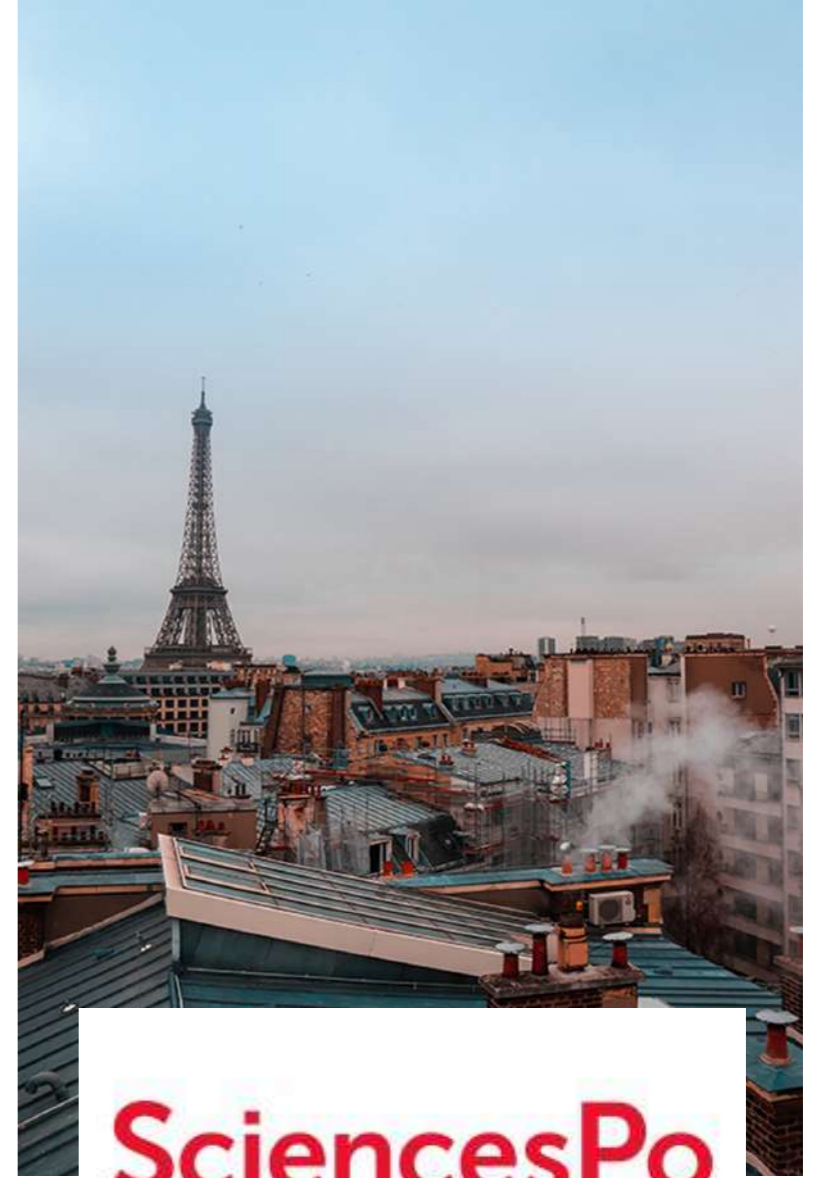




UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM



BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING



SciencesPo

WHAT IS GOVERNED IN CITIES?



NWO



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ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
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ANR
AGENCE
NATIONALE
DE LA
RECHERCHE

Overview

- Decline in theoretical interest in local government as object of study, fuelled by austerity (Ward et al, 2015)
- Yet, austerity context has pointed to financialised entrepreneurial tactics of local government (e.g. Beswick and Penny, 2018)
- **‘what is governed’** is important – this paper looks at the role and work of local authorities in the governance and regulation of housing production (London: case study)
- Housing is highly political and local conflicts often play out around housing
- Despite centralisation of control around planning for housing in England, local authorities adopting a range of strategies to control and shape policies and outcomes

