Spring 2024

UNIVERSITY
of York

School for Business
and Society

PROGRESS
MAGAZINE

Bob Doherty,
Dean of the
School for Business
and Society

> "Each article in this edition of 'Progress' not only showcases our School's multifaceted expertise but also reaffirms our dedication to influencing positive change in society through education, research, and collaboration."

Foreword

Welcome to the Spring 2024 edition of Progress. I am delighted to present a collection of articles that demonstrate our School's mission of driving positive change across business and society through impactful interdisciplinary collaboration.

Understanding and influencing socio-economic systems

In this issue, we explore the intricate dynamics of socio-economic systems, a core aspect of our School's mission. Our feature on the private renting sector in England exemplifies this, offering a nuanced understanding of housing policy and its societal implications. This research aligns with our commitment to unraveling complex systems and influencing policy for societal betterment.

Fostering collaborative research and innovation

The Curiosity Partnership project, led by Professor Yvonne Birks, embodies our vision of innovative and collaborative research. Focusing on adult social care, this initiative underscores our drive to enhance research capacity within local authorities, bridging the gap between academia and practical implementation.

Advancing pedagogical excellence

We also spotlight our innovative teaching methods. Dr Laura Mitchell discusses her use of 'playful pedagogies' recently delivered to a class at the Department of Industrial Engineering and Management at the University of Uppsala, Sweden. This approach aligns with our pursuit of educational innovation, reflecting our commitment to developing holistic and adaptable leaders.

Integrating academia with broader societal interests

Celebrating the tenth anniversary of the 'Soccer Mad Boffins' blog, we illustrate how academic research can intersect with broader societal interests like sports. This initiative mirrors our dedication to extending the reach of academic discourse beyond traditional boundaries.

Pushing the frontiers of academic research

Professor Alexander McNeil's work in mathematics and risk management showcases our School's edge in pioneering academic research. His contributions resonate with our goal of addressing real-world challenges through rigorous academic inquiry.

Innovating for social welfare

Our feature, "Breaking the Mould," highlights a pilot study by the Institute for Safe Autonomy and the School for Business and Society. Led by Professor Philip Garnett, this study focuses on the use of sensors in social housing to detect conditions leading to damp and mould. This innovative project not only addresses a pressing public health issue but also exemplifies our commitment to using technology responsibly and ethically, with tenant engagement and welfare at its core.

Advancing mental health through social research

This edition features the impactful work of the International Centre for Mental Health Social Research (ICMHSR) at our School, highlighting innovative social interventions to improve mental health. Their commitment to exploring new avenues for mental health support, particularly in under-served communities, aligns with our School's mission to effect positive societal change through interdisciplinary research and practical solutions.

Public good

In addition, we feature an insightful discussion with a member of our Advisory Board, Susanna Moorehead. Susanna reflects on the effectiveness of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and the challenges facing the international community in achieving shared goals with limited resources, how to be a successful public leader in a complex world, and what the University and School can contribute to achieve results.

Business and Society

Each article in this edition of 'Progress' not only showcases our School's multifaceted expertise but also reaffirms our dedication to influencing positive change in society through education, research, and collaboration. As we explore these varied yet interconnected domains, we continue to uphold our vision of creating knowledge that impacts businesses and society for the better.

Contents

From management to mathematical theorems

Many management scholars use mathematics to model the world around them and draw inferences that are backed by data and quantitative reasoning. Professor Alexander (Alex) McNeil in the Finance, Accounting and Actuarial Science Group has spent his career applying this approach to the study of risk in finance and insurance and his textbook "Quantitative Risk Management: Concepts, Techniques and Tools" (Princeton University Press, 2005, 2015), written with Rüdiger Frey (WU Vienna) and Paul Embrechts (ETH Zurich) is the definitive reference work in the area. While the focus of Alex's work is usually on the application of established mathematical methodology to real-world problems, occasionally the benefits flow in the opposite direction and the study of problems in risk management leads to new mathematical insights.

Sometimes this can culminate in the excitement of solving open mathematical problems.

Alex has a particular interest in describing correlations or dependencies between risks. To understand why correlations are important in risk management, consider the case of a global insurance or reinsurance company. Such a company is typically exposed to a multitude of risks, ranging from financial, economic and geopolitical risks on the one hand, to climate, seismic, pandemic and terrorism risks on the other. Under European insurance regulation, an insurer must model the effect of all risks on the value of their assets and liabilities in order to determine their solvency capital requirement (SCR).

As part of the modelling process, actuaries and risk managers in insurance companies are

Maurice Kendall
Creative Commons

often called upon to specify joint probability distributions for losses attributable to different risks. Joint distributions can be constructed using information about the marginal behaviour of each individual risk and information about the correlations between pairs of risks. However, calibration of the latter is often complicated by a lack of pertinent data for certain pairs and completion of a so-called correlation matrix frequently requires an actuary to exercise expert judgment and impute plausible values. Therein lies a problem.

Although a ubiquitous concept in natural as well as social sciences, correlation is a surprisingly tricky subject. When we measure correlations between variables, we have a choice of at least three measures – the correlations of Pearson, Spearman and Kendall. While Pearson's correlation has the longest history and is the most widely used, the so-called rank correlations of Spearman and Kendall are a more appropriate choice for risks that are not

normally distributed, as is mostly the case in finance and insurance. The latter correlation, often referred to as Kendall's tau, has a particularly attractive definition, being equal to the probability that two risks are concordant (larger values of the first are accompanied by larger values of the second) minus the probability that they are discordant (not concordant).

An open problem concerning Kendall's tau was the characterization of so-called attainable matrices of correlations for three or more variables. If we have three risks, we cannot arbitrarily select values between -1 and +1 for each of the three possible pairs; there are constraints that must be observed. Alex and his collaborators, Johanna Nešlehová (McGill University) and Andrew Smith (University College Dublin), have proved that, for a collection of d variables, the set of attainable Kendall's tau values forms a geometrical object in $d(d-1)/2$-dimensional space known as the cut polytope. This had been conjectured but a proof was not previously available.

