

# KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE NEWS 36

## BUILDWELL: UK RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (UKRI) FUNDED PROJECT



**A knowledge exchange network advancing healthier, more equitable neighbourhoods by integrating green and blue infrastructure into housing design to support well-being, resilience, and long-term sustainability.**



**The Buildwell Network** has been established by an interdisciplinary team of researchers from Heriot-Watt University, the University of York, and Northumbria University, fostered by a two-year Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) Network grant. With the UK government planning to build 1.5 million homes over the next five years, the network highlights a critical opportunity to move beyond simply expanding housing supply.

Its core mission is to create a dynamic platform for knowledge exchange, bringing together practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and community

representatives to collaboratively re-examine how the design and layout of housing estates and new neighbourhoods can better support physical, mental, and environmental well-being, particularly through outdoor environments.

**The network's academic leadership**—Dr Ian Pattison (Principal Investigator), Dr Sacha Hasan, Dr Louise Delicato (Heriot-Watt University), Dr Stephanie Wilkie (Northumbria University), and Dr Amanda Mason-Jones (University of York)—is committed to this collaborative approach.

Dr Mason-Jones, Associate Professor in Global Public Health,

Department of Health Sciences, emphasises the network's dedication to knowledge exchange:

“We hope that Buildwell can bring people together to ensure that well-being, sustainability and equity are built into housing developments from the outset. We want to ensure new building developments are places where people can thrive. We will use collaborative and experiential learning approaches to develop shared understandings across business, professional, academic and lived experience boundaries through a series of workshops, site visits and engagement activities.

Through developing a strong network, we hope to bring about real change and ensure that housing developments are designed as environments that actively support health and well-being for all communities and not just a select few.”

**Sign up to this upcoming event:**

York Event: 13 May 2026:  
University of York

**Join the Buildwell Network:  
Housing, Health & Wellbeing**

# BREAKING BREAD: LISTENING TO THE HEART OF YORKSHIRE'S FOOD NETWORKS

Yorkshire's Alternative Food Networks (AFNs) - the producers, cooperatives, and community groups building more sustainable local food systems - are driven by passion, values, and deep community connection. Yet these human dimensions are often invisible in research, which tends to prioritise data and metrics over the lived experiences of the people who make these networks work.



Dr Truzaar Dordi, Lecturer in Sustainability Management and Director of Partnerships and Engagement in the Department of Environment and Geography, is working to change that. Through "**Breaking Bread**", a new interdisciplinary project funded by the White Rose Crucible Seed Fund, Dr Dordi and collaborators Dr Lucy Proddgers and Dr Rosario Michel-Villarreal (University of Leeds) are exploring what becomes possible when you give food system practitioners creative, arts-based ways to share their stories.

Dr Dordi's research typically operates at the systems level; mapping transitions, analysing policy, and tracking markets. But systems are made of people, and what excites him about this project is finding new ways to let those people share from the heart, to capture their lived experiences

and emotionally-invested truths. Working with local artists, the team is designing participatory workshops where AFN practitioners use storytelling and narrative elicitation to surface the values, relationships, and experiences that drive long-term foresight.

Crucially, participants are positioned as co-analysts, retaining agency over how their narratives are interpreted and used. These stories are mapped onto the **Three Horizons foresight framework**, translating lived experience into grounded strategic pathways for food system transformation. The project will produce a public-facing Transformative Dialogue Toolkit and strategic stakeholder report for regional bodies like the Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission.

For Dr Dordi, this collaboration

highlights what meaningful research engagement can look like - not just producing knowledge, but co-creating it, through strategic planning that feels more human.



Learn more about the team's interdisciplinary approach and connect with **Dr Truzaar Dordi's research** on sustainability management.