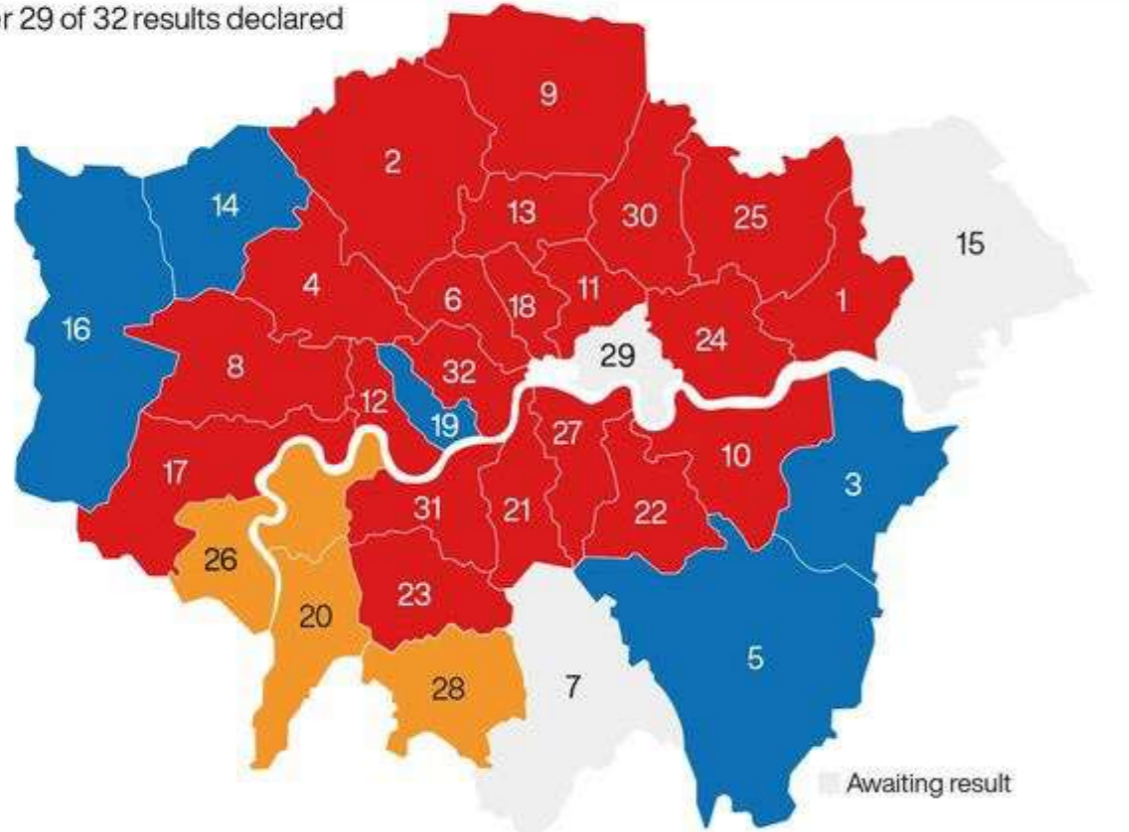
Characterisations of local government

- Managerialism to entrepreneurialism, direct provider to **strategic enabler** (Harvey US, Cochrane UK)
- Working ‘**in and against the market**’ (Cochrane)
- The “**shrinking state**” (Lobao et al, 2018)
- Product of a radical ‘reshaping’ of central-local relations after a decade of austerity, leading to **inequalities between LAs** and territorial injustice (Gray & Barford, 2018)
- **Financialised entrepreneurial actors** (Penny & Beswick)
- Planners as ‘parties to a structural dilemma’ - **use their regulatory power** to ‘decommodify space and **extract broad based benefits**’ (Wolf-Powers, 2005)