To assist risk managers with the difficult problem of specifying matrices that are consistent with this set, Alex and his collaborators have developed procedures, based on linear optimization and convex analysis, that allow users to enter the correlation values in which they are most confident, check their attainability, and then derive the set in which the remaining unspecified values must lie.

As is often the case with mathematics, a much more general

Global Risks Report 2023

## Global risks landscape: an interconnections map
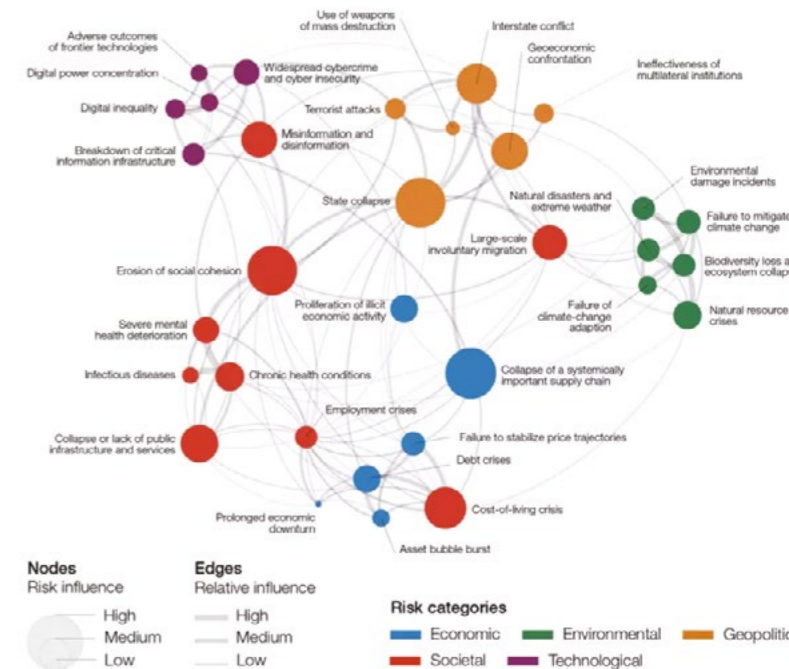
WEF risk map of interconnected risks

theory has emerged from the analysis. While the usual version of Kendall's tau measures the concordance between two variables, there are higher-order generalizations that measure the concordance of three or more variables jointly. Alex and his team have developed a concept known

Picture of cut polytope for 3 correlations

as a concordance signature to describe the complete set of pairwise and higher-order measures of concordance for an arbitrary number of variables. Their main result is to provide a mathematical characterization of attainable concordance signatures and the solution of the open problem of attainable Kendall correlation matrices drops elegantly out of the general theory as a special case.

Reference

On attainability of Kendall's tau matrices and concordance signatures. Alexander J. McNeil, Johanna G. Nešlehová and Andrew D. Smith. Journal of Multivariate Analysis, volume 191, 2022.
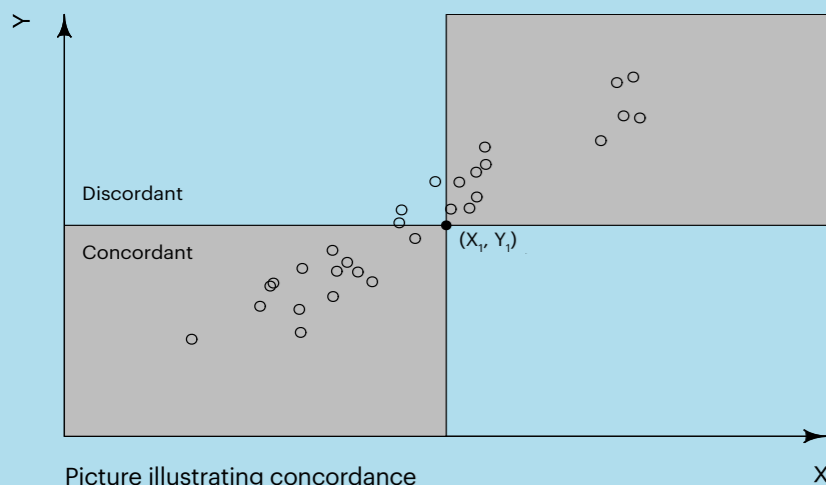
Picture illustrating concordance

Breaking the mould

Examples of the sensors

The Institute for Safe Autonomy and the School for Business and Society at the University of York are leading a pilot study into the use of internal environment monitoring systems that could help with the detection of damp and mould in homes. Led by Philip Garnett, a professor in the School for Business and Society and Ethics Pillar Lead in the Institute for Safe Autonomy, and in collaboration with North Star Housing Group, AwareTag, and Waterstons. We will be placing sensors into social housing for the purpose of monitoring temperature and humidity levels with the aim of detecting conditions that might result in damp and the growth of mould, conditions that might eventually pose a risk to the

tenant's health. The project will run throughout 2024, and is focused on engagement with social housing tenants around the use of autonomous sensor systems in homes for the use in this sort of predictive analytics.

There has been a lot of interest in the issue of damp and mould in housing due to a number of tragic incidents over recent years, including the death of a two-year old Rochdale boy in late 2020. Due

to this and other similar incidents there has been increased scrutiny of damp and mould in social housing by the Government, regulators and the Ombudsman, including the Government proposing changes to the Social Housing (Regulation) Act. The result of this will be more regulatory oversight of the management of damp and mould in homes. To assist with the monitoring of housing some social housing landlords are deploying internet of things technology (IoT), and other AI or machine learning driven technologies, in the form of temperature, humidity, and sometimes carbon dioxide

> **"There has been a lot of interest in the issue of damp and mould in housing due to a number of tragic incidents over recent years."**

sensors, with the hope that such technology can detect issues before it becomes a serious problem, and allow the landlord to act accordingly.

