

Rover and Out? Ex workers needed for new study

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A team of researchers at the University of Birmingham will conduct a study into the economic and social impact of Rover's decline.

The project aims to understand how the loss of employment arising from the closure of Longbridge has affected the well-being of ex-workers and their families and impacts on neighbourhoods - in particular on employment prospects, job quality, health, well-being, family and social cohesion and housing issues.

The team has received ESRC funding to the tune of £100k and has also obtained another £5,000 of funding from Birmingham City Council and the Rover Community Action Trust. The project will be conducted with the Work Foundation and with BBC Radio 4 (amongst others) on the dissemination side and will start on November 1st.

A key element of the research will be a survey conducted by the Work Foundation, on behalf of the team, of ex-Rover workers.

The team brings together the University's Business School and the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies in the School of Public Policy.

As part of the study, researchers will also look at the policy response both before and after the closure and will undertake a comparative analysis with researchers in Australia, where a team at Flinders University is also looking at the policy responses to plant closures.

Researchers will be disseminating their findings to the wider public. Prof David Bailey and Dr Alex de Ruyter both recently worked with Radio 4 on their 'Life after Longbridge' series.

David said: "We are keen to talk to ex Rover workers who lost their jobs in 2005 to find out how they and their families have been affected. If you lost your job at Longbridge in 2005 and would like to talk to us, please call us on 0121 414 6700."

Around 6,300 workers lost their jobs when MG Rover went bust in 2005, with several thousand more affected in the supply chain.

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