**Stubborn continuities: Towards a Critical Race Theory perspective on ethno-religious segregation and spatial transformation in the UK**

Dr Richard Gale, School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University

Recent scholarship on segregation in the UK has served a powerful critical purpose in exposing the fallacies of populist political discourses surrounding the residential geographies of minority ethnic communities. However, with few exceptions, this scholarship is framed narrowly around empiricist preoccupations with movement and measurement, with correspondingly little theoretical account of the wider structural links between racialisation and segregation. Adopting a Critical Race Theory perspective, this paper presents material from ongoing participatory and co-productive research with Somali community groups in Cardiff, South Wales, with a view to examining the dynamic intersection of institutional power and community mobilisation in the contested construction of racialised space. The Somali presence in Cardiff is longstanding, tracing back to the settlement of Somali merchant seaman in the mid- to late 19th century. However, the city’s Somali community has received scant attention in research and policy discourse, with many of the compound hardships faced by young Somalis in particular – residential encapsulation, high unemployment, educational disadvantage and Islamophobia – going unremarked. Above all, the presentation will explore the creative coping strategies, community bonds and diasporic social capital mobilised by young Somalis to offset the effects of ethno-religious stigma and to transcend the ‘stickiness’ of the racialized urban.