Rather than to focus on the efficacy of the technology alone, the purpose of this pilot study is to engage directly with the tenants of social housing to understand how they feel about the deployment of such sensors in their homes. With *North Star Housing Group* we will be conducting focus groups with groups of tenants to discuss the use of sensors broadly, enabling an open discussion about the positive and negative aspects of their use. *AwareTag* will also

be supporting the deployment of sensors in a small number of homes to research their use in practice, and get feedback on the technology from tenants. *Waterstons* are

> **"We are very excited to be working on this project, as it allows us to work with our customers to understand a landlords role in IoT devices and the data they produce. We are always looking for ways to innovative to provide an enhanced customer experience and offer but this work ensures we are doing so, consciously and keeping our customers involved."** Sean Lawless

NORTH STAR

also providing advice on how the technology can be secured and the privacy of tenants protected. The views of the tenants are central to this issue, and their opinion on whether a technological solution is in fact a valid solution to this issue, and if it is how that technology should be used and deployed. It is expected that this pilot study will lead to future research projects at a larger scale.

awaretag®

Institute for Safe Autonomy

Examples of the sensors

Waterstons
we're with you

Lessons in Public Leadership

Interview with
Susanna Moorehead

Susanna Moorehead was British Ambassador to Ethiopia and Djibouti and UK Permanent Representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. Over a 30-year career in international diplomacy and development, Susanna has held senior executive, strategic, policy and operational roles – from the Board of the World Bank to famine relief in rural Africa. Susanna served as the UK's Executive Director on the Board of the World Bank; was Director of West and Southern Africa at the UK Department for International Development (DFID); and Head of DFID India, when it was the UK's largest development programme. She directed field-based famine and rehabilitation programmes in rural Mali for Save the Children and was Deputy Director of the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex until 1997. Susanna is a graduate of the University of York.

In conversation with Professor Neil Lunt, Susanna reflects on the impact of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and the challenges facing the international community in achieving shared goals with limited resources, how to be a successful public leader in a complex world, and what the University and School can contribute to achieve impact.

NEIL LUNT: Most recently you've been the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) Chair, what do you identify as the biggest challenges here?

SUSANNA MOOREHEAD: ODA is a fantastically precious resource. When used well, it can generate real alchemy and achieve results, in pursuit of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Even though the total amount of ODA is increasing, very few DAC members are meeting the 0.7% target of GDP (the average is 0.3%). Demand for ODA is rising all the time – for example to meet humanitarian challenges, the consequences of war, and to tackle climate change. With rising demand and limited supply, ODA is being spread ever more thinly, which threatens to compromise its effectiveness. The challenge is how to leverage the resources we do have to have the greatest impact and to encourage all countries that can afford it – not just DAC members – to do more.

NL: After four years in charge, what have you taken away from this work, and what are you most proud of?

SM: Two of the four years were dominated by the Covid-19 pandemic, hotly followed by the Ukraine war. In addition to the immediate public health crisis and ensuing economic difficulties, the pandemic refocused donors` minds on what the future looks like, particularly the significance of global public goods and bads. How to finance global public goods, when ODA is quite rightly used for the poorest countries, is a continuing debate and there are no easy answers. Both the Covid-19 and the Ukraine crises have rightly made many low-income countries demand that their needs and resource constraints not be forgotten.

> "We passed a landmark recommendation on Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Harassment and Abuse. There's still a long way to go, but the fact that the membership stood up and committed to doing everything it can to stamp out this abuse in the development cooperation sector was a significant achievement."

In advance of COP 26, the DAC agreed a landmark declaration on Climate, the Environment and Biodiversity, which committed to aligning ODA with the goals of the 2015 Paris Declaration and supporting eligible countries in their just transitions. Critically, we put a far greater focus on financing adaptation not just mitigation. Small Island Developing States that are already experiencing acute consequences of the climate crisis were given special recognition.

We did a lot of work on debt, including agreement on how debt relief can be scored as ODA. This was controversial but essential given the rising debt crisis for many developing countries.

We got the DAC talking much more to non-DAC donors, such as other members of the G20, Arab donors, and China.

We passed a landmark recommendation on Preventing Sexual Exploitation, Harassment and Abuse. There's still a long way to go, but the fact that the membership stood up and committed to doing everything it can to stamp out this abuse in the development cooperation sector was a significant achievement.

We passed another recommendation on supporting and working more closely with Civil Society. This sent a very important signal that really transformative change in developing countries, particularly the poorest ones, needs the active engagement of local civil society organisations.

NL: In your career, you've worked in policy, strategy, diplomacy, operations, across a great many sectors. How has your background in social sciences and humanities shaped your career path and intellectual engagement?

SM: Real world problems are multidisciplinary. When I started out, almost all social scientists working in development were economists and often quite technocratic. There was a prevailing view that until you fix the economy, you can't do anything else. Coming in as a political scientist and working alongside anthropologists, sociologists and other disciplines changed how we understood and

> **"In advance of COP 26, the DAC agreed a landmark declaration on Climate, the Environment and Biodiversity, which committed to aligning ODA with the goals of the 2015 Paris Declaration and supporting eligible countries in their just transitions."**

thought about development. The key thing is you're never going to have an impact unless you understand the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and inequality.

Development is also hugely political. And in the development field, recognition of this manifested as a good governance agenda. This covers a huge range of things from the importance of strong institutions, free and fair elections, sound public financial management and robust domestic resource mobilisation to a vibrant press, access to justice and anti-corruption. These issues are now at the heart of sound development cooperation.

When I shifted into diplomacy, I was reminded daily of my History and Politics degree at York, especially the power politics of historical change and the importance of understanding history and culture in working effectively as a diplomat. Change is messy, it's complex, it's non-linear. It's very hard to imagine how a single discipline could address the world's problems. The best teams I've had the privilege of working with have had social scientists, natural scientists, administrators, elected officials, all working together to achieve change.

