

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

# CIRW

CENTRE FOR INNOVATION AND RESEARCH IN WELLBEING



us

UNIVERSITY  
OF SUSSEX



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# Welcome

**The Centre for Innovation and Research in Wellbeing (CIRW) brings together research, scholarship and expertise on wellbeing and builds on growth in academic research and service development in this area. The Centre is a leading interdisciplinary, innovative and international centre in the field of wellbeing and focuses on key areas, such as mental health, ageing, disability, children, place and environment, cultural diversity, spirituality and migration.**

As we move into the new academic year, CIRW continues to provide visible leadership within the field of wellbeing, drawing together partnerships that engage stakeholders in academic institutions and in policy and practice. It also acts as a hub for externally facing profile through developing high profile events addressing key and emerging research areas in wellbeing and through updating and improving our web-based profile and social media accounts.

The Centre also supports the generation of an intellectual community through collaboration with key centres in the University (eg.SMRC, IDS) and a wide range of national and international partners. Key partner institutions and centres include Centre for the Social Study of Migration and Refugees (CESSMIR) and the Centre for Children in Vulnerable Situations (CCVS) at Ghent University. The life course measure of experienced racial discrimination was developed with colleagues from the universities of Michigan, Auckland, and Manchester This partnership has given rise to a number of research initiatives with clear policy implications, including the large scale RefugeesWellSchool project funded by EU Horizon 2020.

Our leadership in the field is apparent at international, national and regional and local levels. National partnerships include collaboration with the University of Manchester, the Health Foundation (leading to a SeNSS studentship), and the Centre for Ageing Better. Regional links include participation in Health and Wellbeing subcommittee of the Sussex Local Nature Partnership and collaborative work with Berwick Church on Art, Spirituality and Wellbeing.

A feature of the past year and one we will build on is the presence and involvement of doctoral researchers in contributing to, and shaping, the Centre. Anna Ridgewell plays a pivotal role in initiating and supporting events and her PhD research into children, nature and wellbeing will be a catalyst for future seminars and knowledge exchange. Emma Soye's contribution to the RefugeesWellSchool project will also be linked to workshops and seminars in the coming year.

We will be initiating a PhD forum early in the new year to consult doctoral students on how they may be further involved in CIRW.

We have a balanced portfolio of funded research, demonstrating international, national and interdisciplinary collaborations. The Centre offers opportunities to develop new partnerships, including ongoing discussion with Sussex Community Development Association and Action for Rural Sussex to secure joint funding for action research to address loneliness and social isolation. We have strong synergies between teaching and research. Teaching draws directly from ongoing research projects and collaborative links. Laia, Charles, Anna, Ella and Emma all contribute to research-led teaching on our modules, drawing on recent and emerging findings from a number of research projects.

*Professor Charles Watters  
Director of the Centre for Innovation and Research in Wellbeing*







# Research Highlights

## RefugeesWellSchool

**Professor Charles Watters** is UK PI for RefugeesWellSchool. RefugeesWellSchool is a European funded Horizon2020 project carried out by seven different partners in six European countries (Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium and the United Kingdom). The overall objective of the RefugeesWellSchool is to further the evidence-base on the role of preventive, school-based interventions in promoting refugee and migrant adolescents' mental well-being, and on how they can be implemented in diverse educational settings. The work places particular emphasis on those interventions furthering social support networks and social cohesion.



## Placemaking and Wellbeing

**Professor Charles Watters** has led UK research that has focussed on examining placemaking and wellbeing in Southeast England, with field sites in Southwark, Canterbury and Folkestone. The research is part of an international partnership led by the Institute for Development Studies and includes research partnerships in Norway, Finland and India. One aspect of the research has been examining recent arrivals to the SE of England by boat and their accommodation in former military barracks. Interviews, conducted by Professor Watters' research team (Dr Anna Wharton and Emma Soye), have taken place with key stakeholders to provide new insights into migrants' lived experiences. A policy brief has been produced by Charles and PhD researcher Emma Soye, highlighting the central findings of the research project.



