

POLICY BRIEFING

July 2019

Welcome to our NLGN Policy Briefing, exclusively for our members. This briefing collates the most interesting reports that we have come across over the last month.

In our new series of briefings, we're asking NLGN members about the research and publications that they have found useful in their work. This month's issue features research recommendations from David Godfrey, Policy Advisor at Kent County Council. If you'd like to contribute to next month's briefing, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Pawda Tjoa at ptjoa@nlgn.org.uk.

Our briefing covers reports across the following topics:

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Meet our members

Kent County Council: David Godfrey, Policy Advisor

What particular challenge has your council recently faced?

On the face of it, the renewed Government interest in the Thames Estuary and the investment announced in March is unambiguously good news. However, the challenge is to ensure this national focus balances the local needs for high quality jobs, support of local communities and the protection of the environment with the demand for new homes. In making the case for the Estuary, we worked with councils along the Estuary to promote the case for such 'good growth', and are continuing to do so.

What research piece have you found helpful to tackle this challenge?

Sir John Armit's [Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission](#) and the [Government response to Commission](#) are now required reading for councils in the Estuary. But the Thames Estuary is one of those places that have attracted the thinking of big political beasts over many years. This ranges from the classic [Parklands Vision](#) of Sir Terry Farrell drawing on the natural environment to paint a picture of landscape-based development to the series of essays [Go East: Unlocking the potential of the Thames Estuary](#), which includes contributions from Lords Adonis and Heseltine, identifying the responsibility for past failures and a prescription for success. Paul Carter's recent paper "[Thames Estuary: The capital corridor](#)" also highlights lessons learnt which have application for all.

Do you have any further reading you'd recommend on this topic?

While creative and high-tech industries are arriving in the Estuary, the loss of many traditional industrial anchors over the years can still be felt. The Lords Committee's [The Future of Seaside Towns](#) was a timely contribution. More widely, [Joseph Rowntree Foundation \(JRF\)](#) and [Centre for Local Economic Strategies \(CLES\)](#) raise important questions on the role of economic anchors and inclusive growth. Amy Goldstein's [Janestown: An American story](#) shows the very personal community impact of General Motors withdrawal from Wisconsin. But no thinking on the Thames Estuary can be left without a viewing of David Lean's wonderfully evocative 1946 production of "Great Expectations". Sit back and enjoy!

■ COMMUNITY PARADIGM READ OF THE MONTH

Ending the Blame Game: The case for a new approach to public health and prevention Institute for Public Policy Research

Too many people in the UK are suffering from preventable ill-health with progress on prevention stalling in recent years. Over half of the disease burden in England is deemed preventable, with one in five deaths attributed to causes that could have been avoided. The UK has made significant progress on this agenda in the past, but we appear to have 'hit a wall' with limited progress since 2010.

Action on prevention will not only improve health but also lead to increases in economic growth, make the NHS more sustainable and help to deliver social justice. The government's prevention green paper must deliver a paradigm shift in policy from interventions that 'blame and punish' to those that 'empathise and assist'. A number of policy recommendations are set out, including:

- The government should return the public health grant to 2012/13 levels and then grow it at the same pace as NHS spending. This would see an additional £1 billion public health investment by 2023/24.
- The government should scale up its child health offer by mandating six health visits for new-born children to ensure proper maternal mental health, full take up of vaccination courses, high quality parental advice and ultimately school readiness.
- Ensure everyone who displays 'risky' behaviour or is newly diagnosed has access to a personal care plan, social prescribing and a peer support network. This will require the creation of a payment mechanism (NHS tariff) for charity sector partners.

■ DEVOLUTION, GROWTH AND INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Perspectives on SMEs and Productivity in the Northern Powerhouse Institute for Public Policy Research North

Boosting the productivity of small businesses in the Northern Powerhouse could add as much as £23 billion per annum to the economy. Northern SMEs are not a homogeneous group. They need support that is tailored to their local contexts and individual needs. This means strategically coordinated opportunities that are rigorously assessed for efficiency, relevance and effectiveness, delivered by experts and well-resourced.

Recommendations to boost northern SME productivity include:

- Government should commit to a full redesign of business rates, alongside a review of how local government is funded.
- Funding should be increased for the British Business Bank and the Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund. In the long-term, this should be developed into a full-scale regional investment bank structure.
- Government should create long-term financial settlements for LEPs to fund growth hubs, increasing funding from £12 million per year to £60 million per year.

