



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

## LARIA Newsletter November 2023

### LARIA Updates

#### LARIA blog November 2023

Well, it has been a very long time since I last attended a face-to-face LARIA event. COVID-19 meant that events were moved online and while these have been very successful, I think there remains an important place for physically coming together and sharing learning about various aspects of using local data to improve decision-making.

The event on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023 kicked off with a welcome address from Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson who is President of the Local Government Association, our generous hosts for the day in London. She outlined the significant added value that research and analysis teams provide in responding to significant issues facing all councils such as the cost-of-living crisis.

Attendees heard a wide range of interesting presentations throughout the day from their peers across local government as well as experts in the field – from organisations working in the data space who made a call to arms for everyone to do amazing things with data (CACI), to representatives of the Evaluation Task Force (ETF), the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth, and the Office for National Statistics.

So, what were my key take-aways? It's difficult to know where to start.

First, I was struck by the point made across several presentations of the significant value of data insights which are not currently explored to their full potential. This could be analysing nearly two-million postcodes to improve our understanding of

which local areas need particular support, or maximising the value from the free-text questions in surveys. On the latter, the presenter explained that his council run around 400 surveys but less than 5% of these use text processing to analyse the free-text inputs. The use of AI is only going to make this easier and analysts will then ensure that this is turned into dynamic outputs for decision-makers.

My second key take-away is that there is help out there to support researchers and analysts. We all know the importance of robust evaluation to assess the success and value for money of a project or programme. While ETF support government departments to conduct proportionate evaluations through good use of data, the What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth can support councils (free of charge!) through training to upskills colleagues on the use and application of economic data (e.g., an introduction to logic models) but also by providing advice before councils invest in an evaluation.

My third and final take-away came from a project in Doncaster where we heard how public sector partners are working collaboratively, using embedded researchers, to develop a positive research culture. Presenters focused on a cohort study called Born and Bred in Doncaster (BaBi-D) which aims to harness the power of routinely collected data to explore patterns in public health and improve health inequalities. Of course, we know it takes time to organise data sharing agreements between councils and the NHS, but when the funding is for five years in this case, it provides significant potential to deliver results of national importance.

Picking a few highlights inevitably mean I can't cover everything from the day - I also learnt about the use of discrete choice experiments to help commissioners improve the experience of homeless people, the minimum income standard in Luton, and the value of using lived experience evidence of poverty in Kirklees. I also saw the joy in researchers winning the coveted LARIA annual awards.

I therefore strongly recommend all LARIA members to look out for future events (both on-line and face to face) to learn about cutting-edge research.

***Professor James Downe***  
***Acting Director, Wales Centre for Public Policy***  
***LARIA Council member***

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## LARIA Membership Fees

Thank you for your continued support over the last 12 months. We've held successful webinar series, along with our one day event and awards in 2023, and look forward to seeing you at our events in 2024. All LARIA webinars remain free to attend for all Full Individual and Corporate Members.

In order to continue to support LARIA membership, LARIA Council has decided to increase membership fees slightly from 1 January 2024. In addition to continuing to provide our core offer to members including the newsletter, access to the knowledge hub and annual awards, this increase in fees will bring more opportunities for virtual conferences and networking events.

As a reminder, in the [members' area](#) of the LARIA website, the lead contact for Corporate and Full Corporate Members can add an unlimited number of additional contacts under their organisation who will then all have access to the LARIA benefits. The members' area also hosts past editions of the LARIA Newsletter, previous webinar recordings and conference presentations, which you can access at any time.

Membership fees from 1 January 2024 will be:

- Associate Membership – free
- Full Individual Membership – £20
- Corporate Membership – £160
- Full Corporate Membership – £180

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## News

### Introducing CACI's InSite Everywhere Profiler

We're introducing our new InSite Everywhere Profiler, a sophisticated and easy-to-use functionality, that enables organisations to securely import and use their data in the cloud with CACI's consumer segmentation tools (Acorn, Household Acorn and Wellbeing Acorn). This software features an intuitive, flexible, and self-service dashboard enabling secure sharing of outputs generated and storage of data.



The new Profiler is designed to offer effective visualisation functionalities, and when used alongside CACI's Acorn Datasets, users can access granular household or postcode information. Find out how our new software will accelerate your organisation's growth **by registering your interest.**

[Register your interest](#)

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### **New LG Inform Transport Report**

[This new report provides an overview of transport](#) in a certain area by looking at a range of metrics covering infrastructure, road safety, parking, public transport, walking, cycling and transport to work.



Having an effective transport system is crucial to providing support to any area as the lifeblood of the local economy, It enables access to services, businesses, places of education and other amenities.

### **LG Inform Strategic User Steering Group**

Are you ready to make a difference and be part of something meaningful? The LG Inform Programme is seeking passionate individuals to join our dynamic team and help drive sector led positive change. If you're eager to contribute your skills, ideas, and energy to a cause you're passionate about, we want to hear from you!