## Ethnic Inequalities in Later Life

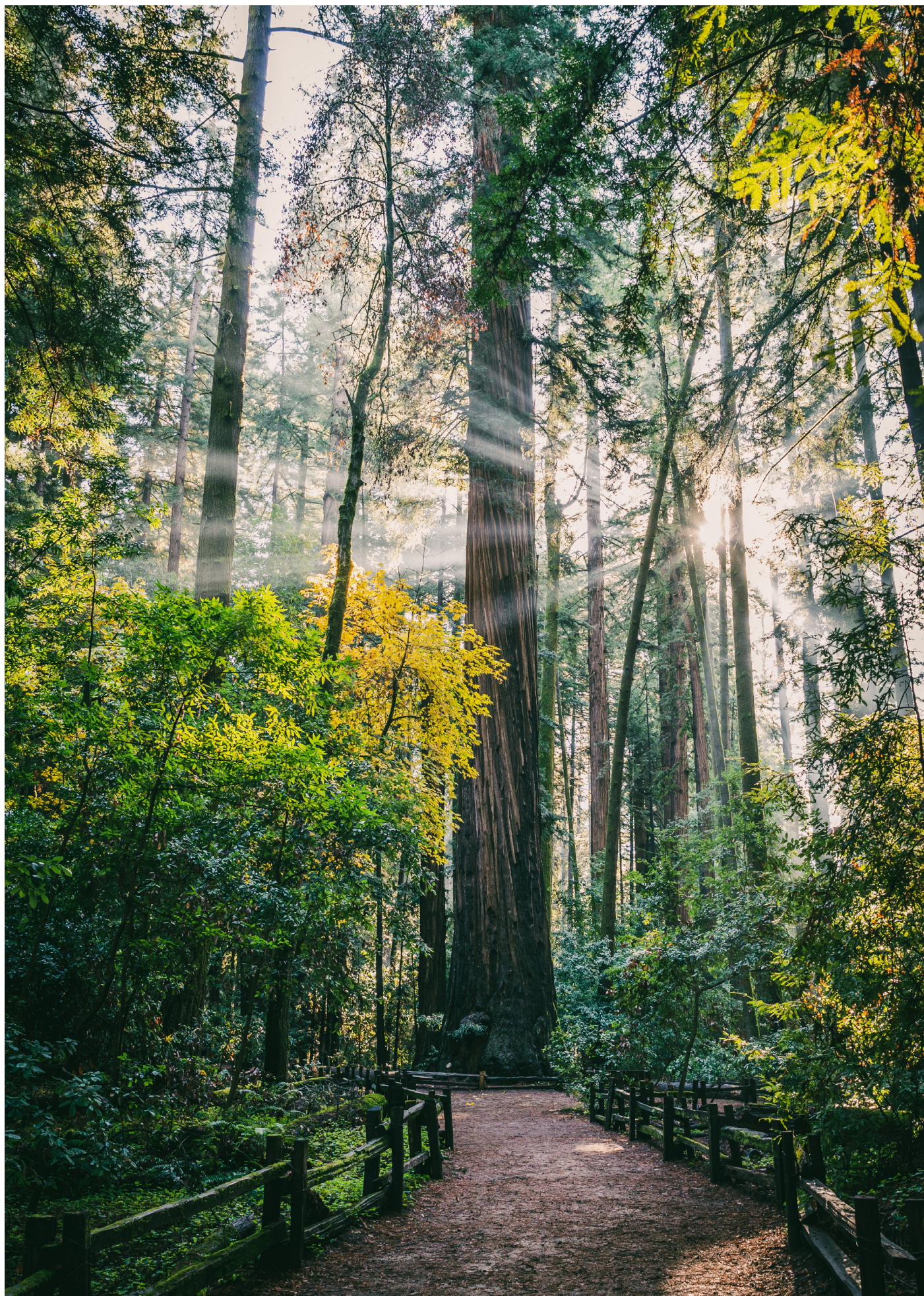
This Nuffield Foundation-funded study is led by **Dr Laia Bécaries** and examines ethnic inequalities in later life. Over the course of their lives, ethnic minority people have poorer health and wellbeing than the White majority population; they are over twice as likely to be born low birthweight, have up to seven years less healthy life expectancy at birth, and have poorer health in adulthood. These inequalities are likely to be due to reduced socioeconomic resources, and to life course experiences of marginalisation and racial discrimination.



Less is known about ethnic inequalities at later stages in the life course, although a handful of UK studies have shown that ethnic inequalities in health and wellbeing are much worse at older ages than at younger ages. As ethnic minority populations grow older it will become increasingly important to get a better understanding of the extent of, and the reasons behind, ethnic inequalities in later life. This knowledge will be imperative in planning social and health-related policies and delivering interventions targeted at reducing ethnic inequalities.

This project addresses these gaps by using innovative methods to analyse existing Census and survey data to provide much needed information on (i) the nature of ethnic inequalities in health, wellbeing, and socioeconomic circumstances at older ages, (ii) why these inequalities exist, and (iii) how and why they have changed in the past 20 years. Early study findings show persistent ethnic inequalities in later life, which are particularly stark for Pakistani and Bangladeshi people whose rates of poor health in their 60s are equivalent to those of White people who are 20 years older. Findings from this project will create real societal impact by improving ethnic minority people's lives through better understanding of the issues affecting their life chances and healthy ageing.







# News in Brief

CIRW Advisory Group Member, **Professor Kevin Fenton**, was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2022 New Year Honours for services to public health. In response to the award Professor Fenton said:

*"I am honoured and humbled to receive such a prestigious award alongside other outstanding individuals. I am accepting this award on behalf of all the incredible public health and NHS teams I am privileged to lead and work with, in London and around the nation who are committed to improving health, tackling health inequalities, building resilient communities, and providing high-quality health and care services to all."*



From February-May 2022, Doctoral Researcher and CIRW Research Fellow **Anna Ridgewell** took three months off from her PhD studies to undertake a funded UKRI Policy Placement at Natural England (part of the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs - or DEFRA). Anna was based within the Engagement, Recreation and Access Team with whom she worked on a project investigating the nature connectedness of primary school teachers and how this impacts their teaching practice.



In June 2022, **Dr Laia Bécaries** accepted a Professorship in Social Science and Health at Kings College, London, where her research interests will focus around Population Health, Sociology and Equality.

