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Could a return to nature be the key for future growth?

The role of nature and the environment in future planning and housing developments will be the focus of a free lecture taking place at Northumbria University on Tuesday 14 February.

Professor of Environmental Geography [Alister Scott](#) will challenge traditional views of nature and set out the many benefits it can provide in development matters and show how this could be incorporated into policy making in future.

His lecture, entitled *Changing the nature of nature in land use policy and decision making* comes following the recent publication of the housing white paper setting out the government's plans to reform the UK housing market, including changes to current planning regulations.

Professor Scott said: "Traditionally nature has been seen as an impediment to development and associated with policies of constraint, with nature conservation seen as getting in the way of economic growth. During this lecture I will argue that we need to change the way we view and account for nature. We need to take a more holistic approach and assess the many benefits nature provides and how this can be used to inform policy and decision making in future.

"With the recent release of the housing white paper this issue is more relevant than ever and we need to engage in a debate to ensure our green spaces are valued as part of a long-term spatial strategy for the UK."

During the lecture Professor Scott will draw on research he carried out for the UK National Ecosystem Follow programme, presenting examples that show how thinking about nature differently is having an impact on policy formation and decision making.

Throughout his career Professor Scott has worked in both policy making roles, for Dartmoor National Park and Scottish Natural Heritage, as well as academic positions. He joined Northumbria in January this year from Birmingham City University, where he was Professor of Environment and Spatial Planning.

His research addresses problems concerning policy and decision making across built and natural environments. Recent projects include the Rural Economy and Land Use Programme managing environmental change at the rural urban fringe and the UK National Ecosystem Assessment follow on programme looking at new tools to improve policy and decision making.

Professor Scott was awarded the first ever University of Wales award in 2002 for excellence in teaching and his research leadership skills were recognised with the Royal Town Planning Institute award for planning excellence in 2012.

The Northumbria University Public Lecture Series celebrates the achievements of leading Northumbria Professors alongside high profile external speakers.

Professor Scott's lecture takes place on Tuesday 14 February from 6.30pm to 7.30pm in the Presentation Hall of the Design Building at Northumbria University's City Campus East. Refreshments will be available from 6pm.

For more information and to book a place please visit

<https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/news-events/events/2017/02/public-lecture-series-mdrt-lecture-professor-alister-scott/>

For queries email nu.events@northumbria.ac.uk or telephone 0191 243 7079.

For more information about studying Environmental Geography at Northumbria please visit <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/study-at-northumbria/courses/environmental-geography-bsc-hons-uusgen1/>

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If you have a media enquiry please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk or call [0191 227 4571](tel:01912274571).

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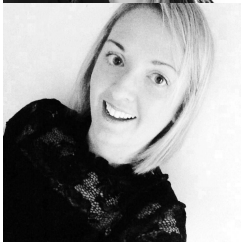
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