

## **Cities, Communities and Homes: Is the Urban Future Livable?**

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

“The Role of Social Media in the Creation of Place and Belonging: The Case of Ocean Village, Southampton”

- **Format:**

Written paper (3,000 words) and Verbal presentation

- **Author(s) Name:**

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- **University or Company Affiliation:**

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- **Abstract (300 words):**

The creation of a sense of place and belonging has been widely debated in sociology by scholars such as Yi Fu Tuan (1977), Massey (2005), Savage (2010), and Benson and Jackson (2012). Furthermore, the role of residential status has been analysed in detail by Saunders (1990 and 2016), Benson (2013 and 2015) and Watt (2009) to create links between the above aspects. However, these works have not adequately addressed the issue of differences between different residential status in terms of the impact of social media. How does social media affect feeling about place and belonging in terms of different residential status (owner-occupier, tenant and landlord)? For this purpose, I am using both quantitative data, as derived from 177 questionnaire participants, and qualitative data, from semi-structured interviews with 42 participants, which were collected between the 17th August 2016, to the 5th February 2017. Specifically, in my

project I will be looking at Ocean Village in Southampton as an example of a redeveloping waterfront area in order to show differences between owner-occupiers, tenants and landlords in terms of the function of social media. This redevelopment project represents a new mix of establishments such as businesses, residential and leisure facilities, etc., which has been ongoing since the 1980s. I will discuss place making/maintenance and (s)elective belonging in order to reveal previously ignored connections between preference regarding residential status and social media. While aspects such as age, gender, nationality, and occupation are emerging as factors in the use of social media to build a sense of connection and belonging with the community and place, residential status is increasingly influencing such decisions. In conclusion, this project sheds new light on the neglected issue of social media in the creation of sense of place and belonging in a specific area as influenced by residential status.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Yahya Aydin is a Postgraduate Research Student in the Division of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Southampton. His research interests include urbanisation, waterfront development, sense of place and belonging in terms of landlords', owner-occupiers' and tenants' perspectives. More specifically, his study is interested in examining how landlords, owner-occupiers and tenants feel about Ocean Village, Southampton. The aim of his project is to learn the perspectives and experiences of the above groups that contribute towards an understanding of the relationships and ties with place and other people in Ocean Village. Prior to starting his PhD in September 2014, he completed his undergraduate degree in Sociology, at the Kirikkale University (Turkey) in 2010, and gained his MA in Urban History at the University of Leicester in 2013.