Fairer and Stronger: Rebalancing the UK economy

UK2070 Commission

A huge gulf exists between the UK's best and worst performing regions and towns. The UK2070 Commission has undertaken a major review of the evidence on the nature of inequality. There is a clear connection between these regional variations and deprivation, educational attainment and skills.

The costs of the UK's regional inequalities are borne by all. Taxpayers pay directly through a growing benefits bill and indirectly through the under-performance of our economy. Individual households suffer in terms of health, wealth and lower levels of access to jobs and opportunities. Continuing low productivity within our nations and regions is a drag on the national economy.

The report sets out an Agenda for Action based on four major policy interventions:

- Effective Devolution
- Harnessing the New and Local Economies
- Aligning ambitions, through national and sub-national spatial frameworks
- Establishing a UK Renewal Fund linked to reformed fiscal regimes.

Land for the Many: Changing the way our fundamental asset is used, owned and governed

Labour Party

Dig deep enough into many of the problems this country faces, and you will soon hit land. Soaring inequality and exclusion; the massive cost of renting or buying a decent home; repeated financial crises, sparked by housing asset bubbles; the collapse of wildlife and ecosystems; the lack of public amenities – the way land is owned and controlled underlies them all. Yet it scarcely features in political discussions.

This report aims to put land where it belongs: at the heart of political debate and discussion. It proposes radical but practical changes in the way land in the UK is used and governed, including:

- The Land Compensation Act should be reformed to enable development corporations and other public authorities to acquire land at prices closer to its current use value, rather than its potential future residential value. This could reduce the cost of building genuinely affordable housing by up to 50 per cent.
- Local authorities should also be empowered to lead local development. They should set housing targets based on the type, size and tenure that local people need and can afford.
- The planning system should be reformed to address imbalances of power, which currently allow deep-pocketed developers excessive influence over local decision-making. Among the measures recommended are permitting local authorities to set and vary planning fees: for example, increasing them for applications raised more than once, or when advice or policy has been ignored.

How Productivity could Deliver Inclusive Growth in Scotland

Institute for Public Policy Research Scotland

Relying on job creation in Scotland's 'growth sectors' to boost pay and prospects for the vast majority of Scotland's labour force is not a realistic or sustainable strategy for realising inclusive growth. Instead, Scotland's productivity strategy needs a dedicated focus on high-employment, low-wage sectors in order to drive up productivity and pay across the breadth of the Scottish economy.

Recommendations include:

- Encourage the Scottish government to focus economic strategy on the 'everyday economy'.
- Increase investment in in-work learning for lower-paid workers in Scotland.
- Pilot tax revenue assignment within Scotland to boost productivity and inclusive growth.

Devolution of Air Passenger Duty to Wales

House of Commons Welsh Affairs Committee

After considering the arguments for and against the devolution of Air Passenger Duty (APD) to Wales, the Committee concludes that APD should be devolved to Wales and calls on the UK Government to set out plans to do so by 2021. The Committee also calls on the Welsh Government to carry out the necessary environmental impact assessments, before any decision is made on how to use the tax.

■ PUBLIC SERVICE REFORM

LGIU Homelessness Commission 2019: Final Report

Local Government Information Group

In this report, the LGiU Local Government Homelessness Commission argues that we desperately need a proper housing and homelessness strategy, that addresses the underlying causes and gives councils the powers and resources they need to carry it out.

Without significant strategic funding the systems in place under the Homelessness Reduction Act will remain procedural. They will result in an improved assessment process, but with no ultimate outcomes because there is not the sustainable and affordable housing, mental health support, addiction services, or other infrastructure that will actually address the causes of homelessness. The report also set out how many of the drivers of homelessness are caused or exacerbated by central government policy, while local government is left to pick up the pieces.

The Health Effects of Sure Start

Institute for Fiscal Studies

Despite its rapid expansion and the subsequent cuts, evidence on the impact Sure Start has had on the health of children and their families is still relatively scarce. This report considers the overall impacts on health of the Sure Start programme as a whole between its inception in 1999 and its peak in the late 2000s.

Key findings include:

- Sure Start reduced the likelihood of hospitalisation among children of primary school age.
- Sure Start benefits children living in disadvantaged areas most.
- The benefits from hospitalisations are able to offset approximately six per cent of the programme costs.