We are searching for individuals who:

- Are passionate about local government, data and digital services.
- Are committed and excited about active participation.
- Want to be part of a collaborative team that shares a common goal.

If this sounds like you, we invite you to apply and share your expertise with us!

Please return a 500 word maximum expression of interest to [lginform@local.gov.uk](mailto:lginform@local.gov.uk) by 20 December 2023 including;

- Whether or not you use LG Inform and/or LG Inform Plus,
- Why you want to join LG Inform User Steering Group,

- What skills, experiences, or perspectives you bring,
  - And how you envision contributing to our initiatives or projects?
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## Courses, Training Events and Webinars

**Best kept secret: How to derive efficiencies and insight from the data you didn't know you had ...**

[In this virtual event on Thursday 7](#)

[December 2023](#), you will hear from a chief executive and a former council leader about how their authorities used this location data to their benefit and the measurable impacts in their authorities; you will come away with

an appreciation of how to use the location data, and the value it might bring to your council; and you will be provided with practical steps that you can take to your teams to drive genuine improvement and transformation within your authority.



After the event, attendees will be sent a briefing pack with a personalised data integration report, to help you understand how well your authority is already making use of the location data that is available to you, compared with the national profile.

### **Briefing sessions - Local Government Data Maturity Assessment Tool**

We would like to invite councils to attend a briefing session where we will give an overview of our refreshed local government [data maturity assessment tool](#) and the process for completing it.

Councils who choose to complete the tool following this will be given the opportunity to participate in facilitated sessions during February/March which bring small peer groups of councils together in confidence to discuss the strengths and areas for development that they identified through the assessment and support each other to identify next steps.

If you would like to attend a session, please register for [Wednesday 29 November 11am – midday](#) or [Monday 4 December 2pm – 3pm](#) and a calendar invitation will follow shortly.

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**Supporting unpaid carers in the NHS and social care – free half day conference on 9<sup>th</sup> February**

On Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> February, researchers at King's College London will be hosting a free half day conference that explores support for unpaid carers in health and social care. This is a hybrid event with options to join via Zoom or in person.



We will open the conference with some initial findings from our study about the [right to a care supporter](#). We will then share some resources that have been co-produced with two PPIE groups to help people understand their rights when staying in hospital or a care home. Following this, we are delighted to welcome colleagues working in the NHS and social care to present case studies of how they support unpaid carers in their respective settings.

If you would like to attend, please [register via EventBrite](#).

For more information, please email [Jo Brown](#).

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Two new HSCWRU Homelessness webinars in 2024:

**Homelessness Radical Safeguarding Toolkit: shaping homelessness social care**

Thursday 18 January 2024, 10 to 11.30am [Book here](#)

**Homelessness and multiple disadvantage: Improving responses for women**

Thursday 29 February 2024, 10 to 11am [Book here](#)

Also, reminder of next month's event:

**A data-driven approach to inform services for people who are experiencing homelessness**

Thursday 14 December 2023, 10 to 11am [Book here](#)

All events are online (via Teams), free and open to all.

## Mapping crime data in R

[An introduction to GIS and spatial data](#), 13 February 2024, 11:00 am - 12:30 pm

[Live code demonstration](#), 16 February 2024, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Do you want to display crime data on maps but don't know how?

Crime data often contains spatial components. As a result, analyses of crime data can create patterns that are clearly linked to geography. Naturally, putting the data or analysis on a map makes a lot of sense. Unfortunately, if you have never matched statistical data to spatial data then you may not know how easy it can be to make beautiful data maps!

That's where these free workshops come in. The aim of the workshops is to teach participants to use the R statistical and graphical environment to map open-source police recorded crime statistics onto geographic representations.

The first workshop will cover some fundamental theories and concepts surrounding GIS and spatial data. The second session will be a live code demonstration using R to explore these concepts.

The workshops are suitable for intermediate (or higher) users of R but there is no need to have experience with GIS software or spatial data. Users should be comfortable with how to set the working directory in R, how to read in data, how to write basic R functions and how to save scripts and output files.

Follow the links above for more information and booking.

## Computational social science drop-ins

January – June 2024, 13:00 - 14:00

Join our free UK Data Service data drop-ins to get or give some help on

computational social science projects. These events will take place on Zoom. There will be a data expert from the UK Data Service present to chair the session. Feel free to join for general advice on getting data, learning to code and much more.

Stuck on a project?

Not sure what to learn next?

Want to meet other computational social scientists?

Learn or teach some data skills with like-minded individuals?

The sessions take place on the second Tuesday of the month. You only need to book once to attend any or all of the sessions from January to June.

[Book your place](#) and we will see you soon.

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## Jobs

To submit a job advert to appear in the newsletter or on the LARIA website, please download and complete this [form](#) (Full Corporate and Corporate Members only). You can also post Job Vacancies on the Jobs Board in the LARIA [Members' Area](#).

The next newsletter submission deadline is [Thursday 14th December](#).

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

The logo for Laria, consisting of the word "Laria" in a bold, teal, sans-serif font.

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 [Thursday 14th December](#).

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