



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

## LARIA Newsletter October 2021

### LARIA Vice-Chair Kate Waterhouse

In early September I and another LARIA Council member, Juliet Whitworth (Head of Research and Information of the Local Government Association (LGA)), were invited to be part of a Peer Challenge Team organised by the LGA to find out more about how a local intelligence unit was working within a local authority in the West Midlands.

Peer Challenge visits are a voluntary process and are designed to be improvement focused by bringing together an external team of local government peers to provide feedback and recommendations, either on a specific issue or on wider corporate plans.

They are great to be part of and as a member of the team you get to learn so much. In two days we gathered information and views from more than 20 face-to-face and virtual meetings, in addition to further research and reading. We spoke to more than 50 people, including a range of council staff together with members and external stakeholders.

What was clear in this visit was how well respected the local intelligence unit was and how much value they added to council decision-making and partnership working. As a member of LARIA Council it was great to hear senior leadership teams talking passionately about the value of local data and asking questions about how to support the team to continue to develop and grow. Their role in the

COVID-19 response was clear, as was their contribution to recovery planning and the production of the next strategic plan.

Key themes from the review included addressing challenges in managing and prioritising the range of requests for research and intelligence support from across the organisation, increasing data sharing, and getting information governance right to be able to improve data management and the granularity of reporting. Tips on keeping data sources up to date using automated links to other sites such as LG Inform and the Office for National Statistics were shared, and examples of different models for Partnership Intelligence Units were discussed.

A lot of the good practice we shared came from our LARIA Council members and from case studies we see through our awards programme and regional networks. Being together in person reminded us of the value of sitting across a table with a cup of tea and working out how to apply these examples in a new place with its own challenges. It will be good to start re-introducing LARIA face-to-face meetings soon.

Overall, it was great experience to be out and about again seeing the value of research in action. Both Juliet and I left inspired to do more to promote our LARIA network and help spread the good practice across even more organisations.

If you get chance to be part of a Peer Challenge, please take it. It is great to be part of a review team, but also for your intelligence or insight team to be part of the process if your organisation is signed up to one. Find out more [here](#).

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## News

### **LARIA Webinar Series – Call for Presentations**

#### **Routes to recovery – using data to build back better**

**Deadline: Friday 29 October 2021**

LARIA's webinar series provides delegates with the ideas, tools and techniques for influencing decision-makers and delivering improved outcomes based on robust data, evidence and research. We are calling for a broad range of presentations from the general to the specific on our theme: **Routes to recovery – using data to build back better**.

We welcome presentations on any of the following questions, but we are open to all your other ideas that fit the theme.

- What are the emerging research and analytical themes for the recovery and how are you delivering them?
- How is your research and data supporting the environmental ambitions of your organisation, to ensure you build back better?
- What has been your most impactful analysis and how is that shaping the ways you now approach analytics?
- How will you balance ongoing support for the pandemic with the need to deliver business-as-usual intelligence?
- How are you involving digitally excluded local residents in your research?
- What successful local partnerships have been created during the pandemic and if they continue, what will be their purpose?
- How has the work you do changed since early 2020 and what permanent changes have you made?
- What data flows have been created locally and are they sustainable long-term?
- What needs to happen to maintain your ability to use both local and national information sources?

- How has your access to data and information changed over time and what is its future trajectory?
- What have been the critical skills that you've learnt and how will you use them going forward?
- What are your skills gaps and how will you fill them?
- Do you have the necessary resources to deliver intelligence and what systems, tools or techniques are creating capacity in your work or teams?
- How has the way that you present data changed, and what are the implications for the future?

For full details and to submit a presentation please download the [submission form](#) and return to [admin@laria.org.uk](mailto:admin@laria.org.uk)

If your organisation is interested in sponsoring a webinar, please download our [sponsorship document](#) for more information.

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## CACI

### Financial Inequality Local Government Data Initiative

Financial inequality was with us long before COVID-19, but the pandemic has only widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The cost of living only seems to be going up and it's having significant impact on our most at risk and vulnerable communities.

In order to be able to support those facing financial hardship, it is essential for central and local government to have access to an up-to-date and reliable source of income data. This will help to assess need and prioritise the delivery of services to those who really need it at such a challenging time.



For this reason and in association with our partner LARIA, CACI are launching a new Local Government Data Initiative to provide free access\* to our gross household income dataset, Paycheck for use to specifically tackle financial inequality until the end of January 2022.

For further information and to register your interest in accessing this data, complete your details using the link below and we'll be in touch walk you through next steps.

\*subject to contract.

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## Digital take up of Census 2021 beats targets

A fantastic 97% of households across England and Wales responded to Census 2021 to ensure they count when it comes to local services - and almost 90% of them did so online.

Initial findings show online take up of the first digital-first census far exceeded expectations, with more than 22 million responses submitted using the web questionnaire.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) had set a pre-census target of at least 75% online completion. However, that was beaten, with 88.9% of households responding to the census choosing to do so on a digital device.

Mobile phone was the most common way of completing the electronic questionnaire, with 56.4% of households choosing to do so that way. Nearly 35% used a desktop computer, while 9% used a tablet.

The average completion time for the household online form was 23 minutes, in line with expectations.

