Parallel session 3A-2.5
High-Rise Lives
Tuesday 12 November, 16.00 – 17.30
South Wing Garwood Lecture Theatre

Chair: **Dr Andrew Harris**, Associate Professor, Department of Geography, UCL

Discussant: **Dr Michał Murawski**, Lecturer in Critical Area Studies, UCL

Urban Verticality Inside Out: Exploring the View in New Vertical Urban Spaces in London
Sidra Ahmed, PhD candidate, Department of Geography, UCL

'High-rise lives' can also take a more temporary and voyeuristic form. In this way, they could be explored in the context of London's growing experiential and visually intensive viewing spaces. Looking at three Central London viewing spaces (Sky Garden, The View from The Shard and the Tate Modern Viewing Level), this presentation develops an intra-urban comparative approach in order to explore the branding, material creation and experiential reading of the London view. It builds on existing academic research on urban verticality and reading the city, as well as visual culture and the commodification of the view. The methodology comprised of a mix of qualitative methods: ethnography, social media analysis of websites and Instagram accounts, and interviews with key actors. Key insights that have emerged from this research include exploring the presence of a contemporary market for the London view within both the physical built environment and online; understanding how the viewing experience and subject is mediated according to the design and material amenities provided; and observing how the gaze can be commodified – shaped by a tourist gaze, as well as structured by one's personal knowledge and memories.

Understanding and assessing social capital in a restructured Chinese neighbourhood
Xin Li, PhD candidate, University of Cambridge

The study explores changes of residents' daily practices moving from the courtyard house to high-rise apartments in order to understand social capital in restructured Chinese neighbourhoods, which is essential for urban social sustainability, but which has been overlooked in the rapid economic development process. The study takes a recently restructured Chinese neighbourhood in Jinan, Shandong, as a pilot study and identifies various nexuses of practice-spatial arrangements of neighbourhood housing before and after restructuring, resulting in differences of social capital between 'stayers' and newcomers. Theoretical approaches in the work of Bourdieu's social capital concept and practice-based theory are used to formulate the interview outlines. The method used in the study has unfolded the links between practices and the built environment, regarding the

building and neighbourhood arrangements as the material base and the potential generator of social capital.

Analysis reveals three key themes. Firstly, a transformation from outdoor to indoor activities such as cooking, eating and hygiene among stayers and a section of the newcomers after moving from courtyard houses to high-rise apartments – and the spatial dispersion of practices in both household and urban scale – have increased privacy and reduced neighbourhood tension. Secondly, the shifts in housing tenure due to the restructuring process intensifies the social distrust between stayers and tenants. Strong social networks and an age-related inegalitarian distribution of power were found among stayers. These networks could be so robust that they exclude 'outsiders' such as the tenants – an outcome regarded as the 'dark side' of social capital. Thirdly, the social impacts of implementing the MOHURD policy of opening the 'gates' should not be overlooked. The gate is still appreciated by some residents for security and privacy. Sufficient school and education resources are essential to enhance the social interactions between stayers and newcomers, as they generate common interest for the two groups of people as incentives.

The Making of [the New] Resident: Intersecting Vertical Living, Affects and Technology
Dr Mor Shilon, Postdoctoral Fellow, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology
Prof. Efrat Eizenberg, Associate Professor, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology

The study argues that a twofold process of verticalisation and technologisation of cities produces a new urban experience for city dwellers. More specifically, it suggests that in the vertical technological city, large urban developments, and particularly high-rise residential projects, are playing a pivotal role in generating this new urban experience. Understanding the new urban experience requires a nuanced construction of delicate interplay between form and its associated technologies and the experiences of people.

Relational theories, and particularly affect-based accounts with a focus on the urban environments, offer a framework for unpacking the new urban experience. However, the relational framework in general, and the affect-based approach in particular, are still very rare in planning literature. Utilising an affect-based approach of the intersection of vertical living and technology, the research portrays the experiences of residents and the different ways in which people engage with the spaces they inhabit in the case studies of high-rise residential projects built from 1998 to 2016 in two medium-size cities in central Israel.

The analysis offers three moments of new affective residential experience: 1. The Gaze; 2. Bodies Become a Body; and 3. Bodies and Sound in the High-rise Residential Project. A two-fold contribution for urban planning theory and practice is offered: first, tracing the associations between verticality and technology refines a new framework for understanding not only urban experience, but also its relations to the form and function of the built environment. Such a framework offers concepts and vocabularies for urban planning in order to then evaluate urban developments that generate vertical living. Second, the study offers an empirical account of present-day urban experience. It refines the relations between the social and the spatial in contemporary cities to derive policy and planning outputs for practitioners who wish to adhere to users' needs, wants and aspirations.

'Accommodation city': new urban developers and low-income housing construction in Mumbai and Dhaka

Shreyashi Dasgupta, PhD candidate, Centre of Development Studies, University of Cambridge

There is a growing field in urban studies today that pays attention to how the real estate shift in cities of the Global South focuses on elite real estate developers and their speculative practices related to land and housing (Goldman 2011; Roy and Ong 2011; Shatkin 2017). While the elite real estate developers largely centre their interests on – and invest in – large-scale housing projects aimed at leveraging the potential of cities as growth engines, the ways the lower half of the local real estate functions are often overlooked (Birch, Chattaraj and Wachter 2016; Bhan 2016). In this paper, I open up pathways for discussing by whom and how the low-income private housing is built. In doing so, I extend that analysis to how horizontal and vertical geographies of the 'Accommodation City' are mutually constructed and facilitated by new private actors, i.e. the local builder, sub-contractors and their ad-hoc team of day labourers and independent entrepreneurs. Based on empirical case studies in temporary accommodations for low-income workers in Dhaka and Mumbai, I emphasise the role of market forces in the flexibilisation of labour and space.