NL: With this diverse background and high-profile collaborative leadership experience, what would you consider to be most key to being successful at leading change and addressing the complex grand challenges in a public leadership context?

SM: The first thing I would say is "don't take the public for granted". There's a real temptation to boil everything down to 140 characters. Generally speaking, people have a very good understanding of their own challenges and what they need to help resolve them. Early in my career, I did a lot of participatory rural appraisal, which at the time was seen as revolutionary. Rather than great, big longitudinal surveys we'd go and ask women in villages what they needed, and you'd get a pretty good analysis of their problems and what they needed to tackle them.

In public leadership, there's a real need to listen and learn before you can lead change. There's also a need to be honest, to tell it like it is, to admit when you don't know and especially when you get things wrong. When you're dealing with complex challenges, you don't want to only showcase the positive, even though you do need to remain optimistic and focus on solving problems.

You should compromise. Don't make 'the best' the enemy of 'good enough for now'. Values really matter: integrity, honesty and transparency are pillars of a strong public sector. Communication is critical. It's not boiling everything down to easy sound bites but finding ways to explain complex ideas without jargon.

You should rely on others and their real expertise. I don't see myself as an expert. As a leader, I see myself as somebody who's able to draw on other people's expertise and help pull it together, be able to take advice and help craft workable policies and solutions. Implementation is key – there's no point having a brilliant policy if it cannot be delivered.

Finally, it isn't a competition between the public and private sectors. Both have their strengths and weaknesses. So often it's pitched as one versus the other. To be successful and solve the world's problems, it's got to be a complementary relationship.

NL: That's particularly interesting given our School's foundation of bringing business and society together and our University's mission for Public Good, recognising that it's only through working together across sectors that we can tackle the grand challenges. How do you see that we can more effectively contribute as a School and University to this vital work?

SM: Drawing business and society together is a really innovative good start. And it might be

controversial, but I don't think everybody should be trying to do everything. So, I'd say to SBS pick two or three goals where you can really make a difference, and then focus on those.

NL: You've mentioned a couple of issues that are very close to the work of the School, such as the role of the private sector and collaboration. Are there any other areas of activity that deserve more attention, where interdisciplinary attention and innovative thinking could make useful contributions?

SM: Firstly, making the leap from policy formulation to delivery is key – being able to operationalise delivery should never be an afterthought.

The second is to re-energise public interest in the policy agenda. Globalisation is here to stay. We're going to be more dependent on each other across the world. And while there's lots of discussion about the threats of globalisation, we don't focus enough on the opportunities available. And I don't think this is a political point, but more of an empirical one that gets lost in the politics.

NL: Within the core aspirations of the School is a clear commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). How have you seen the positive effect of EDI in your career?

SM: In development cooperation, some progress has been made on gender equality – especially educating girls – but there is still a long way to go and progress is

painfully slow. Rising inequality and exclusion are pressing issues in almost every society. Hard fought gains in women's rights are being threatened. Universities need to be crucibles of diversity – in thought and in education, in what students read, in who teaches them, and in the freedom to challenge conventional wisdom.

NL: And just one final question, and it's a political question, but asked in a non-political way! Given we have a General Election this year, what should every manifesto commit to in terms of ODA?

SM: I'd like to see the UK return to the 0.7% ODA target. As important, there should be a commitment to reforming the multilateral system. The UK has a very strong track record in steering change in this area. As a significant player, we need to redouble our efforts to engage strongly in reforming multilateral development banks, strengthening the United Nations and the global climate finance architecture. Improving the multilateral system is always about reform not revolution, but the time to do so is now and it's urgent. Greater inclusivity, more finance, greater efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. And I`d like to see many more women in the top leadership roles.

Susanna is a member of the School's Advisory Board, and was recognised in the New Year's Honours with the Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, for services to International Development and Diplomacy.

The Curiosity Partnership: building a research partnership with local authorities

As we tentatively emerged from the pandemic in 2022, work was picking up pace in the School for Business and Society on an exciting and innovative research project – The Curiosity Partnership.

Led by Professor Yvonne Birks, the Curiosity Partnership is a four-year research project, funded by a £1.3 million investment from the National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR), which aims to build research capacity and – as the name suggests – curiosity within local authorities. Specifically, the project focuses on adult social care and how research can play a role in improving the delivery of care for older people.

Although research is well embedded – and resourced – within the NHS, the same is not currently true for adult social care. As more funding becomes available for social care research – £200m has been awarded to social care research by the NIHR since 2006 – the need to boost capacity, stimulate research curiosity and encourage evidence-based practice/ decision making within local authorities has never been greater.

Working with four partner local authorities – City of York Council, City of Doncaster Council, Hull City Council and North Yorkshire Council – and three other universities – University of Hull, Newcastle University and University of Sheffield – the Curiosity Partnership team at the University of York spent the initial phases of the project building relationships with adult social care practitioners and setting the partnership's priorities.

The project formally launched in June 2022 at the first Curiosity Partnership Adult Social Care Research Festival. Attended by almost 100 people, including local authority partners, pe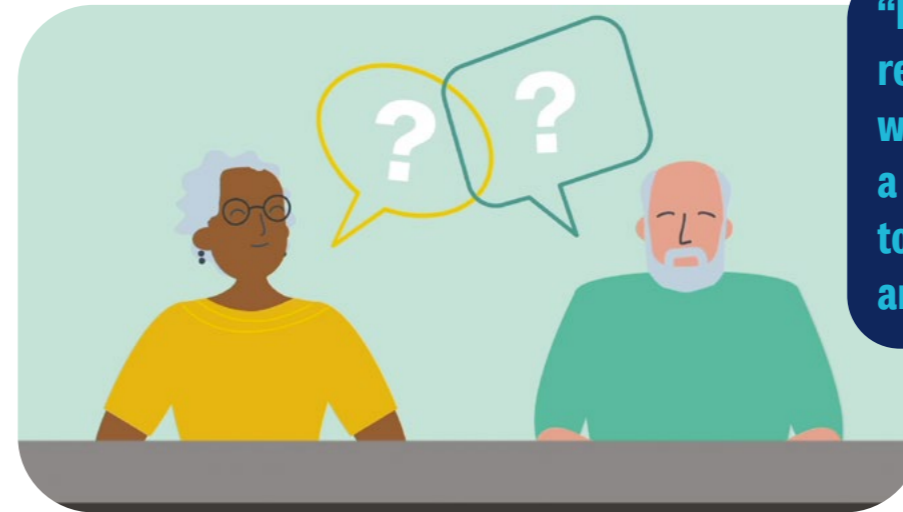ople with lived experience, researchers and community group representatives, the event generated a real buzz about the possibilities the partnership brings to adult social care in the region.