Defining and Measuring Housing Affordability – An alternative approach

Affordable Housing Commission

This interim report proposes a new measure of housing affordability in England. Rather than focusing on market rents and house prices it defines and measures housing affordability as being what people

can afford, be it to rent or to buy. Viewed from the perspective of who is facing housing stress and under what circumstances, this approach replaces existing market-based definitions as encapsulated by the 'Affordable Rent' product, which misleadingly defines affordable housing as 80 per cent of market rents regardless of a household's income. The new measures are based on an affordability threshold at the point when rents or purchase costs exceed a third of household income (for those in work). From this starting point it seeks to capture other issues around housing quality, overcrowding, adequacy of Housing Benefit, household size and regional variations.

This alternative approach also recognises the different ways in which different groups of people experience housing stress. In place of general definitions such as 'Affordable Rent', the new definition and measures relate to four groups: struggling renters; low income older households; struggling homeowners; frustrated first time buyers.

The AHC will now be examining how the definition and measures can be effectively applied to housing policy, funding and planning to help deliver more affordability in different places, for different people. They are intended to provide a more pro-active and interventionist 'people based' approach to solving the affordable housing crisis.

Planning and the Broken Housing Market

House of Commons Public Accounts Committee

The Government has an ambitious target of delivering 300,000 new homes per year by the mid-2020s, but inherent problems at the heart of the housing planning system are likely to jeopardise this target. If the Government delivers 300,000 new homes per year, this would be a significant increase in the rate of house building, with the number built a year averaging only 177,000 in the period 2005–06 to 2017–18. While the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (the Department) has made some recent reforms to the planning system, much more needs to be done and it still does not have a detailed implementation plan for how it will scale-up house building.

The Department stresses that it wants a 'plan-led system', with local authorities determining the shape of development in their areas through their own local plans. We welcome this outlook, which has the potential to engender a housing system which is both efficient and able to be tailored to local communities. But local authorities are struggling to produce local plans showing how many, where and what types of new homes are needed in their areas, and fewer than half of authorities have an up-to-date local plan, and the Department is reluctant to take decisive action. New housing developments also need supporting infrastructure in place and the Department estimates that £12 billion a year towards the cost of this infrastructure should come from public sources. The rest must come from developers, but local authorities find it difficult to navigate complex negotiations with developers who are too often able to negotiate lower contributions to infrastructure.

Still no Homes for Nurses: How NHS land is being sold off to build unaffordable homes

New Economics Foundation

Following on from a publication released by New Economics Foundation last January – *No Homes for Nurses* – this report examines 23 sites the NHS declared 'surplus' in England in 2017-18, and can reveal once again that the sale of NHS land is fundamentally failing to produce the affordable homes we need, and is in fact exacerbating the deep affordability crisis across the UK. In many ways things have got worse. There are 1.2 million English households on the waiting list for social housing, but the majority of homes built on NHS land will be out of reach to those who most need them.

By failing to use the land to meet the vast and growing unmet need for decent, affordable homes, the Government is dramatically failing in its mission to 'fix the broken housing market'. Public land could be key to solving the housing crisis, but instead is being used for more unaffordable homes, and generating record profits and bonuses for the big developers.

Capital Cities: How the planning system creates housing shortages and drives wealth inequality

Centre for Cities

This report explores the relationship between urban economies and housing wealth in England and Wales. Analysis set out in the report shows that while average housing equity per house in cities in the rest of England and Wales has increased by £23,000 from 2013 to 2018, in the urban Greater South East it grew by £103,000. Total housing equity across the rest of England and Wales increased by £374 billion from 2013 to 2018, while in the Greater South East it increased by £842 billion.

As housing wealth for homeowners in the Greater South East grows, so do rents for private renters. The inability of housing supply to respond to demand in prosperous cities drives their increasing house prices and makes homeowners wealthier at the expense of renters. The report argues that the planning system's rationing of land creates housing shortages in these cities with the strongest economies. This political choice inflates the value of houses and so gifts increases in housing wealth to these cities' homeowners, deepens inequality and the North-South divide.

To address these issues the report recommends:

- Government to introduce a flexible zoning system that allows development by right, thus allowing housing supply to respond to local demand and end housing shortages in cities.
- Policies that promote housing wealth be ceased and increases to housing tax be introduced. Help to Buy should be abolished.
- Government explore policies to encourage saving in other asset classes besides housing, such as equities, bonds and pensions.

