers and practitioners. It invites contributions from around the world, aimed at discussing and sharing information, reflections and practical learning on sustainable urbanism in its various forms.

- [Join the International Eco-Cities Forum](#)

Further information

For more information about the International Eco-Cities Initiative and to sign up for news and events, please see our [website](#).

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