At the launch, the partnership announced their priority themes (engagement, isolation, place, prevention and workforce) which emerged from a series of workshops with partners, stakeholders and people with lived experience. The partnership is now building research communities around each of these themes, bringing together researchers and practitioners to discuss the challenges and where there are opportunities to work together with the intention of improving social care for older people.

In addition to establishing research communities, work is underway to deliver a social care academy to boost research skills and confidence and a digital platform to connect research-curious colleagues across the partnership, facilitating networking, knowledge-sharing, and skill-building. The partnership is also actively championing colleagues in adult social care, supporting fellowship applications, conference attendance, accessing existing research, and exploring specific research interests like loneliness, prevention and the potential impacts of the care cap (if it comes to pass).

The Curiosity Partnership has co-produced their work programme, collaborating with local authority colleagues every step of the way, but this has not been without challenges.

Councils grappling with budget deficits and social care facing unprecedented workforce pressures has directly impacted the ability of local authority staff to fully engage with the partnership. Despite these hurdles, there is a palpable eagerness to engage with research, and strong relationships have been forged. Though occasionally hindered by capacity constraints and staff turnover, we continue to move forward.
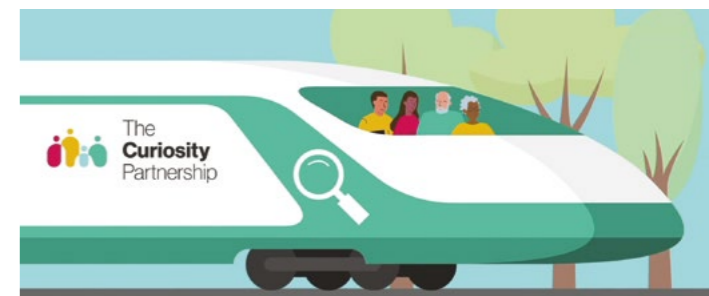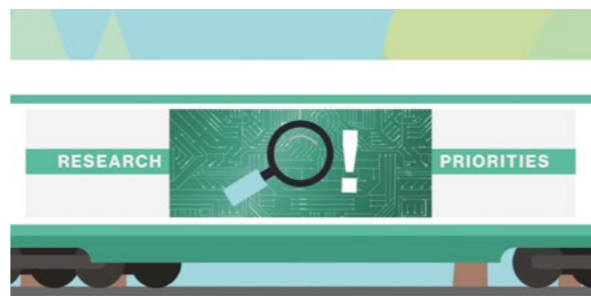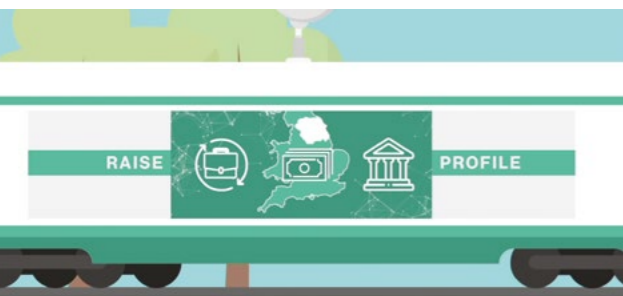
Integral to the research is an evaluation of what's worked well and what hasn't, conducted through interviews and surveys using a realist methodology. This approach delves into what works, for whom, under what circumstances, and how, capturing the diverse experiences of those involved in the partnership.

As one of *six similar partnerships* currently funded by the NIHR, the Curiosity Partnership is also involved in cross-partnership evaluation activities to combine learning and make recommendations to the funder about how the momentum gained to date can be sustained beyond the current partnerships' funding.

Looking toward 2024, the partnership eagerly anticipates building on its foundations. Plans include establishing researchers in residence in each of the four partner councils, hosting the third Adult Social Care Research Festival to showcase research from across the partnership, and pursuing new avenues of research curiosity. The journey continues, and the opportunities are boundless…

Curious to find out more? Watch the *animation*, view the *project infographic* and contact the research team – *curiosity-partnership@york.ac.uk* or follow on Twitter *@YHCuriosity*

1 of **6** partnerships

RAISE PROFILE

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

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SOCIAL CARE ACADEMY

The Curiosity Partnership

Charting trends in private renting in England

Housing policy, at its highest strategic levels, tends to seek the optimal balance of owner occupation, social housing and private renting. The private rented sector (PRS) has grown markedly, roughly doubling in size from 2000 and now accommodating around 20 per cent of households. Staff within the School for Business and Society have a long-standing interest in the PRS and have contributed substantially to a better understanding of this hugely complicated part of the market. Much of this work points towards the value of a complex systems approach. The PRS comprises a multiplicity of niche-markets and sub-markets, wide variation in supply-side actors, a range of policy intervention and enforcement agencies operating at local, regional and national

levels, and the often-contradictory impacts of policy interventions from multiple government departments. This complexity means that there is a strong risk of unintended consequences for any policy intervention.