Future Homes

Demos

The public is deeply concerned that homes built today are not fit for the future – more than a third (34 per cent) think new homes built today will not be fit for purpose in thirty years' time. Drawing on demographic, economic and technological forecasting, it also finds that significant changes are have to be made to the home if we are to respond to the challenges Britain faces in 2040.

Multigenerational living could be part of the answer, helping to tackle loneliness and social care demands as a result of an ageing population and intergenerational divisions. But 66 per cent of people think new build homes do not allow for such arrangements, despite the report finding that more people would consider having their parents move in with them than would not (31 per cent versus 29 per cent).

Key recommendations include:

- Local authorities should offer multigenerational households (three or more generations) a 25 per cent council tax discount.
- The government should introduce permitted development rights for the conversion of garages into 'granny annexes'.
- Local authorities should abolish the single-person council tax discount for residents without dependents living in band E and above properties.

Game of Homes: The rise of multiple property ownership in Great Britain

Resolution Foundation

Additional property wealth is a big deal in Britain today. There is a lot of it around – almost a trillion pounds' worth in 2014-16, or almost one-sixth of the value of all property – and one-in-nine adults have some in their family. It has increased sharply in scale, with its value rising by one-fifth in two years, while the number of adults in families with additional property wealth has risen by more than 50 per cent this century, to 5.5 million people. This report looks at who owns additional property, the reasons for holding it, and the implications for the living standards of different generations and income groups.

Key findings include:

- The proportion of adults with additional property wealth in their family has grown over the past 25 years.
- Generation X, the baby boomers and the silent generation have had unusual cohort-on-cohort increases in additional property ownership.
- Buy-to-let ownership varies more across regions than second home ownership does.

The Wealth Within: The 'Preston Model' and the new municipalism

Demos

This report assesses the Preston model and finds that it might help us answer some of the most pressing political questions of our time. It concludes that community wealth building marks an important development in the evolution of place-based policy initiatives that attempt to answer the two most important and related questions in contemporary British politics: how to create wealth sustainably in communities themselves and how to create wealth more equitably at the national level.

Policy recommendations include:

- National Policymakers should trial and fund a place-based Community Wealth Zone scheme, where economic rules vary from areas outside the zone.
- Part of the money committed for replacing the EU Regional Development Fund should be used to set-up a £1 billion Co-operative Resilience Fund in order to ensure smaller worker cooperatives have decent capital access.
- The Government should seek to promote fiscal retention of taxes to local authorities, whilst monitoring the impact this has on social justice.

Scaling up Social Lettings? Scope, impact and barriers

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

This report identifies a range of different organisations, described as social lettings agencies (SLAs), that are seeking to loosen the grip of poverty by improving the options available to low-income or vulnerable households in the private rented sector (PRS). Although not a substitute for wider, systemic changes, this innovative sector has an important role to play in the PRS and can be encouraged to grow with support from government and other stakeholders.

Recommended actions include:

- Central government needs to ensure that there is an enabling national regulatory and funding environment that makes it possible for SLAs to operate.

- Managing and reducing the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) gap would be the most effective way for the Government to support SLAs.
- The proposed introduction of a ban on upfront fees that lettings agents can charge tenants as part of the Tenant Fees Bill provides an opportunity to review how lettings agents function and whether additional changes could improve the overall functioning of this market for the benefit of both landlords and tenants.

■ DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Cyber Security in the UK: Ninety-Ninth Report of Session 2017-2019

House of Commons Public Accounts Committee

The UK has one of the world's leading digital economies, designed to exploit the benefits of the internet, but this also makes it vulnerable to attack from hostile countries, criminal gangs and individuals. To counter this threat, and continue to support the UK's digital government and economy, since 2011 the Cabinet Office (the Department) has managed two, five-year national cyber security strategies. The report finds that the Department is beginning to make progress in meeting the strategic outcomes of the current, 2016–2021 National Cyber Security Strategy after a poor start. However, a weak evidence base and the lack of a business case for the National Cyber Security Programme that helps to deliver the Strategy make it difficult for the Department to assess whether it will meet all its objectives by 2021. A lack of a business case also means it is unclear whether the money allocated at the start of the Programme was the right amount, making it more difficult to judge value for money.

The report sets out a number of recommendations, including:

- The Department should ensure another long-term coordinated approach to cyber security is put in place well in advance of the current Strategy finishing in March 2021.
- The Department should ensure that, to support any follow-on, long-term and coordinated approach to cyber security, it produces a properly costed business case.
- When the Department publishes its costed plan in autumn 2019 for its future approach to cyber security it should also set out what the existing Strategy and Programme should deliver by March 2021, and the risks around those areas where it will not meet its strategic outcomes and objectives.