London context

London local elections 2022

After 29 of 32 results declared



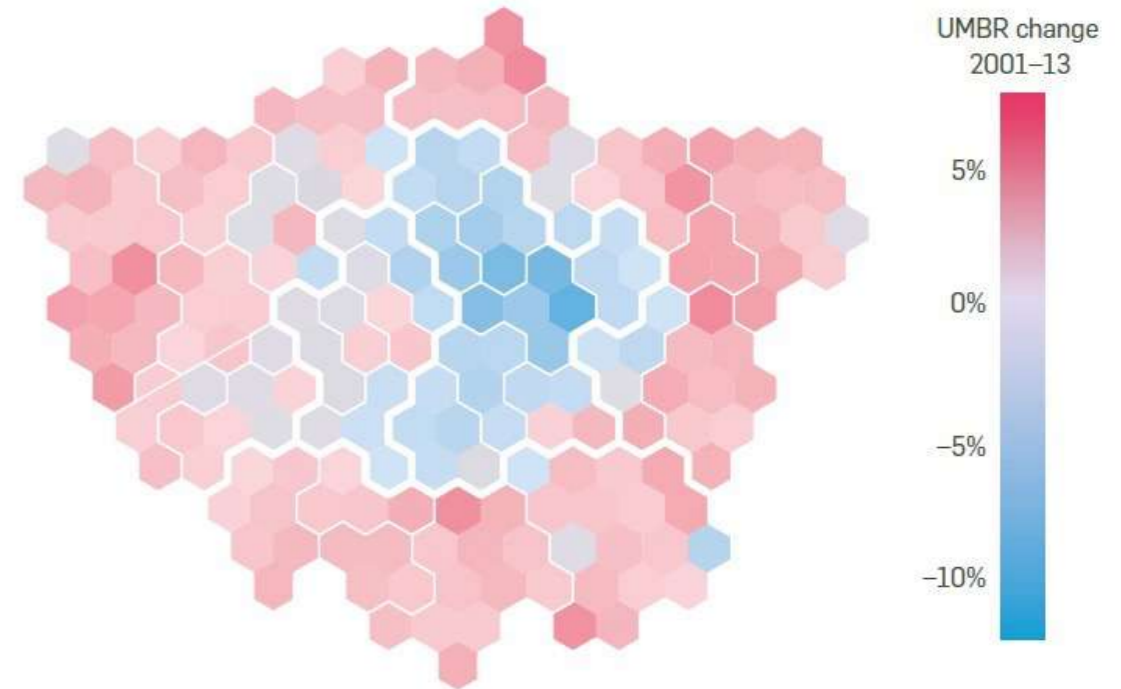
State of the parties

Lab		21 (+2)
Con		5 (-2)
Lib Dems		3 (nc)
No overall control		0 (nc)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Barking & Dagenham | 17 Hounslow |
| 2 Barnet | 18 Islington |
| 3 Bexley | 19 Kensington & Chelsea |
| 4 Brent | 20 Kingston-upon-Thames |
| 5 Bromley | 21 Lambeth |
| 6 Camden | 22 Lewisham |
| 7 Croydon | 23 Merton |
| 8 Ealing | 24 Newham |
| 9 Enfield | 25 Redbridge |
| 10 Greenwich | 26 Richmond-upon-Thames |
| 11 Hackney | 27 Southwark |
| 12 Hammersmith & Fulham | 28 Sutton |
| 13 Haringey | 29 Tower Hamlets |
| 14 Harrow | 30 Waltham Forest |
| 15 Havering | 31 Wandsworth |
| 16 Hillingdon | 32 Westminster |

Figure 5.3: Change in the rate of households claiming means-tested benefits, 2001–2013^{viii}

