



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

LARIA Newsletter February 2025

LARIA Updates

The effective use of evidence is likely to be vital for everyone connected to LARIA. In my role, for example, in a What Works Centre, a wide range of different types of evidence (from RCTs to lived experience) is used to improve policy-making.



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

I sit on LARIA Council and the Events sub-group that organises the annual conference and webinars. Evidence is important in these venues as it helps to inform the decisions we make about our offer to members. Probably the most important source of evidence is the feedback we receive from participants at events. This shows us what went well, not so well, key learning points picked up from attendees, and ideas for future events.

The November 2024 conference, held at the LGA, was perceived positively by those who completed the survey. 81% of attendees rated it as 'very good', with the remainder scoring it as 'good'. Similar numbers agreed that the conference met their expectations. It was a little risky solely focusing the conference on AI, but attendees appreciated the quality of the programme. One remarked that the most useful aspect of the day was: "Hearing a mix of information - from the presentations at the beginning on the general theme before focusing down to case studies in practice." AI will remain a topic within future events, but we will return to covering a broader range of subjects.

LARIA members appreciate the webinars we have organised over the last few years. Our plan is to invite the LARIA awards winners and those who were highly commended to present and share their work with others. There is so much excellent work being conducted by LARIA members across local government, and this will be an opportunity to learn from your peers and be inspired to apply for an award next year.

The LARIA Events sub-group currently consists of just three volunteers, so if you could spare a little bit of time to assist in designing future events (some members would like a greater focus on events for senior managers for example), we would welcome you with open arms. Please email admin@laria.org.uk if you would like to help. At the very least, please fill in all feedback surveys we send your way. We read every comment (although we might get AI to do it for us in the future!).

LARIA Regional Representatives Update

We are pleased to announce that we have now recruited a new LARIA regional representative for LARIA North East - [Andrew Stevens](#).

Laria

Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

All those working in local research in the North East are welcome to join the group. Local LARIA groups rely on the goodwill of members to arrange free venues, come up with ideas for speakers and to provide articles for the LARIA newsletter. Andrew would be happy to hear from you if you wish to get involved.

Introducing LARIA Regional Representatives

[LARIA in the West Midlands:](#)

Jason Lowther

Email: j.lowther@bham.ac.uk

[Jason Lowther | LinkedIn](#)



Director of the Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV) and Head of the Department of Public Administration and Policy, University of Birmingham.

A senior strategic leader, with experience across public sector and private organisations.

Strong research, policy, strategy, analysis, performance and programme management, and people skills to enable fundamental business improvement.

Passionate about improving lives through cost-effective public services, delivered with (not just "to") communities.

News

Policy principles to support the effective use of address data

GeoPlace has launched new guidance to help local authorities gain maximum use of address data. Developed by GeoPlace, and supported by the Local Government Association and Socitm, the document contains principles which provide a structured approach to integrating the UPRN into council systems, ensuring accurate, efficient, and consistent use of property information across departments.



By adopting these principles, councils can streamline service delivery, improve communication, and enable data-driven decision-making. This resource serves as a practical tool for embedding the UPRN within existing policies, tailored to the unique needs of individual authorities.

Whether you're enhancing digital transformation, reducing operational inefficiencies, or strengthening community outcomes, this guidance offers actionable steps to support the effective use of address data and the UPRN.

To find out more:

- See more at [Policy principles](#)
- read the article published by UK Authority- [Addresses, streets and local government data standards](#)
- join a [techUK webinar](#) with speakers from SOCITM, LGA and GeoPlace which explores 'Harnessing data to improve local public services' and will focus on the policy principles.

The Procurement Act 2023

The Procurement Act 2023 goes live on 24th February 2025. It will introduce significant changes aimed at improving transparency, sustainability and value for money in public procurement. At the same time, the Act brings new obligations for compliance with updated regulations.