We wish Laia the very best of luck in her new role and thank her for her invaluable contribution to CIRW!



In September 2022, CIRW welcomed **Dr Lior Birger** as a visiting Research Fellow.

Lior is a Social Worker and a Haruv Institute Postdoctoral Fellow. Her current research focuses on the intersection of migration and sex-trafficking-related policies with social workers' practice in the UK and Israel. She received her PhD from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her PhD research explored the relationship between social workers and refugee service users in a hostile political climate. Lior has over ten years of practice and research experience with refugees and asylum seekers in Israel and Germany.





# Public Engagement, Impact and Knowledge Exchange

## A round-up of key CIRW activity over the last year

### Professor Charles Watters

- Served on the European Advisory Group for the ChildMove Project.  
The project is a unique examination of the lived experience of separated migrant and refugee children in Europe. Researchers follow children to gain insights into their journeys. The Advisory Group draws together academics and policy makers to explore the research, policy and service implications of the project findings.
- Chaired a symposium at the UN World Urban Forum in Katowice in June 2022.
- Continues to act as Editor-in Chief of the International Journal of Migration, Health and Social Care. PhD researchers have supported the journal through undertaking editorial and review activities.

### Dr Laia Bécares

- Along with Sarah Stopforth and in collaboration with the Centre for Ageing Better, developed a policy brief and infographic to disseminate findings from their Nuffield-funded project on ethnic inequalities in later life in November 2021. Sarah Stopforth presented at a webinar organised by the Centre for Ageing Better in January 2022.
- Presented a paper on 'Ethnic Health Inequalities in Later Life: Causes and solutions to address them' at the UKRI Healthy Ageing 2021 Conference in November 2021.
- Attended the Times Higher Education Awards in November 2021 to represent her Queerantime study, which had been shortlisted for a Research Project of the Year award.

### Anna Ridgewell

- Presented at a webinar on the 'Ins and Outs of Fieldwork' for the South East Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS) Student Forum on 9 November 2021.
- Presented a Doctoral Research in Progress webinar on her PhD fieldwork, co-hosted by the Centre for Innovation and Research in Wellbeing (CIRW) and the Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) on 4 March 2022.
- Presented at a Postgraduate Research Network webinar on creative research methodologies, hosted by the Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) on 10 March 2022.
- Presented at a South East Network for Social Sciences (SeNSS) Student Forum wellbeing event on looking after your wellbeing as a PhD researcher and a primary carer, on 25 May 2022.
- Presented her PhD and Natural England research work at a 'People and Quality of Nature' webinar, co-hosted by Natural England, the Department for Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Environment Agency on 26 May 2022.
- Had a photograph and accompanying abstract relating to her PhD work shortlisted in both the Sussex Festival of Doctoral Research 2022 Doctoral Research Image competition, and the SeNSS Summer Conference 2022 Doctoral Research Image Competition.



*Charles Watters chairs a symposium at the UN World Urban Forum in Katowice in June 2022*



