



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

LARIA Mini Newsletter January 2026

LARIA Updates

📌 **Big News from LARIA: Conference Registration & Award Applications Are Now Open**



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

Registration is now open for the LARIA One Day Conference - Local Evidence Matters: Understanding Need Through Research and Data.

On 25 March 2026 join the thinkers, doers, and data-driven changemakers shaping smarter decisions for our communities. Tickets are limited so book your place today!

[Book here.](#)

Local Evidence Matters: Understanding Need Through Research and Data will bring together leading researchers, analysts, and practitioners to explore how robust local evidence can drive better decision-making and improve outcomes for communities. In an era where data is abundant but actionable insights are scarce, this conference will emphasise the critical role of localised research in identifying needs, shaping policy, and delivering targeted interventions. By focusing on the nuances of local contexts, we aim to bridge the gap between national strategies and community realities.

Participants will engage in thought-provoking discussions, share innovative methodologies, and examine case studies that demonstrate the power of insight-driven approaches at a local level. Whether you are working in health, education, social care, or economic development, this conference will offer a unique opportunity to collaborate, learn, and contribute to a growing movement that values evidence as the foundation for meaningful change. Together, we will

explore how research and data can illuminate needs, inform priorities, and ultimately create stronger, more resilient local communities and neighbourhoods. Register today!

[Download Draft Conference Programme](#)

Tickets are priced at £80.00 for LARIA Members (Full Individual, Additional Corporate, Corporate and Full Corporate Members) and £100.00 for non-members and LARIA Associate Members. If you would like to join LARIA to benefit from the member rates, you can find information on the different memberships available on the website: [LARIA Membership benefits](#)

In Partnership with

CACI

Conference Supported by

**Local
Government
Association**

Courses, Training Events and Webinars

There's a new webinar in [this series](#). All events are free and open to all:

Use and misuse: Mental capacity, homelessness & multiple disadvantage

Wed 25 Mar 2026, 10 – 11.30am [Book here](#)

A reminder of the Feb event:

Dying Homeless Project 2024: Research, Remembrance & Resistance

Thu 12 Feb 2026, 10 – 11am [Book here](#)



Data on young people and education at the UK Data Service

28 January 2026, 13:00 – 14:00



This free webinar, organised by the UK Data Service, will offer an introduction to the secondary survey data available from the UK Data Service for researching young people and education. It

is aimed at anyone interested in learning about these data and will provide a starting point for those looking to begin research or teaching in this area.

The session will cover:

- An introduction to the UK Data Service, types of data and training resources.
- Key datasets for education research available at the UK Data Service: an overview of major UK studies, such as the Birth Cohort Studies and Next Steps, as well as some lesser known surveys.
- Finding relevant data: Guidance on common variables within these studies that measure educational outcomes, student well-being, and factors affecting educational trajectories. Also the potential for linking survey data with administrative records, such as school performance data or exam results.
- Access conditions: How to access microdata from the UK Data Service.

[More information and booking](#)

Using agent-based models as a simulation tool to generate synthetic data

18 February 2026, 14:00 – 16:00

This free online workshop, organised by the UK Data Service, explores the intersection of two computational social science ideas, synthetic data and agent-based models:

1. Synthetic data – which is generated data rather than observed data. This can be useful when balancing research needs with data availability or security.
2. Agent-based models (ABM) – which simulate interactions and can produce synthetic data for diverse or even counterfactual scenarios.

This workshop will cover:

- why create synthetic data using ABM
- when it would be appropriate to do so
- how to create the data using open source software NetLogo
- what the resulting data can be used for

We will be using [NetLogo](#) for the live software demonstration, which is an open-source programming language and integrated development environment for agent-based modelling.

Workshop details

The workshop is structured into four parts:

1. *Introduction to synthetic data*
What is and is not synthetic data? What is it good for? What are some common ways to generate it?
2. *Introduction to top-down versus bottom-up*
What do top-down and bottom-up mean? How do these relate to research problems and data generation methods?
3. *Introduction to agent-based models*
What are agent-based models? How do they work? What data do they generate? This part includes demonstrations of free and user-friendly agent-based modelling software.
4. *Q&A session*
Participants can engage directly with the content, ask questions related to the presentation or live coding demonstration, and get links to useful resources.

[More information and booking](#)

Crime Surveys User Conference 2026

11 March 2026, 10:00 - 16:00

Are you interested in research on crime? Do you want to know the latest developments in crime data from UK social surveys?

This free conference, organised by the UK Data Service in collaboration with the [Office for National Statistics](#), [Scottish Government](#) and [Home Office](#), will be held online on Wednesday 11 March 2026.

Attendees will hear a mixture of presentations from the data producers and researchers who have used data from the [Crime Survey for England and Wales](#), [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey](#), and more.

A detailed programme of presentations will be provided before the event.

[Book a place](#)

Using QGIS to map 2021/22 census data from the UK Data Service

Online

22 April 2026, 10:00 - 12:30

A table of numbers is not always the best way to present census data, often we want to visualise the information as a map to help people see patterns quickly.

This free online workshop, organised by the UK Data Service, will focus on the use of the free and open-source cross-platform QGIS GIS application to create maps and other geographical visualisations from 2021/22 census data provided by the UK Data Service (UKDS).

The session will include:

- An introduction to UK census data, the UK Data Service, and the different types of UK census data provided by the service.
- An exploration of the help resources available within UKDS to assist you with using census data.
- Demonstrations of how to download census data from UKDS.
- An introduction to maps and other forms of geographical data visualisation and a consideration of the common issues that need to be considered when applying geographical data visualisation to UK census data.
- An introduction to the QGIS GIS application and demonstrations of using QGIS to create geographical visualisations from UK census data.

The workshop will consist of short presentations followed by practical demonstrations of using resources provided by UKDS and manipulating census data using QGIS. There will also be time available for attendees to ask questions.

[More information and booking](#)

Can't make this date? The workshop will be [repeated on 15 July 2026](#).

You may also be interested in: [Mapping crime data in R: Interactive introduction](#)

[View all UK Data Service events](#)

Jobs

Organisation: Essex County Council

About the role

Senior Research and Evaluation Officer

Fixed Term, Full Time

£43,431 to £51,095 per annum

Location: Chelmsford

Working Style: [Anywhere worker](#)

Please note this vacancy is available as a fixed term contract or secondment opportunity for up to 12 months.

Application Deadline: 1 February 2026

Please see our job advert for more information: [Senior Research and Evaluation Officer – Working for Essex](#)

For more information or an informal conversation please contact Mike Williams, Intelligence Manager, via Mike.Williams@essex.gov.uk or 03330 134255.

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 19th February](#).

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

Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

The next newsletter submission deadline is [Thursday 19th February](#).

Copyright © 2025 LARIA, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this email because you opted in via our website.

Our mailing address is:

LARIA
Tower House
Mill Lane, Askham Bryan
York, North Yorkshire YO23 3FS
United Kingdom

[Add us to your address book](#)

Email - admin@laria.org.uk

Web - www.laria.org.uk

LinkedIn - <https://uk.linkedin.com/company/laria>

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

