

Book review

Social Sustainability in Urban Areas: Communities, Connectivity and the Urban Fabric

Tony Manzi, Karen Lucas, Tony Lloyd Jones and Judith Allen (eds).
Routledge, Oxford, UK, 2010, ISBN 978 1 84407 674 1, £49.99, 256 pp.

This book is aimed at students and practitioners and is an invaluable and highly readable guide to social sustainability. It will also provide a useful resource for researchers across the range of areas it touches upon (which include planning, housing, regeneration, transport, tourism and urban design). The book is a collection of papers arranged around three themes: the first looks at social organisation at the level of neighbourhoods and communities, and in particular at the institutional and management practices which impact on the wellbeing of such groups; the second looks at issues of urban density, place and connectivity, in particular how to achieve a balance in urban areas between people maximising their life chance

opportunities while at the same time minimising their impacts on others; the final section looks at the role of local and national governments in urban areas in terms of stimulating local economic growth and regeneration of neighbourhoods.

The book provides a novel overview of current theory and practice in a crucially important area and one which is essential reading for those interested in the wider goal of achieving more sustainable urban environments, a challenge which is likely to become more difficult as urbanisation increases around the world.

It is a book I will recommend as key background reading for my students and draw on regularly for material to illustrate good practice in this area.

Miles Tight