Culture is Digital: June 2019 progress report

Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

The Digital Culture Project set out to explore how culture and technology can work together to the benefit of each other. In 2018 the Culture is Digital Report was published which contained research, evidence and commitments across three main themes: Audiences, Skills and Digital Capability, and Future Strategy. The project is now in implementation stage. This report charts the progress that has been made in partnership with the commitment holders as well as opportunities for future development. Much progress has been made across the three themes, including:

- On audiences, the National Lottery Heritage Fund are embedding skills development on the use of audience data within multiple workstreams as part of its new £1 million Digital Campaign.
- On digital skills, the Arts Council have launched their new £1.1 million Digital Culture network, a two-year initiative to increase the digital skills and capacity of arts and cultural organisations, providing practical hands-on support, developing partnerships with the technology sector and facilitating the sharing of resources and best practice.

- On Future Strategy, the National Gallery are launching their new innovation space, National Gallery X in the Summer of 2019. This space, will house a range of activity, leading with a collaborative R&D project with King's College London.

Digital Vision for Mobility

Atos

With contributions from many leading innovators from the transport sector, this publication sets out how we are on the cusp of a new era of connected mobility. Transport and logistics are leading other markets in digital transformation that will drive wider economic growth and societal change.

Public transport providers have already embraced open data, enabling thousands of new transit apps and providers. This will continue, with open payments and collaboration between operators—both critical factors for integrated mobility services. With advances in edge computing, swarms of connected cars, buses, drones and trucks will also make travel smoother and more sustainable. Pushing intelligence to the edge will further enable predictive performance monitoring and asset management.

FINANCE

Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme – progress review

National Audit Office

This report follows up on the March 2014 report *The Help to Buy equity loan scheme*. It continues a series of reports published on housing in England, which have included *Housing in England: overview (January 2017)*, *Homelessness (September 2017)* and *Planning for new homes (February 2019)*. Since the first report, the scheme has increased considerably in size and value. This report assesses how the scheme has performed against its objectives, how effectively the Department and Homes England have managed the Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme to date, and how they are planning the future of the scheme and its end.

Key findings include:

- The Department's independent evaluations of the Help to Buy: Equity Loan scheme show it has increased home ownership and housing supply.
- The Department's second evaluation found that around three-fifths of buyers could have bought a property without the support of Help to Buy.
- The scheme has supported five of the six largest developers in England to increase the overall number of properties they sell year on year, thereby contributing to increases in their annual profits.

Living standards, poverty and inequality in the UK: 2109

Institute for Fiscal Studies

This report examines how living standards – most commonly measured by households' incomes – have changed for different groups in the UK, and the consequences that these changes have for income inequality and for measures of deprivation and poverty. This latest report focuses in particular on those people who are poorest in society.

Key findings include:

- The key driver for stalling income overall has been employee earnings growth being lower than inflation in 2017–18.
- Reductions in the reported amounts of working-age benefits pushed down incomes of poorer households in 2017–18.
- Since the recovery from the Great Recession began in 2011–12, the incomes of different age groups have performed similarly.

Future of Finance

Bank of England

At his Mansion House speech entitled “New Economy, New Finance, New Bank” June 2018, the Governor announced a review: “to set out a vision for the medium-term future of the UK financial system, with a particular focus on what this might mean for the Bank, and what steps the Bank’s Executive might take to ensure the institution is able to provide appropriate support to that vision, both now and in the future”. The recommendations in this review cover the following areas:

- What the Bank has direct responsibility for, particularly how it could change its hard and soft infrastructure to support innovation and promote resilience in finance.
- Areas of interest to the Bank where it is not the primary actor, and so may wish to collaborate or contribute expert advice to affect change.
- Where the private sector will lead.

Jeremy Hunt’s Tax and Spending Policies: What would they cost and who would benefit?

Institute for Fiscal Studies

In his bid to be leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister, Jeremy Hunt has announced a number of policy proposals. This publication examines two tax and two spending promises: cutting corporation tax, raising the point at which workers begin to pay National Insurance contributions (NICs), increasing defence spending, and reducing the interest rate paid on student loan debt.

