E-bulletin Autumn 2013
This e-briefing is from the Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM) at the University of Birmingham to keep you informed of our latest activities.

News

Policy Commission on the Distribution of Wealth
The final report from the Policy Commission on the Distribution of Wealth was launched in Westminster on the 22nd October. The report found evidence that wealth inequality has negative effects on a range of outcomes such as health and well-being, educational opportunities, social cohesion, democratic processes and so on. The report then considered how policy should respond to wealth inequality, considering first those at the bottom of the wealth distribution with very little and perhaps even negative net wealth. It also looked at policies in relation to those in the middle and the top of the wealth distribution. Finally, we also carried out research with the general public (through an Ipsos MORI poll) to measure their attitudes to wealth inequality which found that the public grossly underestimate the extent of wealth inequality and believe it should be much lower.

Financial inclusion annual monitoring report 2013
In the summer, we produced our first annual monitoring report on the state of financial inclusion. The research, funded by the Friends Provident Foundation, concluded that this is the longest and deepest slump in a century and we are already seeing signs, in the available data, of a major impact on people's finances. But the most relevant datasets in this field only provide data up to 2010–11 and so the impact of the recession in 2013 may be even greater. Furthermore, the situation looks set to worsen still further in coming years due to recent welfare reforms. Unless there is a major improvement in the economy and/or government action to support those struggling to make ends meet, we will see further reductions in financial wellbeing and inclusion in future years. We will produce a further report next summer.

CHASM internships

CHASM is about to advertise some paid internships for University of Birmingham undergraduates, generously supported by a donation from Andrew Fisher. Where appropriate, we are keen to work with organizations outside CHASM so that our interns can undertake research to support such organisations. Please get in touch with Karen Rowlingson on k.rowlingson@bham.ac.uk if you think that your organization might like to get involved with our internship scheme.
INRAP (International Network for Research on Asset Policies)

Ricky Joseph has been working on INRAP to develop a virtual network so that researchers across the world can find out about other relevant work on asset policies. The network will allow people to post information on a web portal to let people know about their work and also exchange email correspondence. We plan to launch INRAP, formally, in the next couple of months.

Events

Members of this email list may be interested in the following seminars

- December 10th on Housing and Community Assets Professor David Mullins, 12.30 in Muirhead Tower, 427
- January 21st 2014, Housing, Welfare and Post-Homeownership Societies, Professor Richard Ronald, 12.30 in Muirhead Tower, 427
- February 25th 2014 Housing, Race, Community and Conflict 50 years on Dr Ricky Joseph and Professor Alan Murie, 4.15 p.m. Muirhead Tower, 710

Briefing papers

Our latest briefing papers are:

- ‘Crony capitalism’? Remuneration Committees and Executive Pay
- The changing remuneration mix for UK top management
- Are credit unions failing or are they repositioning themselves for the future?
- Do the public really oppose Inheritance Taxes?
- The Forthcoming “Flat Rate” State Pension is Helpful
- New Horizons? The Future for UK Payday Loan Companies
- The debate about pension commencement lump-sums

All our briefing papers are available on the CHASM website

Current Research

We have a number of ongoing projects, not least our project on ‘responsible lending and borrowing’ for the Arts and Humanities Research Council and our project on ‘inter-generational transfers of wealth’ for the Leverhulme Trust. Please see the website for further details of each.

Details of our current research

Feedback

If you would like to find out more information on CHASM please visit our website

Keep up to date with the latest news, research and events happening at CHASM by joining our mailing list by contacting chasm@contacts.bham.ac.uk

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Best wishes,

The CHASM Team

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