



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

LARIA Newsletter April 2025

LARIA Updates

Paul Holme, Head of Performance, Research & Intelligence @ Manchester City Council



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

Hello all and welcome to this latest edition of the LARIA newsletter. I'm Paul Holme a member of the LARIA council but day-to-day I lead the Performance, Research and Intelligence function within Manchester City Council.

It's been a busy start to 2025 and I can't believe we're already in April and it's time for the next LARIA newsletter. Most of my time this year has been spent working on an exciting programme of work and the launch of HDRC Manchester, or to give it its full title 'Health Determinants Research Collaboration Manchester'. This is a National Institute for Health & Social Care (NIHR) funded programme of work to "boost research capacity and capability within local government. HDRCs aim to embed a culture of using evidence to improve decision-making on health and health inequalities".

The programme involves local authorities working with university partners (in Manchester's case the University of Manchester) to build collaborative infrastructure, combining local government knowledge with academic research skills. At present there are 30 HDRCs across the country and Manchester is pleased to be one of them.

There are 30 HDRCs - 10 in Wave 1 [2022-27]; 14 in Wave 2 [2023-28]; 6 in Wave 3 [2024-29]



1. HDRC Aberdeen (1)
2. HDRC Blackpool (1)
3. HDRC Bradford (1)
4. HDRC Cornwall (2)
5. HDRC Coventry (1)
6. HDRC Cumberland (2)
7. HDRC Doncaster (1)
8. HDRC Ealing (2)
9. HDRC Greater Essex (2)
10. HDRC Gateshead (1)
11. HDRC Glasgow (3)
12. HDRC Islington (2)
13. HDRC Lambeth (1)
14. HDRC Leicestershire (3)
15. HDRC Liverpool (2)
16. HDRC Manchester (3)
17. HDRC Medway (2)
18. HDRC Newcastle (1)
19. HDRC North Yorkshire (2)
20. HDRC Plymouth (1)
21. HDRC Portsmouth (3)
22. HDRC Rhondda Cynon Taf (2)
23. HDRC Sandwell (2)
24. HDRC Somerset (2)
25. HDRC Southampton (2)
26. HDRC South Tees (2)
27. HDRC Surrey (3)
28. HDRC Torfaen (3)
29. HDRC Tower Hamlets (1)
30. HDRC Wakefield (2)

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The programme has forced me to think about what a good evidence-led culture looks like, review what this looks like in different places and self-reflect where we are in Manchester. But as I said above this has been ‘exciting’ and an excellent opportunity to ensure we stay ahead of the curve and continue to be relevant. But LARIA members don’t need to be a HDRC to ask the same questions and being involved in this has taught me that we can’t afford not to.

Success for HDRC Manchester is “**Putting Communities at the Heart of Policy**” and where: **Local residents are more able to directly influence decisions** about their area through greater control and influence over research activities and learning new skills and experience **Improved decision making and impact** across the City Council and partner organisations, through officer and member engagement and clear governance arrangements Investment will turbo-charge what we are already doing so that it becomes **more consistent and more impactful**

Better, more ‘real life’ research, improving our understanding of the wider determinants of health at a local level

Dissemination of learning through Core Cities, GM, government, academia, VCSEF sector **Sustainable legacy** of working in this way beyond the investment

At the heart of this is culture and how our profession influences that culture and advocates for evidence-led decision making. This is where LARIA can support and how collectively we should be supporting each other to do this!

This links to discussions that the LARIA Council had early this year and working out how we can best support this and our individual members who, like me, are tasked with leading this work in a local area. More to come on this, but we’ll need your input and ideas to ensure we’re able to do that collective influencing.

So keep getting involved in discussions, share your stories and reach out to colleagues as much as you can, and LARIA is here to support you.

I'm always happy to chat and explore new ideas, so reach out through LARIA if there is anything you'd like to discuss further.

Cheers,
Paul

LARIA Webinars 2025

Register your place today via our [website](#).



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

Webinar 1: Tuesday 13 May 2025, 14:00 - 15:30 BST

Session 1: Unlocking Local Insight: Exploring LG

Inform Data with Power BI and the Birmingham City Observatory

Danny O'Neill, City Observatory Lead, Birmingham City Council & Mark Williams, Senior Data Adviser, Local Government Association

Session 2: Mind the gap: how patients experience hospital discharge

Ben Lee, Director, Shared Intelligence

Session 3: Tackling the cost of living together in Stockport

Imogen Fox, Delivery Manager – Financial Inclusion & Tom Plant, Anti-Poverty Lead, Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Webinar 2: Wednesday 14 May 2025, 10:30 - 12:00 BST

Session 1: Using qualitative research and partnership working to tackle fuel poverty

Abi Yeates, Qualitative Insights Researcher - Public Health, Wirral Council

Session 2: Tackling the Digital Divide: The Digital Exclusion Risk Mapping Tool

Melody Cremer, Analyst & Amos Turn, Data Science Fellow, Essex County Council

Session 3: Unlocking the power of address data: A data-driven infographic report for benchmarking and transformation