The PRS is now a mainstream housing tenure that is expected to match values that are generally ascribed to owner occupation and social renting: it should offer long-term security and include opportunities to rent for households in the lowest incomes. However, studies produced by School staff have demonstrated that the sector is in flux. A cohort of ageing landlords – who benefitted substantially from easy availability of buy-to-let mortgages in the early 2000s – is exiting the market, leading to a reduction in supply and uncertainty for households looking for a settled

tenancy. Long-term restrictions in benefit assistance and changes in benefit administration have also reduced landlord willingness to let to people who need help with paying the rent. There has been a subsequent increase in the number of households whose homelessness is caused by the loss of private rented tenancy. A 'mediated' PRS has expanded rapidly to meet the need for emergency housing. Private sector agencies procure properties from landlords to let as temporary accommodation or supported housing. These properties are bundled into portfolios offered to local authority homelessness services, often at premium nightly let rates. Arguably, temporary accommodation is now the fastest-growing tenure, with over 100,000 households costing local authorities £1.74bn in 2022/23.

Playful pedagogies: innovative teaching interventions

At the Department of Industrial Engineering and Management at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, Dr Laura Mitchell was invited to deliver a pedagogical intervention using artistic tasks. This 'playful pedagogy' complements Dr Mitchell's research into games, play and learning in management to support professional development.

Students were introduced to the idea of leadership as a life-long human craft, requiring the ability to be present, attentive, authentically engaged in their leadership role, and resilient in the face of criticism. Extending the analogy of craft, they acknowledged their inexperience as leaders, and reflected on how to pay attention to their tools and materials. Here, they were invited to

study the tools and materials of an artist with close attention; the smell of the paper, the weight of the brush, the texture and quality of the paint.

Students were restricted in their access to materials, and asked to produce their own artwork on the theme of 'connection'. They were warned that as novices, their first attempts could be frustrating, and some students admitted to noticing a clear gap between their ambitions and their performance capabilities. We had a lot of laughter from time to time in the room, parallelled with the occassional outburst of shame and anxiety. For these highly competitive and advanced students, no longer used to the struggle of learning new skills, the challenge of working in paint was deeply uncomfortable. Yet at the same time, many students expressed a calmness in the tactile experience of painting.

The created artworks were then used as a basis for conversations among class members on the challenges of communication, even among groups with shared language and experiences. Students reflected on their own capabilities in the medium, the scale of the task to become experts, and the emotional resilience needed to respond to

critique. They were invited to keep their art as a marker of the first step in any leadership journey, and to consider how any leader needs to practice their craft and engage in active reflection and care for their resources in order to enhance their expertise. We speculated on the devotion, energy and effort that would take, and admitted that in truth, to work at developing mastery in the art of leadership must take lifelong dedication.

@drlauramitchell.bsky.social
laura.mitchell@york.ac.uk

International Centre for Mental Health Social Research

We all have mental health and there is growing awareness of the importance of looking after it. In recent years we have gained a greater understanding of how to enhance our mental wellbeing, but life often throws up challenges which impacts negatively on us.

It might be harmful experiences such as violence or abuse; loneliness or social isolation; or the lack of a meaningful or valued social role, for example, which contributes to mental health problems. Or it could be challenges such as poverty, disability, unemployment or poor housing, which challenge our mental wellbeing.

Mental health is linked to our position within society. People of lower socio-economic status are more vulnerable to mental health problems than wealthier or higher status individuals. Gender, race, ethnicity and age also have a role to play, as does where we live. This was made evident to even the most neutral observer during the Covid-19 pandemic, which shone a light on inequality in the UK. Lockdown had a more harmful impact on younger people, for example, with steep increases in rates of mental health problems found in many surveys.

Although some of the social factors which impact on mental health are beyond our control, there are many which can be altered. Loneliness can be addressed, relationships can be changed, living conditions can be improved and employment can be found, for example. However, people often experience barriers in making changes in their lives which mean that they do not experience the resulting improvements in their mental health.

Substantial research has been undertaken in drug treatments or psychological therapies for mental health problems. However, much less attention has been paid to social approaches which improve someone's life and their mental health.

The International Centre for Mental Health Social Research (ICMHSR) in the School for Business and Society specialises in the development and evaluation of social interventions which can improve someone's life and their mental health. It aims to improve the evidence base for social approaches so that they can be used as frequently as medication or psychological therapy, with the same beneficial impact.

ICMHSR researchers are currently working on two randomised controlled trials, in collaboration with other researchers across England, to test the effectiveness of social contact coaching for psychosis and community navigation for depression. Both interventions support people who are lonely or isolated to engage more with activities, groups or resources in their local community. We are also evaluating a supported volunteering programme which enables people to volunteer when they may lack confidence or skills to do so independently.

These approaches are similar to Connecting People, which was developed and evaluated by ICMHSR. Connecting People supports people to develop their social networks and has now been integrated into a new model of community-enhanced social prescribing (CESP). This draws upon the collective expertise of panels of residents, and organisations providing wellbeing services, to inform the work of social prescribing link workers. A feasibility study of CESP is nearing completion, with some positive emerging findings.