# Spotlight on Doctoral Research

## **Difference and Encounter: Psychosocial support and secondary education for young migrants and refugees in the UK**

by Dr Emma Soye

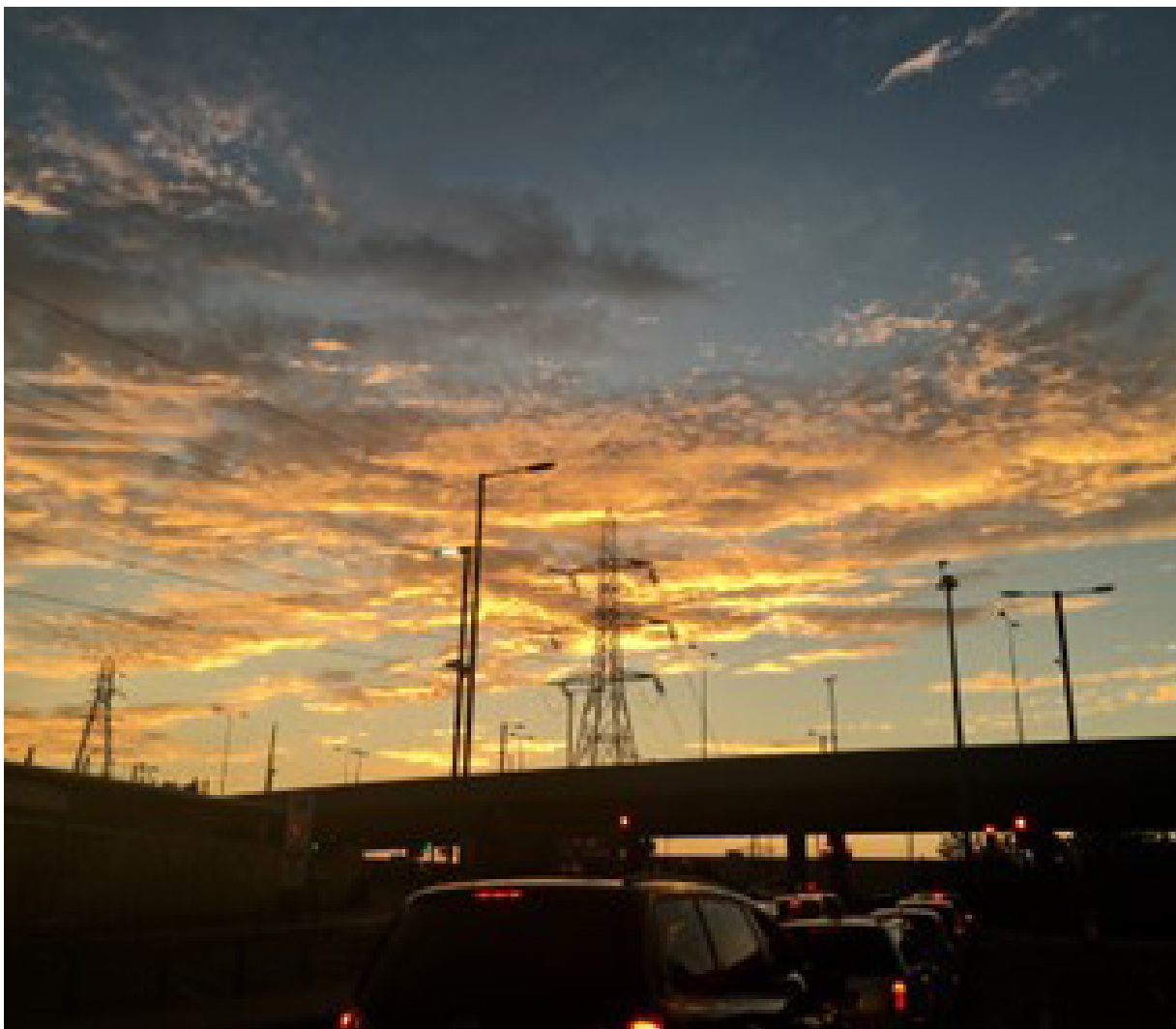
I have recently completed my PhD in Social Work as part of 'RefugeesWellSchool', an EU-funded project led by the University of Ghent in Belgium. The overall objective of the RefugeesWellSchool project is to further the evidence base on the role of preventive, school-based interventions in promoting refugee and migrant adolescents' mental wellbeing, and on how they can be implemented in diverse educational settings. Five school-based preventive interventions – Welcome to School (WTS), Classroom Drama Workshops (CDW), Peer Integration and Enhancement Resource (PIER), In-Service Teacher Training (INSETT), and In-Service Teacher Training with Teaching Recovery Techniques (INSETT + TRT) – were implemented in six European countries: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Each intervention was implemented at least in two countries. The effectiveness of the interventions was evaluated using questionnaires and focus groups with students and teachers before and after each intervention.

Two interventions were implemented in the UK: 'CDW' in a secondary school in East London, and 'PIER' in a secondary school in Brighton & Hove. Professor Charles Watters and I designed the PIER intervention. PIER aims to encourage recognition and empathy for the experiences of migrants and refugees through collaborative, classroom-based activities. The direct target group for the programme is adolescent students (aged 11-16) in mainstream classes from diverse backgrounds, including refugee, migrant, and 'host' society adolescents. A comprehensive instruction manual details the 8-week programme, which is implemented in weekly sessions by a school actor or facilitator. Each PIER session aims to build understanding and to increase empathy among young people by exploring issues such as reasons for displacement, migrant and refugee journeys, the asylum-seeking process, and social challenges and opportunities in the host country. PIER activities are based on theories of integration, social identity, and intergroup contact. The programme includes watching videos and animations, reading stories and comic strips, role-playing, and other group activities. The programme also encourages young people to reflect on their relationships with others in the classroom and to view their identities as diverse, multiple, and complex. Many of the programme materials are adapted from activities designed and promoted by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as the British Red Cross, Amnesty International, PositiveNegatives, and Save the Children. During the RefugeesWellSchool project, the PIER programme was implemented in secondary schools in the UK and in Finland.

My role on the RefugeesWellSchool project involved organising the interventions and conducting their evaluations in the two UK schools. Alongside this project-based role I conducted ethnographic research on young people's peer relationships and how these were influenced by the policies and practices of psychosocial support and secondary education. The research took the form of 38 interviews with young people, school staff, parents, and local community workers; 16 focus groups with students, intervention facilitators, and school staff; and participant observation in both schools over a 14-month period.

The research took an open approach to the differences of significance in young people's peer relationships in each school, highlighting the roles of migration status, race and ethnicity, language, religion, and economic status. The thesis uses Martin Buber's (1937) 'I-It' and 'I-Thou' concepts to frame the interplay of social bonding (the making of 'difference') and bridging (moments of 'encounter') within and across multiple social differences at both schools, pointing to the contingency of these relations on geographical, political, and socioeconomic factors. In doing so it contributes new insights to the 'integration' and 'conviviality' literature, challenging reductive ethnonational understandings of the rich complexity of young people's peer relationships.