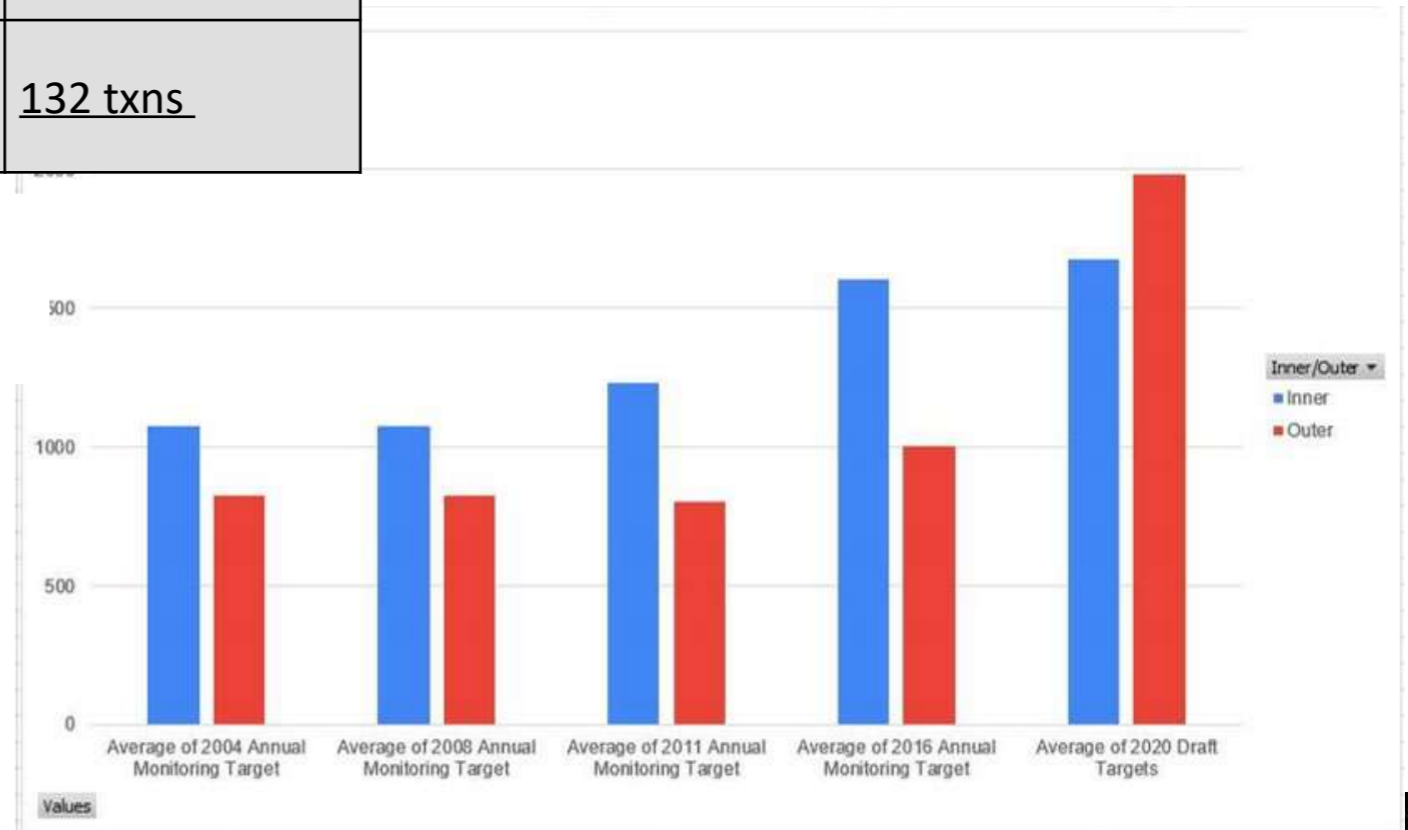
Source: Alex Fenton (forthcoming), Gentrification in London: a progress report, 2001–2013



Increasing residential investment and housing pressure in Outer London

	<u>Central London</u>	<u>Inner London</u>	<u>Outer London</u>
<u>Pre 2011</u>	<u>31 txns</u>	<u>20 txns</u>	<u>17 txns</u>
<u>2011-2015 incl</u>	<u>47 txns</u>	<u>46 txns</u>	<u>77 txns</u>
<u>2016 ff</u>	<u>37 txns</u>	<u>41 txns</u>	<u>132 txns</u>

Table 3: London Residential Transactions (includes student accommodation, new build and second-hand sales)



Centralisation & loss of local control – planning for housing

- Austerity context and local authority financing – planning services hit hard, social housing grant funding evaporated
- National Planning Policy Framework
 - 2012: ‘presumption in favour of development’
 - Viability-led planning
 - 2018: Housing Delivery Tests – punitive measures to ‘underperforming’ LAs
 - Permitted development – extending range (since 2013)
- Metropolitan governance and neighbourhood planning – ‘hollowing out’?

Questions

How has local government in London responded to this context? What are the different ways we see local authorities reasserting control?

- **Policy and regulation** – planning for housing
- Governance of housing **production**

How might we explain the variations we see?

POLICY & REGULATION	GOVERNANCE of PRODUCTION
Evidence-based work (officers)	Strategic enabler – facilitating private investment
Political lobbying	Frontline negotiators – ‘gaming’ the system
Exerting power through ‘in-action’	Resistance to growth
	Direct delivery – taking back control

Conclusions

- In the last decade, local government has lost significant control over housing policy and delivery, fiscal and governance, BUT
- Local government using a variety of strategies to re-assert control in relation to both housing regulation and delivery
- Conditions of local government are constantly changing, local government is able to be responsive and mindful of local nuance
- Characterisations of local government as ‘strategic enabler’ still (somewhat) valid, but much local resistance
- Housing development highly contested and vehicle for political mobilisation – diversity of responses politically influenced