ICMHSR researchers are also evaluating different ways to support unpaid carers of people with mental health problems. Family and friends provide substantial support for people they care for, but often need support themselves. We have investigated how to improve their experience of leave from hospital when the person they provide care for is detained under the Mental Health Act 1983. We are also beginning a feasibility trial of Family Connections, a group programme for carers of people with experiences of emotional dysregulation.
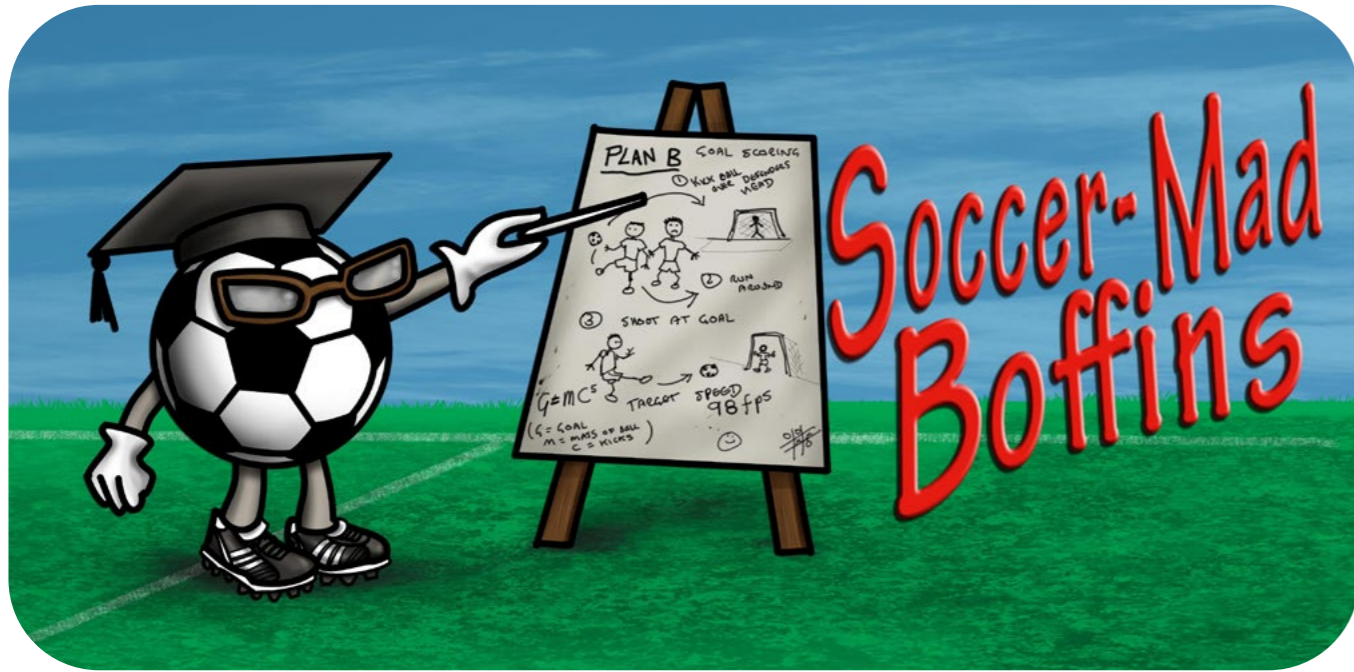
We are also committed to reaching under-served communities where there are either no mental health services or people do not engage with them. For example, we are exploring ways to improve support for those who experience loneliness before or after the birth of their child and we are seeking ways to better understand the mental health needs of people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities.

Finally, we are working with the ESRC Vulnerabilities and Policing Futures Research Centre to explore how police officers routinely respond to people with mental health problems. This is of key strategic importance to police forces at present, as there is a perceived high number of calls involving people with mental health problems, caused in part by an increasing number of people searching for help whilst mental health services cannot keep up with demand.

One in four people experience mental health problems in the UK each year and new ways to prevent or alleviate them are required. ICMHSR aims to create a better society for our mental health, achieving social change for public good. If you want to find out more about our work, please contact Professor Martin Webber, Director of ICMHSR (*martin.webber@york.ac.uk*).

> "Mental health is linked to our position within society. People of lower socio-economic status are more vulnerable to mental health problems than wealthier or higher status individuals."

Soccer Mad Boffins score academic goals

We have co-edited the blog Soccer Mad Boffins since 2014 and will celebrate its ten-year anniversary on 30 June 2024. The blog is a way that we communicate our research of the business and management history of sport. This involves all sorts of things for example reports or links of interesting stories from the news and showcasing the work of other academics in the field. But mostly it is a way for us to communicate our events, publications and research to a broad audience across academia and beyond, to anyone who can read English.

History and the study of sport and projects is useful because it allows for empirical but also methodological and theoretical contributions to the field of business and management studies. Our published research has included work on club football, and global sport mega-events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games. Common themes are sport institutions and governance and the use of public money in sport. We have also published on methodology and on teaching and learning using the context of our research into the business and management history of sport.

These publications include a book about the planning and delivery of the 1966 FIFA World Cup and articles in a broad range of journals including Public Management Review, Management Learning, Journal of Management History, Project Management Journal, International Journal of the History of Sport, Soccer and Society. Since 2015 we have also authored nine book chapters for edited volumes, most recently a recent contribution to the Edward Elgar Handbook of Historical Methods for Management.

The book about the 1966 FIFA World Cup was funded by a scholarship from FIFA, which enabled us to undertake research of documents held in FIFA's own archives as well as those of the International Olympic Committee, the Football Association, the National Archives in London, the National Football Museum and several regional archives notably in Manchester, Middlesbrough and Sheffield.

We were then awarded a further injection of funding from the University of York ESRC Impact Accelerator Account to collaborate with the National Football Museum for a major exhibition to commemorate the 1966 FIFA World Cup, famously hosted and won by England. As well as the display which filled an entire floor of the museum, a slightly smaller version was also included in the display area of Wembley Stadium, the home of the English Football Association.

We have become a regular fixture at the University of York Festival of Ideas, where we have hosted talks by many notable sport authors and journalists as well as with Greg Dyke, the former Chancellor of the University and perhaps most famous as a British media executive, football administrator, journalist and broadcaster (as well as University of York alumni).

Our insights and opinions about the FIFA World Cup are occasionally sought by the media. We have been quoted in magazines such as Money Week, newspapers and news websites such as TRT World and the BBC, and podcasts including the Africa Business of Sport podcast and the University of York's own 'The Story of Things'.

Our research into the business history of the FIFA World Cup and its variants, such as the FIFA Womens World Cup, age category World Cups, and even indoor- and beach-soccer, has provided the basis for a new University of York MOOC that will go live in January 2024.