Luke Studden, Data Integration Manager, GeoPlace

Webinar 3: Thursday 15 May 2025, 11:00 - 12:30 BST

Session 1: Adopting a blended data approach to weather the storm of change
CACI

Session 2: Understanding poverty in Luton through the Minimum Income Standard (MIS)
John Stokes, Senior Intelligence Analyst, Luton Council

Session 3: Harnessing Council Data to Understand Unmet Need in West Lothian Council
Nick Cassidy, Research Manager, Improvement Service

Introducing LARIA Regional Representatives

[LARIA in the North East](#) Chair Andrew Stevens

Email: Andrew.Stevens@newcastle.ac.uk



I am very happy to take on the role of North East Regional Representative for LARIA as this gives me an excuse to spend even more time in my native North East, where I am Visiting Fellow at Newcastle University's Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies (CURDS). In addition to this I split my time between there and the capital where I live with my very young family and work in urban management and local governance research, having originally trained as a journalist with a keen eye for the comings and goings of urban policy. I have also done stints in Whitehall, town hall and county hall. Additionally, I am a member of the Regional Studies Association and Political Studies Association.

[LARIA in Wales](#) Chair Hayley Randall

Email: Hayley.Randall@dataunitwales.gov.uk

My name is Hayley and I am the Senior Statistician at Data Cymru. We support local government in good data practices and provide a range of specialist data, statistical and research services to local government in Wales. My work covers mostly quantitative data and analysis. I lead on both designing, creating and running surveys and data collections, and analysing and disseminating data. I am currently heavily involved in the [National Resident Survey for Wales](#) which is part of our 'Once for Wales' approach. Our aim is to reduce duplication and increase consistency across local government in Wales.

I am based in South Wales and my background is in theoretical statistics. I have a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and a Masters in statistics. Outside of work, I enjoy watching sport, going to dance lessons and reading bad books.

News

Fuel Poverty: Ward-level data to help you support your communities

CACI

do amazing
things with data

As the UK navigates the ongoing energy crisis, fuel poverty continues to profoundly impact the health and wellbeing of millions of households. Estimates vary, with the Government suggesting up to 8.9 million households could have been classified as fuel poor by the end of 2023, while the National Energy Action reports that 6.1 million households are currently affected. Clearly, understanding the extent of fuel poverty is challenging, but the need to provide adequate support to residents is undeniable.

Leveraging CACI's Paycheck Disposable Income variables combined with EPC data, we have calculated the volume of households in fuel poverty. Our visual map uses red, amber, and green indicators to flag areas with the highest levels of fuel poverty, making it a valuable tool for quickly identifying regions most at risk.

To support your organisation in understanding this pressing issue, CACI is offering **free access*** to a ward-level database and an accompanying hotspot map.

If you want to understand more about this ground-breaking initiative, [view more information here](#).

*** This initiative is available for six months to Public Sector organisations only.**

How Reigate & Banstead is transforming key resident services



Reigate & Banstead Borough Council has placed the Unique Property Reference Number (UPRN) at the heart of a major transformation in how residents' access local services and information. By building a digital system anchored around individual properties, the council delivers fast, accurate, and personalised content—cutting through the complexity of traditional, map-based interfaces. The result is a service that's simpler for residents to use and far more scalable and sustainable for the council.

[Find out more here.](#)

Does your organisation have a Residents' Panel?



Norfolk
County Council

I look after the Residents' Panel at Norfolk County Council and I'm currently carrying out an 'audit' to see what is and isn't working and how we can make better use of the panel. Like many other organisations, resources and budgets are limited, but we are committed to providing real opportunities for residents to engage and play a part in local decision-making.

If your organisation has a Residents' Panel I'd love to hear from you. It would be an informal chat just to hear about how you run it, recruitment and retention of panel members, managing resources (newsletters, types of public engagement activities) and anything else you want to share.

Natasha Downes, Senior Communications Officer
(Engagement): natasha.downes@norfolk.co.uk

**Funding opportunity from NIHR RSS Specialist
Centre for Public Health – Public Health
Grassroots Awards**

Opportunity to apply for Public Health Grassroots
Awards funding (£5000)

The vision for the Public Health Grassroots Awards is to foster a culture of research within public health at the grassroots level, empowering more individuals to contribute to innovative and informed practices that improve public health and reduce inequalities.

By offering short-term, part-time funding, the award is focused on equipping individuals in public health with the research skills necessary to enhance their impact and contribute to evidence-based practices, with support from local and national infrastructure.