These updates provide a framework for local authorities to enhance procurement practices, and a good opportunity to extend the use of UPRNs and USRNs. Software suppliers have an important role to play in supporting progress, but some have been reluctant to incorporate UPRNs and USRNs into their own systems, demanding high charges to make it happen. There has been a sense among some Custodians that some suppliers are standing in the way of progress.

By making it clear within the procurement process that authorities expect system vendors to meet specific standards that include the capability for a smooth integration and handling of UPRNs and USRNs, barriers to integration can be more easily overcome.

For more information, see:

- [Perfecting procurement to deliver the golden thread of location data for public services](#)

- [Guidance on the GeoPlace website](#)
 - [Policy principles to support the effective use of address data.](#)
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Courses, Training Events and Webinars

UK Data Service introductory training series: Spring 2025



We provide access to a wide range of social science data for reuse. To help you get the most from these resources, we run a free introductory training series every spring and autumn to introduce different aspects of the UK Data Service.

Our training series workshops in spring 2025 are listed below and you can also browse our [training and events pages](#) for a full list of what is available.

[Dissertation projects: Introduction to secondary analysis for qualitative and quantitative data](#), 19 March, 10.00-11.30

[Introduction to the UK Data Service](#), 27 March, 10.00-11.30

[Introduction to effective and practical research data management](#), 8 April, 10.00 – 11.30

[How to become a computational Social Scientist](#), 16 April, 10.00 – 11.30

[Introduction to copyright: Copyright and publishing](#), 24 April, 13.00 – 14.30

[Introduction to copyright: Copyright and secondary data use](#), 29 April, 10.00 – 11.30

[Ethical and legal guidelines in data sharing](#), 8 May, 10.00 – 11.30

[Role of Informed Consent in Ethical Data Collection, Sharing and Reuse](#), 13 May, 10.00 – 11.30

[Getting started with secondary analysis](#), 16 May, 10.00 – 11.30

[Introduction to anonymisation techniques for social sciences research data](#), 22 May, 10.00 – 11.30

[Best practices for documenting social sciences research data](#), 10 June, 10.00 – 11.30

Recordings of UK Data Service events are made available on our [YouTube channel](#) and, together with the slides, on our [past events pages](#) soon after the event has taken place.

[Read the news story online](#)

Data Cymru - Double your learning: Buy One, Get One FREE! Limited time offer!



Ready to boost your skills? Now's the perfect time! Until 31 March 2025, purchase any of Data Cymru's [online training](#) courses and get a second course absolutely **FREE*** (*the cheaper course is free).

All courses must be purchased by 31 March 2025, with delivery available until 31 July 2025, so you can schedule your learning at your convenience.

Take the same course twice with different cohorts (20 delegates per cohort) or choose two different courses—it's up to you! Each course lasts approximately two hours.

Choose from...

[Presenting data](#): Communicate insights effectively to stakeholders.

[Summary statistics](#): Master essential tools for evidence-based decision-making.

[Survey design](#): Create impactful surveys for your community.

[Focus groups](#): Enhance public engagement strategies.

[Data 101](#): Build foundational skills to navigate complex datasets.

[Understanding performance data](#): Drive efficiency with actionable insights.

For Welsh local authorities courses start at £480 + VAT

For non-local authorities courses start at £600 + VAT

If you're interested, please contact Róisín Roberts on 029 2090 9599 or email roisin.roberts@data.cymru to discuss your training needs.

**Robotic processing automation (RPA)
webinar**

5 March 10.00-11.00



This event, presented in partnership with NW Employers and iNetwork, will feature a presentation from St Helens Council focusing on their implementation of RPA.

St Helens will cover three examples of RPA application in adults' social care, and conduct a demo on each of these:

Social care meeting notes delivery into Case Management Meetings

Falls management using their digital front door

TEC catalogue integration with falls management systems

There will then be 15 minutes for a Q&A.

To attend, [please register by 4 March](#).

If you have any questions, please email isobel.parkes@local.gov.uk.

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 20th March](#).

Are you a Corporate or Full Corporate Member?

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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.

The next newsletter submission deadline is **Thursday 20th March**.

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