Key findings include:

- Cutting the main rate of corporation to 12.5 per cent would cost around £13 billion per year in the short run, though probably somewhat less in the long run.
- Increasing the NICs threshold is a good way of helping low earners through the tax system.
- Increasing defence spending to 2.5 per cent of national income over the next five years implies spending £15 billion more in 2023–24 than today, and around £12 billion more than if spending remained at its current level of two per cent of national income.

Streamlining the Account

Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accounting

Local authorities are required to prepare their accounts in accordance with the *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* issued by CIPFA/LASAAC. The adoption of IFRSs has meant a substantial increase in the amount of information reported and more recently, local authorities in England have delivered on early closedown. Yet despite the quality and timeliness of local government financial reporting there is work to do to better translate the story of the financial sustainability of individual authorities and to build trust with local stakeholders by giving clear, simple and relevant information. This publication aims to supply practical ways of streamlining both financial statements and year-end financial processes.

Moving Matters: Housing costs and labour market mobility

Resolution Foundation

Making a move – to a new job, a new home or both – can be born of many things. It can be entirely positive – a response to a promotion, perhaps, or a happy change in personal circumstances. But equally, such moves can have more negative motivations – leaving an area because it is hard to find employment there, for example, or because housing costs are a burden. This research examines the complex topic of residential and job mobility and focuses on three economic explanations for the fall in job-plus-home mobility:

- The ‘push’ of a lack of employment has diminished over time: it is easier to find at least some type of work in the vast majority of local authorities today than it was two decades ago.
- While the earnings uplift of moving local authority is often still very considerable, the difference in the average ‘wage premium’ achieved as a result of such a move has fallen since the turn of the century.
- Not only has the earnings boost of moving to a more productive area diminished as a result of closing wage differentials; so, too, has the broader living standards uplift once housing costs are taken into account.

Life on Low Pay

Living Wage Foundation

In 2001 community organisers from Citizens UK brought together people from local institutions in East London to talk about the problems affecting their lives. Many of them were working in two or three minimum wage jobs and still struggling to make ends meet. Since then, the campaign for a real Living Wage has led to a pay rise for over 150,000 UK workers and put over £600 million back into their pockets. In 2016, the government introduced a higher minimum wage for over 25 year olds inspired by the campaign, even calling it a ‘national living wage’. However, one in five, or over 5.5 million, people in the UK are still earning below the real Living Wage. Based on polling results with parents working full time but not earning a wage they can live on, this research finds:

- 37 per cent said they had skipped meals regularly for financial reasons.
- 43 per cent said they had fallen behind on household bills.
- 24 per cent believed low pay had negatively affected their relationship with their children.

An Intergenerational Audit for the UK: 2019

Resolution Foundation

Intergenerational issues are on the political, policy and research agenda in Britain in 2019, and their salience is rising. The Intergenerational Commission, hosted by the Resolution Foundation during 2016-18, was one element of a growing focus on the experiences of different cohorts compared to predecessors at the same age. While large majorities across age groups in Britain believe that each successive generation should have a better life than the one before, pessimists about the prospects of today’s younger generation outnumber optimists by two-to-one. A body of analysis showed that in a range of areas related to economic living standards, this pessimism is at least partly justified. But alongside this pessimism regarding young people’s prospects, people are equally committed to the belief that the success of a society is measured by how well we provide for older generations. The

Commission's analysis also weighed up the challenges (fiscal and otherwise) Britain faces in fulfilling that duty as lives get longer, and the large baby boomer generation moves into retirement. A rounded view of our country's intergenerational challenges in the 21st century takes account of these two things. First, the extent to which younger generations are experiencing living standards improvements on predecessors. Second, the extent to which we are supporting older people to maintain their living standards in retirement, particularly the least well-off and most vulnerable.

The report takes stock of generational living standards differences in Britain according to the latest data by considering living standards within four domains: jobs, skills and pay; housing costs and security; taxes, benefits and household income; and wealth and assets.

Delivering Skills for the New Economy Confederation of British Industries

This research increases the evidence base on digital skills needs across the UK economy; provides case studies on innovative ways firms are addressing their digital skills gaps; and provides insight for government to inform the National Retraining Partnership and Digital Skills Partnership.

Digital skills are a game-changing lever for competitiveness, business growth and inclusion. Digital skills are the cornerstone of the UK digital economy. As a crucial enabler of business digital transformation, access to digital skills is a key factor for companies deciding where to locate and invest. Ensuring people have the digital skill sets they need will transform businesses, open up job opportunities and support digital inclusion in every aspect of life.