The PhD research also considered how secondary education and psychosocial support can encourage encounter among young people through different forms of provision including language, cultural, and pastoral support. The research shows that the type and amount of English language support significantly shaped newcomers' peer interactions. Efforts by the schools and the RefugeesWellSchool project to celebrate young people's cultural backgrounds and to encourage recognition of their migration experiences sometimes had unintended reifying effects. Pastoral support was found to be critical in the context of economic precarity. The thesis draws on Buber's (1947) work on education to explore how the two schools and the RWS project promoted 'dialogue' with young people. The findings highlight the importance of vulnerability or 'presence' in dialogical practice and expose the adverse effects of national and school-level education policies on the capacity of teachers to be 'present' and to stimulate critical discussion in the classroom. They indicate that psychosocial support projects should carefully engage with social and political nuances in order to secure young people's trust and to enhance, rather than institutionalise, the complex and sophisticated ways in which they negotiate their multiple differences on an everyday basis.





## **Spiritual and Secular Approaches to Mental Distress Among Buddhists in the UK: Navigations and interactions of multiple therapeutic realities**

by SeNSS Doctoral Researcher, Ella Delaine

My doctoral research project explores understandings and practices related to mental distress among people in the UK who are in touch with both Western-secular and Buddhist-spiritual worldviews. This includes individuals of migrant-Buddhist heritage as well as those engaging with Buddhism following a western upbringing. By looking at people at the intersection of secular and Buddhist worldviews, I wish to understand if, when, how and why individuals draw from both worlds when engaging with and making sense of suffering and wellbeing. Furthermore, I seek to explore the new or hybrid therapeutic realities that emerge in order to understand the origins of distress, to seek support, and develop strategies that promote wellbeing.

My interest in the topic largely stems from personal experience. Having grown up in a Western Buddhist household, I started engaging with mental health and psychiatric services as a young adult, becoming astutely aware of the promises and challenges arising where Buddhist spiritual communities and western medical mental health care meet. My Master's dissertation explored Belgian Tibetan refugees' orientations towards psychiatry and psychotherapy, with the main finding that these communities integrate a pragmatic attitude to Western mental health practices within a wider Buddhist ontology. My doctoral research seeks to further these insights by looking at the therapeutic realities of people who engage with the Thai Forest tradition in the UK. This monastic lineage within the south-east Asian Theravada tradition has been developing in non-Asian countries since the 1970s and has since greatly contributed to the popularisation of Buddhism in the Global North.

One of the main underpinnings of this research project is the idea that people's attitudes towards distress and wellbeing are overwhelmingly socially and culturally shaped. In order to combine a bottom-up approach to individual practices and beliefs with a top-down perspective of the social and institutional circumstances defining which therapeutic pathways are possible, available, and desirable, my research is set in places of Buddhist congregation. People's therapeutic realities are explored through participant observation in these spaces in which individuals interact with Buddhist ideas and practices, and where figures of spiritual and moral authority guide and advise people. Additional insights are provided through narrative and semi-structured interviews with lay attendants and institutional representatives, such as teachers and senior monastics.

I have now reached the end of my fieldwork stage. Like for many of my peers, conducting fieldwork during a pandemic has presented a lot of challenges as well as opportunities, and led to significant changes in my research plan. Due to national lockdowns, travel bans, and quarantining requirements of potential host organisations, I eventually stayed six months within a Thai Forest monastery in England. The international monastic community comprises approx. 50 nuns and monks and 20 lay people. Pre-pandemic, the monastery's temple and grounds used to be buzzing with activity, with South-East Asian and Western day visitors attending teachings, meditation sessions, food offerings and important Buddhist festivities. During my stay, however, strict Covid rules governing resident contact with the outside world meant that the community functioned as a largely closed-off microcosmos, highly suitable for immersive ethnographic research.

My first three months were spent settling into the environment: trying to slow down, to move, speak, and think more mindfully, to learn a new routine governed by the monastic schedule and the moon calendar, and the social and monastic norms required to support a harmonious community life. Daily life included participating in communal meditation periods and ceremonies, and undertaking all sorts of work activities required for the smooth running of monastery life: gardening, cooking, cleaning, repairing. I got to know the community and was able to build relationships and friendships.

It was a period of embodied and experiential research, during which I tried to record the effects of this particular lifestyle and philosophy on my own mental and emotional states. After a while, I started conducting narrative and semi-structured interviews with lay people to trace their spiritual and therapeutic biographies. These offer rich and valuable insights into their understandings of the causes and origins of suffering, the practices and structures they engage with to overcome difficult life situations and emotional states, and the strategies employed to foster wellbeing. In addition, I interviewed senior monastics who act as institutional representatives and disseminate approaches to emotions and the mind through teachings, meditation workshops and retreats, school visits, etc.

While it is too early to present research findings, it stands out to me that a majority of the participants disclosed narratives of suffering in which extreme instances of distress, such as bereavement, suicidality, or addiction, led to their engaging with Buddhist ideas. Rather than being a simple lifestyle choice, Buddhist practices and beliefs are presented as crucial coping or healing elements. They are oftentimes used in conjunction with, and sometimes after reaching the perceived limits of, secular, psychotherapeutic, and biomedical approaches to mental distress. Conversely, some participants also described how intense meditation practice and reflection on core Buddhist ontological principles can lead to increased distress in times of emotional and mental instability.