Top 5 local authorities in England by online share for online first areas:

- Tower Hamlets - 97.3%
- Newham - 97.0%

The logo for the 2021 Census in Wales, featuring the word 'cyfrifiad' in a purple, rounded font, 'census' in a bold, purple, sans-serif font, and '2021' in a purple, sans-serif font below it.

- City of London - 96.7%
- Slough - 96.7%
- Hounslow - 96.6%

Top 5 local authorities in Wales by online share for online first areas:

- Cardiff - 95.2%
- Newport - 94.3%
- Vale of Glamorgan - 94.2%
- Rhondda Cynon Taf - 94.0%
- Flintshire - 93.5%

[See digital take up results for your local authority here](#)

The [Census 2021 outputs consultation](#) closes at midnight tomorrow (5 October), so if people want their say on what census data will be published, they should respond now.

For more information on the online Census 2021 and how the ONS enabled people to respond digitally or on paper, read the full reports [here](#).

If you have any questions about the digital take up of Census 2021 please the [LA Partnerships Team](#) at the ONS.

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## Jobs

**Cambridge Econometrics**



**Managing Consultant / Project Manager,  
public policy and local economy**

We are seeking a collaborative and resourceful consultant to lead our research and

manage our clients in the fields of [social policy and local economic development](#), and based in Cambridge, UK. Your achievements will contribute to the commercial success of the team and the business.

Closing date for applications	31 October 2021
Interviews	November 2021
Start date	As soon as possible
Location	Cambridge, UK
Salary	£40,000-55,000
Other benefits	individual training budget; flexible working; group personal insurance

Link to vacancy - [Vacancies | Cambridge Econometrics \(camecon.com\)](#)

Please get in touch with [Vivian](#) if you have any further questions.

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## Webinars

**King's College London**  
**NIHR Health and Social Care Workforce Research Unit**

**Webinar on Gambling and Suicide - Monday 29th November**



We are delighted to invite you to a webinar led by Dr Steve Sharman, Research Fellow, The National Addiction Centre at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience (IoPPN), King's College London. Steve will discuss his research on gambling and suicide.

This webinar is part of a NIHR-funded study which is validating a screening question for identifying gambling harms to individuals and affected others in adult social services and piloting it in three local authorities.

We are hosting a series of webinars focused on various aspects of the study and on other research on gambling harms. This webinar will be Chaired by Dr Emily Finch, Clinical Director for Addictions, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

For more information about this study and future seminars, see [here](#).

Please email [Caroline Norrie](#) or [Catherine Forward](#) if you would like to attend or to be added to the mailing list.

Please do circulate this to your networks.

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## Transport for the North



Transport for the North's [Northern Evidence Academic Forum](#) is taking place on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> November (12-2PM). This online forum connects policymakers to the cutting-edge research undertaken by academics, and aims to enhance understanding of the range of social and economic issues affected by transport in the North of England.

In our next session, we will be hearing from experts on issues including sustainable freight transport, the future of the North's major roads network, the transition to electric vehicles, and the impacts of road pricing.

Our speakers include:

[Owen Wilson - Transport for the North](#)

[Dr Daniela Paddeu – UWE Bristol](#)

[Professor David Metz – UCL](#)

[Professor Miquel-Àngel Garcia-López - Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona](#)

[Dr Georgina Santos – Cardiff University](#)

You can sign up to the event here: [Transport for the North Events | Eventbrite](#) or by

emailing us at

[research@transportforthenorth.com](mailto:research@transportforthenorth.com)

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## **Social Research Association**



Our online conference takes place on  
Thursday 25 November.

Social research (and much else) came to an abrupt halt in March last year. Join us to find out how researchers have adjusted, re-worked and re-invented their way through unprecedented times.

This is our first online conference, and features:

### **KEYNOTES**

Sir Ian Diamond, National Statistician, joined by Jill Rutter, Institute of Government; deliberative methods expert Sarah Castell, CEO of Involve; and qualitative and narratives specialist Jane Elliott, Professor of Sociology at Exeter University.

### **IN CONVERSATION**

Making research, and research organisations, more inclusive, with Marie-Claude Gervais (Versiti) and Reema Patel (Ada Lovelace Institute); Victoria Boleman (Young Foundation) and Babita Earle (Chair, MRS Diversity & Inclusion Council).

### **RESEARCH METHODS IN PRACTICE**

A varied mix of topical presentations from applied researchers on the front lines. Hear about their innovations and adaptations, what worked and what didn't, and why.

### **PLUS:**

'Research Compendium' - a showcase of creativity in research, with video,

cartoons, poetry and more on display.

'Meet the software specialists' - presentations on a range of useful software analysis products.

All these include live audience Q&A via Zoom. And you can meet up with colleagues old and new in networking sessions.

Book your place on the [SRA website](#)

Delegate rates: £65 for non-members and £35 for SRA members.

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### **Are you a Corporate or Full Corporate Member?**

**Laria**

Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

Your LARIA Corporate Membership entitles you to submit content to the monthly LARIA newsletter, if you have any research, events, job adverts, resources or news which you would us to include please send it to [admin@laria.org.uk](mailto:admin@laria.org.uk).

The next newsletter submission deadline is **Monday 15th November 2021**.

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