Key findings include:

- Two thirds of business already have unfilled digital skills vacancies.
- 95 per cent of business expect their digital skills needs to grow.
- 93 per cent of firms are taking action to address their digital skill needs.

Low Pay Britain Resolution Foundation

This ninth annual Resolution Foundation report on low pay focuses on the minimum wage, for two reasons. The first is that it is driving big, welcome changes to our labour market. As the UK's wage floor celebrates its 20th birthday, recent increases in its level have driven the first sustained reduction in low pay for four decades. Since the higher 'National Living Wage' (NLW) was introduced for those aged 25 and over in 2016, the percentage of employees in low pay (paid less than two thirds of median hourly pay) has fallen from 20.7 per cent in 2015 to 17.1 per cent in 2018.

The second reason is that the minimum wage is at a crossroads, with an uncertain future. The five-year uprating period instituted in 2016 comes to an end next year, and policy makers need to decide where to take it next. The Chancellor and the Labour Party have both announced ambitious plans for its future, either of which would result in the UK having one of the highest minimum wage rates in the world. This report offers a framework for how to marry such (welcome) ambition with caution given that we do not know where the optimal level of the wage floor lies. It focuses more on the journey, rather than the ultimate destination – how fast to boost wages for the lowest earners while managing the inevitable risks to employment.

Ensuring the Leadership of the New Municipalism

Association for Public Service Excellence

This report contributes to debates over the future of public leadership, examining how chief officers in local authorities are experiencing the shifting landscape of local government and how they are making sense of its leadership challenges. Against this background, this report takes a fresh look at the roles and responsibilities of local authority chief officers. It seeks to capture and evaluate their everyday experiences, generating much needed evidence on a relatively neglected group of local public servants.

Key recommendations include:

- The strategic leadership capabilities of local authorities will wither on the vine unless chief officers have the opportunity and spaces to engage in reflective practice; to benefit from mentoring and peer review; and to scan for future challenges and alternatives.
- Local authorities should revisit and future proof core competency frameworks for chief officers.
- Local authorities should investigate new ways of working which take account of the broader responsibilities of chief officers, as well as the declining numbers of staff employed by local councils.

Public-Common Partnerships: Building New Circuits of Collective Ownership

Common Wealth

This report introduces a new institutional framework for a transformative socialist politics: the Public-Common Partnership (PCP). Whilst the era of new public-private partnerships in the UK has apparently come to an end, more than £199 billion of Public Private Partnership (PPP) payments from the public to the private sphere are due into the 2040s. This accumulation of wealth for the few comes at the cost of deteriorating services for the many. The debt itself serves to foreclose political alternatives by tying the hands of future authorities with ceaseless repayments and the further entrenchment of market logic.

This report is aimed at both policy makers and social movement actors, both of whom are essential to the implementation of PCPs. Whilst a Left Labour government could dramatically increase the potential for the rollout of PCPs, there is already scope for their implementation by progressive municipalities such as Preston and new city-regions such as the North of Tyne. If these projects are to succeed, however, they will also need the mobilisation of social movements, ranging from housing unions such as ACORN or environmental groups such as Frack Free Lancashire. These movements can help define the problems to be addressed, add pressure to change calculations of political cost, and act as seeds in the formation of the Commons Associations that will drive the creation of PCPs.

Home Office Indicators of Integration Framework 2019 (second edition)

Home Office

Successful integration helps people to realise their full potential. It makes it easier for them to access services, reduces educational and health inequalities, helps them to find jobs and, fundamentally, underpins social cohesion and community empowerment.

In developing the Indicators of Integration framework, the report acknowledges integration is multi-dimensional and can depend upon a broad range of factors. Integration encompasses access to

resources, like education and healthcare, opportunities for work and leisure, as well as broader concepts like social mixing. The research also acknowledges true integration is multi-directional. Integrating successfully involves a wide variety of individuals, agents and stakeholders; no organisation, however capable, can integrate people single-handedly. Integration also depends upon everyone taking responsibility for their own contribution, including newly arrived residents, receiving communities and government at all levels. Finally, integration is context specific and needs to be understood and planned in relation to a particular place, time, and person.

This framework is intended to be a resource for integration practitioners at all levels, offering a common language for understanding, planning, monitoring and measuring integration, and supporting better and more tailored integration services. It has been developed in collaboration with academics and with input from migrant organisations, the voluntary sector, local and national governments and, most importantly, migrants themselves.