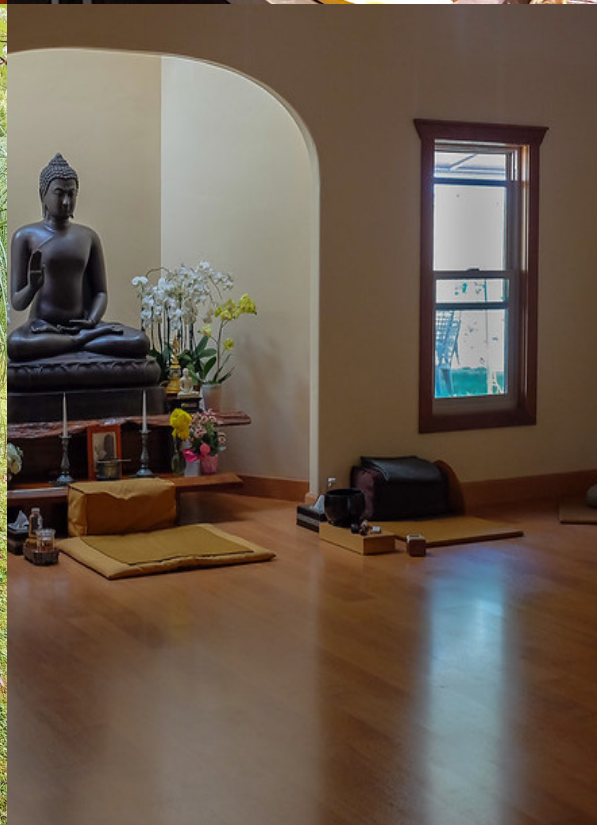
Despite a booming 'mindfulness' business and ever-expanding scientific research into the psychological and physiological benefits of meditation, people's engagement with Buddhism as a lived-religion and moral framework remain largely unconsidered in the Western world. This research project seeks to counteract a unidimensional academic view of the relation between mental health and Buddhism.

Through in-depth ethnographic research, it seeks to present, among other things, the value of engaging with Buddhist ethics, philosophy and mind enquiry practices, the benefits and potential risks of lay Buddhist practice, and the challenges and opportunities of navigating secular and spiritual therapeutic worlds.

Whilst contributing to the research body on contemporary contexts of therapeutic pluralism, the topic is also highly relevant from a policy perspective. The turn towards a more holistic approach to 'mental health' requires comprehensive knowledge of the interpenetrations of biomedical or psychotherapeutic treatments and the spiritual sensitivities of an increasingly diverse population. Only then can we offer meaningful paths to care that consider religious minorities' and others' preferred ways for coping with distress and achieving wellbeing.







## **Who Believes in Housing Options? Constructing the Road to Temporary Accommodation: Stigmatisation and the single mother** by SeNSS Doctoral Researcher, Vicky Bromley

I am in my final year of my PhD research project, doing social research on the housing crisis, focused on homeless mothers who are raising their children alone, as one of the societal groups being disproportionately affected. Data collection was carried out using an online survey, and through one-to-one qualitative interviewing over Zoom, with lone mothers with current or recent experience with the housing department due to homelessness, and with experience of emergency or temporary accommodation.

The stories I have heard are most often filled with turmoil, not only in the events that led up to the need to contact the council for housing assistance, and the experience of Emergency and Temporary Accommodation, but the act of dealing with a housing department in denial as to where the issue of homelessness is located. Institutional refusal to accept the structural origins of homelessness is resulting in a complex discourse aimed at rewriting realities.

The study recognises that over the last decade, among the falling living standards and rising housing costs experienced by the majority under austerity, single parent families are one group that have been faced with punishing policies, such as sanctioning and the benefit cap. Current governmental policy continues to compound the societal barriers that lone mothers have long contended with, those of reduced social capital and status in a competitive, socioeconomic environment.

The first commonality I hear about is that it's getting increasingly more difficult to find housing and to keep housing as a single mother. Benefit reliance, or even one good income simply doesn't suffice anymore when trying to meet the rent. Families are only supposed to be in Emergency Accommodation for 8 weeks, but I've spoken to women who have been moved after months, only to be placed in further Temporary Accommodation. They can stay living with uncertainty for years, and sometimes experience multiple moves, lives placed on hold, and entire childhoods wasted in substandard and often unsafe housing. Temporary housing is increasingly expensive: the council is paying private landlords and housing giants a hefty price.

The question that drives my research is how do governments get away with it? The starting point to this query, is recognition the role of stigmatisation. The stigmatised are made "other" by those with knowledge and in positions of power. The single mother - historically a moral deviant - remains within the psychosocial realm a 'folk devil'. Stigmatised societal groups are marginalised societal groups, they fall to the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy and exemplify 'what happens to those that fail'. Foucault notes that the recurrent platforming of the dominant narrative versus the subjugation of the marginalised voice is the means by which society "ensures its survival under the mask of knowledge". In the deconstruction of such political crafting, Goffman, Butler, Foucault, and Rose can inform understanding around how we come to absorb notions of ourselves and others, citizenship, and the purpose of governing.