 [Webinar to support applications: 2pm on Tuesday 13 May](#)

 Closing date for applications: 5pm on Thursday 19 June

 <https://sites.google.com/view/nihrrssscph/local-authority-support-and-resources/public-health-grassroots-awards/funding-call-june-2025>

NIHR | Research
Support Service
Specialist Centre for Public Health
delivered by Newcastle University and Partners



Funding call for

**Public Health
Grassroots Awards**



The vision for the Public Health Grassroots Awards is to foster a culture of research within public health at the grassroots level, empowering more individuals to contribute to innovative and informed practices that improve public health and reduce inequalities.



Refreshed Concordat to Support Research Integrity launch, continuing to support the highest levels of research integrity across the UK.

The refreshed [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#) launched Friday 4th April, following detailed review and consultation across the sector by the Research Integrity Concordat Signatories (RICS) Group. Now hosted by the UK Committee on Research Integrity, the Concordat has provided a vital national framework and reference document for practice and governance of research integrity in the UK since 2012, and the review aimed to ensure that it retained its relevance and application in today's fast-moving environment.

Alongside the Concordat, you will find a document summarising the consultation undertaken and the changes that were made in response. The Concordat is being launched now, but organisations have until **April 2026** to comply with the new expectations, including those related to annual statements. Organisations are encouraged to use the existing [annual statement reporting template](#). Users of the Concordat will find that the basic structure and requirements of the Concordat are unchanged, structured around five commitments, the first of which sets out the core principles of:

honesty

rigour

transparency and open communication

care and respect

accountability

You can read more about the Concordat on the UK Committee on Research Integrity [website](#).

Courses, Training Events and Webinars

Workshop: Enhancing evidence use in Scottish local policymaking

A peer-learning and networking workshop for public, third and higher education sector professionals and researchers engaged in improving the use of evidence in local government



[Register here](#)

We are pleased to share that the [Local Area Research + Intelligence Association \(LARIA\) Scotland](#) is collaborating with [SPRE](#), the [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) Local](#), and the [Improvement Service](#), to host a peer-learning and networking workshop:

Enhancing evidence use in Scottish Local Policymaking 10:00-12:30 on Wednesday 11th June

This highly interactive event is designed to strengthen learning and connections across sectors and between professionals and researchers working to improve evidence use in Scottish local policymaking.

This includes officers, managers, analysts, researchers, and knowledge exchange and engagement professionals from the public, third and higher education sectors.

We will hear from a panel of experts sharing insights and examples of how evidence can support improved outcomes on some of the big, interconnected issues facing local government, including:

- Boosting productivity in city regions
- Public Service Reform
- Addressing racial bias and discrimination in AI and data

Further details are available via registration.



David Boyle
*Glasgow City Region
Intelligence Hub*



Dr Emma Miller
*Independent Consultant
& University of Strathclyde*



Dr Mark Wong
University of Glasgow



Gerard McCormack
Improvement Service

Unlock the Power of Place at the GeoPlace Annual Conference

If you're in local government and involved in service delivery, planning, digital transformation or data management, the GeoPlace Annual Conference is the event you won't want to miss. Taking place on 22nd May in London, this one-day, in-person event is free of charge for local authority officers.



Jointly owned by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Ordnance Survey, GeoPlace supports councils in using address and street data to deliver better services, make smarter decisions, and achieve real savings. The conference brings this work to life, offering practical examples, live case studies, and expert insight into how local authorities are using geospatial data to drive real change.

Discover how a smarter, joined-up approach to location data can:

- Boost efficiency and cut costs
- Improve customer satisfaction by resolving issues first time
- Break down silos and connect teams across your organisation

- Support everything from planning and school admissions to waste collection, emergency response, and housing

You'll hear from peers in local government, key figures in central government, the LGA, and even the Bank of England, exploring how data powers better decision-making at every level. The LGA will also shine a spotlight on local government's "Best Kept Secret"—the vital role of address and street Custodians.

Whether you're hands-on with geospatial data (or would like to be), driving transformation projects, or simply looking to understand how better data leads to better services, this event is packed with content tailored to your work.

Explore tools, ideas, and innovations in the accompanying exhibition, and connect with colleagues from across the country in a friendly, supportive environment.

[Find out more and register for free.](#) Join us to celebrate the people behind the data—and unlock the full potential of location in local government.

DCRN Community Conference

The Dementia Community Research Network (DCRN) is delighted to host their [first community conference](#)! We will have short presentations and plenty of information stall from community partners working in dementia support services and dementia researchers. There will also be music, refreshments and plenty of time for networking and finding out more how to get involved in dementia support and research.

The conference is open to anyone with an interest in dementia care, community groups, and dementia researchers from across South London.

Date: Monday 19th May

Time: 2:00pm – 4.30pm

Location: Stanstead Lodge, 260 Stanstead Road, SE23 1DD

To find out more details and register for the conference, please see the Eventbrite link: [DCRN Community Conference Tickets, Mon 19 May 2025 at 14:00 | Eventbrite](#)

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 22nd May.

Are you a Corporate or Full Corporate Member?

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 22nd May.

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