Can you talk us through the content that has been published in the journal so far, and the thinking behind some of the subjects chosen?

Yes, kind of linked to what I said when we originally set up the journal the intention was it would be very, very broad in orientation and certainly covering the key words in the title; urban planning and transport but also related areas such as environmental issues and policy, and even related to water, sanitation things like that particularly with an eye on issues in the global south related to rapid urbanisation. Housing clearly we thought might be an area as well and that has been true. What has been more of a surprise I think has been the, I wouldn’t say quite dominance of one particular theme, but the clear relative importance of transport as a feature of many of the submissions. Sometimes in an interdisciplinary context linked for instance of spatial planning often linked to infrastructure and again the issue of rapid urbanisation particularly in the global south. But in some cases mainstream planning articles, a lot related to cycling and planning infrastructure, a lot related to again infrastructure generally, pertinent to transport, some very, very focused, again going back to one advantage given the encouragement of a very niche focused articles. Policy relevant sometimes related to very, very focused issues such as spatial elements of siting of taxi ranks, bus stops things like that and rapidly developing cities.

So the relevant prominence of transport has been a bit of a surprise, obviously there can be many reasons for that but I certainly welcomed it because it’s very clearly linked to the aims of the journal and the interdisciplinary element because almost certainly in many cases there is an interdisciplinary component particularly with respect to land use and spatial planning. To a slightly lesser extent issues of public health have been quite prominent, epidemiology almost in some cases linked to spatial elements, how planning and land use can promote good public health or detract from it in some cases. There have been several particular articles which are I think again practice relevant in their orientation.

The global spread has certainly been fairly less of a surprise and a lot of articles from the global south. Many wouldn’t be surprised that there are a lot of articles from China which is experiencing massive urbanisation obviously. Equally, of course linked to the fee-waiver potential for particular countries related to sub-Saharan Africa for instance, in which there are a lot of issues of urbanisation arriving in such areas; so a lot of articles from countries like that. But, equally a lot from mainstream European countries, such as Greece, Spain as well as North America. Quite a lot from Canada and the USA and several from the UK as well but certainly I think a very wide global spread, perhaps slightly wider than I was expecting I must admit, but again I very much welcome that because even though it does impose challenges, it fills a gap because clearly there has always been a very unfortunate lack of opportunities from researchers in the global south, together with research.
disseminated, and I think this is really pushing the boundaries in a very helpful way, particularly where that’s policy relevant. So I think those circles are all particular strengths.