Most recently we have been included in a team of academics from our department led by Professor Anne-Marie Greene, and including Professor Bob Doherty, to collaborate with 'Kick it Out' (the organisation which tackles discrimination in football) to investigate EDI in football and in regulatory bodies, following the UK government's call for an independent regulator for football.

We proudly co-edit a book series 'Frontiers of Management History' published by Emerald and we welcome submissions from academics who wish to publish on the book format.

Dr Alex Gillett and Dr Kevin Tennent are co-editors of Soccer Mad Boffins. Check out the full blog online at soccermadboffins. blogspot.com

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Our Masterclasses

The first series of Masterclass talks have taken place in the new School for Business and Society over the past year. In total, we have hosted more than 10 speakers, all highly experienced leaders and subject matter experts in their fields. We asked the speakers to share their insights on important issues relevant to Business and Society, resulting in a wide range of topical issues being covered. Staff, students and the public are invited to attend and many have benefited from the Masterclasses Series.

The Speakers

NICK WATERS

A lawyer and commercial airline pilot, told us what a typical day in the life of an airline pilot involves. He went on to discuss challenges in the wider airline industry and gave us a glimpse into the future of aviation in the context of environmental trends and innovation.

SANJAY BANDARI

Chair of Kick It Out – a charity organisation addressing racial discrimination in football, discussed the changing landscape and responses to racism and discrimination in football. He explained how the Kick It Out organisation confronts these problems within the game and wider society.

ANDREW ROBSHAW

Former commodity trader, entrepreneur, and international business leader, presented his new book on the concept of "Thankonomics", a radical paradigm for benefiting society by measuring value in real-time. The approach claims to challenge the fundamentals of business and economics by exploring the true meaning of words like value, money, and appreciation.

DAVID CASWELL

Executive Product Manager of BBC News Labs, explored how generative AI is different from earlier 'narrow' AI, how this difference makes it easier to use, and how different AI models can be used together to automate media production. David also discussed both the long-term implications of AI in media and practical guidance for using AI for communication.
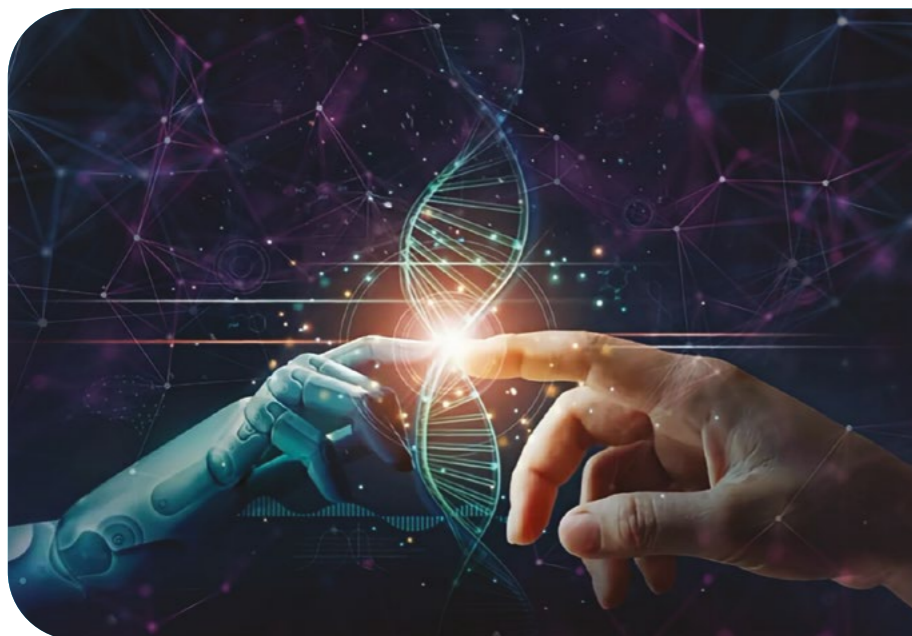
SEIJIRO TAKESHITA

A Professor at the University of Shizuoka in Japan and former investment banker, took us into the world of corporate Japan and the serious problem of "Karoshi", or death from overwork. He shared some intriguing insights into the unique features of corporate Japan and its implications for society.

TRISTRAM HICKS

An international criminal justice advisor and former New Scotland Yard detective presented his new book on "The War on Dirty Money", co-authored with Nicholas Gilmour. The book challenges the global approach for dealing with dirty money within the world's financial system and suggests overall progress has been slow.

LAURA IBBOTSON

A HR Group Director with over 20 years HR experience discussed the challenges facing working parents and how they can be better supported by government, employers, and colleagues. She drew on examples in Sweden, the Netherlands and Germany to highlight best practice.

MIKE SAKS

Emeritus Professor at the University of Suffolk, discussed the meaning of responsible leadership in turbulent times, connecting this to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

JYOTI SHARMA

CEO and Founder of TaraCares shared her journey into ethical entrepreneurship and AI healthtech. Her business venture tackles the problems of misinformation, misdiagnosis, and mismanagement in relation to menopause and is supported by Enterprise Works at the University of York.

PHIL HENRY

A senior level engineer with Genuit Group, shared his experiences of engineering plant-based solutions in urban environments to combat the effects of climate change. Drawing on a project to install a green roof above a shopping mall in Manchester, he showed the power of interdisciplinarity to create commercial and social value in cities.

STEVE TAYLOR

A Professor of Leadership and Creativity at WPI Business School, Massachusetts, discussed leadership as a craft that involves creating, shaping, and moulding the connections between people.

IAN FOXLEY

A Veteran with 24 years' service in the British Army, discussed his 'lived experience' as a whistleblower behind the Airbus Group/GPT case , and his subsequent research into the root causes of why people do NOT speak up.

Future Masterclasses

If you are a leader in the business, charity or public sector and would like to be a speaker at one of our future sessions, then please get in touch! Email: *sbs-support@york.ac.uk*

Watch Masterclass talks on our YouTube channel *@UoY_SBS*

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