Below are two short extracts which demonstrate how single parent women experience  
Emergency and Temporary Housing:

*“I mean, I do think about my housing every single minute of the day. And I think what if I die, especially like with Covid because mine is temporary. And I had such a battle to get accepted and we’ve been moved four times in five years. And that’s had its toll. And I keep thinking, God, what if I get Covid and I die, the kids will have nowhere to live”.*

*“We lived in our temporary accommodation which had asbestos dust. I am in fact still worried about the potential health implications of living in that property for so long (9+yrs). I am trying to be optimistic but it’s very hard as it feels that the entire system is rigged against people like myself. I am not into victimisation, to the contrary I always seek solutions in a proactive way while also helping to empower others on the way. Yet it is very difficult, and I experience regular anxiety, insomnia, a feeling of inadequacy and so on”.*

This situation is intolerable and presents health, wellbeing and safety risks for women and children. Additionally, the poor treatment of marginalised groups has been demonstrated to have consequences on the societal collective, yet it is tolerated by what is considered an advanced, democratic society. The root of this phenomenon lies in the way we experience power, our lives and each other.

This research considers the practises of governmentality and our collective subjectification.

I am hugely grateful to those women for coming forward to share their story with me.

Most do so as they are hoping to help future mothers by demanding change,  
we must as a society do justice to them and challenge policy makers.



## **Growing up Green: Using Photovoice as a way of facilitating the very young to identify and reflect on the meanings that outside spaces hold for them at nursery or school**

by SeNSS Doctoral Researcher, Anna Ridgewell

My PhD project aims to identify whether political ideologies that have simultaneously reduced state provision, but increased state surveillance through a restrictive regulatory landscape, are impacting the ability of state funded nurseries and schools to foster nature connection in children and how this compares with the private education sector. At the end of 2021 and the first half of 2022, I worked with children at four different state and privately-funded schools and nurseries, using a participatory action research methodology called Photovoice. Framing this work through a position of interpretivism/social constructionism, I found that children in educational settings, while subject to certain constraints, used the particular cultural and social frameworks in which they found themselves, to help them make sense of their world. Thus, children who had more exposure to embodied and authentic encounters with nature when at school or nursery (opportunities which were more readily available at the private school), were more likely to take and choose nature related photographs and to express a subjective sense of nature connection in subsequent discussions.

Child participants (all aged 3-7) were given an Apple iPad Mini and accompanied on a walk around the outside spaces of their educational setting, in groups of 2 participants. Each setting was later revisited, and a creative workshop held with the same children in the same pairs. The photographs were printed out and formed the basis of the group work, whereby children 1) selected the most important photographs and 2) contextualised them through reflection and dialogue. Colourful sticky notes and a generative method involving colouring in outline maps of the school or nursery grounds were also used.

Photovoice proved to be a very useful and enjoyable creative method to use with such young participants. The children all appeared to enjoy the opportunity to show off their educational environment and took to photographing their most meaningful places with relish. Children were encouraged to retain their agency throughout and were given free rein to photograph whatever they wished (with the only 'rule' being not to take any photographs of people's faces). In this way, they remained free to creatively express themselves, with myself as researcher attempting to act only as an advocate for their authentic expression.

Many photographs were taken reflecting both the physical nature of the outside space, but also the interests of the children themselves. Preliminary analysis indicates that all of the children involved, regardless of the type of educational setting they attended, or availability of outdoor greenspace, were drawn towards the natural in their environments, lending weight to the theory that nature connection is a fundamental human psychological need. Nature photographs consisted of expansive depictions such as trees, the sky and fields, alongside the small and intimate, such as pebbles, blades of grass, or frost particles.

The creative workshops acted as an opportunity to a) find out which photographs (and therefore which aspects of the outdoor landscapes) held most meaning and appeal and b) further explore why these particular images had been taken and selected. Although in Photovoice it is normal to bring all participants together for this stage, as a way of ensuring it is a collective effort and individuals can support each other, due to Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time of undertaking the first set of workshops, it was necessary to keep children in their original walk pairings, so as not to cross 'bubbles'.



While this change deviated from the original research plan, it soon became apparent that for this age group it was a positive development. Having only two children in each workshop allowed those who were less articulate or confident to initiate the talk, as well as making the process of looking through dozens of photographs more manageable. This approach was subsequently used in all remaining workshops. The outline maps of each setting which the children coloured in were popular and a positive way to round off the session. The maps furthermore proved useful in facilitating informal discussion, leading to further insights from the children.

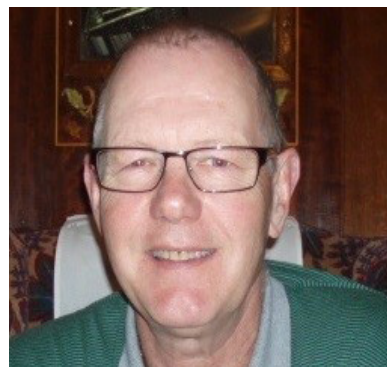
One of the most important aspects of the Photovoice process is ensuring that it actually achieves its aim of empowering the community it is used with, and does not simply pay lip service to the participatory action research process. This can only be achieved through engaging the participants throughout the life course of the study and beyond in the dissemination phase. Steps have been taken to fulfil the final stage of the process through engagement activities. All participating schools and nurseries have been given the option of hosting a display, so that children and stakeholders can see the results of the workshops. So far, three out of the four fieldsites have accepted this offer. Once preliminary analysis is complete, all field sites will be offered a report outlining the findings particular to their setting, which can be disseminated within the wider community.