# CO-PRODUCING CLIMATE ACTION: HOW YORK RESEARCH IS EMBEDDING COMMUNITY VOICE IN BRADFORD'S NET ZERO ACTION PLAN

Local councils are at the heart of net zero, as the most immediate policy interface with residents and often where change-making and progression is most visible and experienced. Place-based understanding, community engagement, and emphasis on equity contribute towards a just transition, which supports the uplift of all in a community ethically and sustainably.



The **Healthy Livelihoods team** at the Department of Health Sciences has a working partnership with Bradford Council as part of the Bradford Health Determinants **Research Collaboration Policy Hub - York Policy Engine**.

Research Associate Dr Kelli Kennedy led a collaborative research project with Bradford Council's Sustainability Service. When first approached, Bradford Council was in the process of creating their Climate Action Plan (CAP) and based on conversations about community voice and just transition, Kennedy and colleagues in the Policy Hub devised a co-production project in Bradford to gather community evidence to inform the CAP.

The University of York led on a workshop series across two wards in Bradford (Bowling & Barkerend and Tong) with two community

partner organisations (The Sutton Centre and the Anchor Project) to gather lived experience and insights into a tangible form the Council could use towards the CAP. With six climate community researchers, the three-part, six-hour workshop series with over 30 residents resulted in **two climate community manifestos** and one project report. The manifestos were then centred as part of a two-way listening exercise between policymakers, community and health practitioners, and the

residents, creating new linkages and opportunities for transition.

The project was highlighted in Bradford's CAP and informed the plan's direction to embed community in net zero. Public reception has included Kennedy winning the Shared Green Society EU-funded **Shared Green Deal project's ECR Research Award**, and was cited in the House of Commons **Seventh Carbon Budget report**.



# UNIVERSITY OF YORK INDUSTRY MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The University of York has joined TechUK, Make UK, and Society of Chemical Industry (SCI) to stimulate new opportunities between the University and Business.

The Society of Chemical Industry (SCI) continues to foster collaboration between business and science, through its ongoing networking events and live-streamed public evening lectures. The digital world is keeping up the momentum from techUK's 'AI Vision to Value' summit held in January, pushing the country's AI plans forward. Leaders on the factory floor are navigating what Make UK describes as a major turning point for the manufacturing sector.

Explore upcoming events available through our industry memberships.



**May 05**

Implementing the UK-India Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement Roundtable

**May 05**

Shaping the future of the UK cyber profession: techUK x UKCSC

**May 13**

Innovations in Physical AI Workshop Series: the economic case for physical AI: identifying the UK's sectoral opportunities

**May 13**

Building the Smarter State 2026 - UK public sector innovation

**May 14**

Cyber trade opportunities for SMEs: cyber SME forum

**May 21**

Unlocking UK leadership in next-generation computer hardware



**May 12**

Bio-Beauty – The Future of Engineering Biology

**May 13**

What a chemist needs to know about Patents 2026

**June 01-02**

5th SCI / RSC Symposium on Anti-Infectives Drug Discovery

**July 06**

SCI Foundation medicinal chemistry workshop (online webinar)

**July 15**

How building your Digital Twin would revolutionise medicine and change your life



**May 21**

Environment Briefing

The latest policy shifts, legislative updates, and real-world legal cases shaping the environmental management and sustainability landscape.

**June 23**

**HE/ FE Member Briefing: Skills, Labour Market and Manufacturing Challenges**

Specifically designed for **Make UK's Education members**. A dedicated platform for education providers to gain direct industry intelligence, ensuring an institution's curriculum and strategy remain highly relevant to the evolving needs of the manufacturing sector.

**June 24/25**

Make UK Manufacturing Dinner and Expo

To register as a staff or student member for SCI, or staff member to techUK or MakeUK, email [clare.murgatroyd@york.ac.uk](mailto:clare.murgatroyd@york.ac.uk).

Connect with industry leaders, share experiences and gain valuable insights that will help shape the future of manufacturing and be part of a community dedicated to innovation and excellence.

[All techUK Upcoming Events](#)

[All SCI Upcoming Events](#)

[All MakeUK Upcoming Events](#)