# CIRW External Advisory Group

## **Thurstine Basset**

Thurstine Basset is Director of Basset Consultancy, specialising in the field of mental health training and education. Thurstine originally trained as a social worker and has previously worked as a community worker and social work practitioner. He has an MSc in Social Policy and has worked as an Independent Training and Development Consultant for over 25 years.



## **Professor Jo Boyden**

Jo Boyden is a former Professor of International Development at Oxford University and former Director of Director of Young Lives, which she led from 2005-2019. She has a PhD in Anthropology and a BSc in Social Anthropology from the University of London. Her research has mainly focused on child labour, children and political violence, and childhood poverty – particularly in bringing together academics, practitioners and policymakers to develop effective models and methods for supporting children, their families and their communities in situations of adversity.



## **Professor Kevin Fenton**

Kevin Fenton CBE is the London Regional Director at the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Regional Public Health Director at NHS London and the Statutory Health Advisor to the Mayor of London. He is the current President of the United Kingdom Faculty of Public Health and holds Honorary Professorships with the University College London and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. He is visiting Professor of Epidemiology and Public Health at University College London, with research interests in migration and health.



## **Dr Louise Montgomery**

Louise Montgomery is a Senior Specialist in the Engagement, Recreation and Access team within the Chief Scientist Directorate at Natural England. She is also a guest lecturer and research co-supervisor for the Creative Health MASc at University College London (UCL). Louise completed her PhD at Royal Holloway University of London (RHUL) on the impact of nature engagement on child wellbeing and educational attainment. She previously completed an integrated Masters in Zoology at the University of Glasgow, which included an internship at Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) working alongside the EU Horizon 2020 project 'Sea Change'.





# CIRW People

## Directors

[Professor Charles Watters](#) (School of Education & Social Work)

[Dr Laia Bécaries](#)

*\*Laia accepted a Professorship in Social Science and Health at Kings College, London in Summer 2022*

## Research Fellow

[Anna Ridgewell](#) (School of Education & Social Work)

## Co-Directors

[Professor Jackie Cassell](#) (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)

[Professor Paul Statham](#) (School of Global Studies)

## Affiliated Faculty

[Dr Tish Marrable](#)

Tish Marrable is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work and Social Care in the School of Education and Social Work, a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a member of the Association of Palliative Care Social Workers. Her current research interests around autism, death and dying, and contemporary shamanic practices, are drawn from her own personal experience as well as from previous research work.

[Dr David Orr](#)

David Orr is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at the University of Sussex. His recent research projects have focused on adult safeguarding and self-neglect, global mental health, and representations of dementia in contemporary films and fiction. He is co-editor of the Palgrave Handbook of Sociocultural Perspectives on Global Mental Health (2017) and a member of the editorial board of Anthropology in Action.

[Professor Jeremy Niven](#)

Jeremy Niven is Dean of the Doctoral School. A lot of his research focuses on mental health and wellbeing in students, particularly graduate students and involves publishing research papers and producing interventions. He is also developing an interest in wellbeing in prisons in the UK.

## External Advisory Group

Thurstine Basset (Basset Consultancy Ltd)

Professor Jo Boyden (Oxford University)

Professor Kevin Fenton (Public Health England)

Dr Louise Montgomery (Natural England/UCL)

# CIRW Publications: 2021/22

**Bécares, L.** (2021): 'Health and socio-economic inequalities by sexual orientation among older women in the United Kingdom: findings from the UK household longitudinal study'. *Ageing & Society*, 41(10), 2416-2434.

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Marchi M, Magarini FM, Chiarenza A, Galeazzi GM, Paloma V, Garrido R, Ioannidi E, Vassilikou K, de Matos MG, Gaspar T, Guedes FB, Primdahl NL, Skovdal M, Murphy R, Durbeej N, Osman F, **Watters C**, van den Muijsenbergh M, Sturm G, Oulahal R, Padilla B, Willems S, Spiritus-Beerden E, Verelst A, Derluyn I (2022): 'Experience of discrimination during COVID-19 pandemic: the impact of public health measures and psychological distress among refugees and other migrants in Europe'. *BMC public health*, 22(1), 1-14.

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**Soye, E.** and **Watters, C.** (2022): 'Newcomer Wellbeing and Placemaking in Southeast England, *IDS Policy Briefing 198*, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

Spaas C, Verelst A, Devlieger I, Aalto S, Andersen AJ, Durbeej N, Hilden PK, Kankaanpää R, Primdahl NL, Opaas M, Osman F, Peltonen K, Sarkadi A, Skovdal M, Jervelund SS, **Soye E, Watters C**, Derluyn I, Colpin H, De Haene L (2022): 'Mental health of refugee and non-refugee migrant young people in European Secondary Education: the role of family separation, daily material stress and perceived discrimination in resettlement'. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 51(5), 848-870.

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