



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

## LARIA Newsletter November 2025

### LARIA Updates

#### LARIA Membership Fees 2026

Thank you for supporting LARIA over the past twelve months. We are now looking forward to a busy 2026, including planning our One Day Event and next round of the LARIA Awards.



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

Although we were able to freeze membership fees for 2025, LARIA Council has decided to increase membership fees slightly from 1 January 2026. In addition to continuing to provide our core offer to members, including the LARIA Newsletter, access to the Knowledge Hub and annual LARIA Awards, this increase in fees will bring more opportunities for networking events as well as helping us continue to cover the increasing costs we face in running LARIA as a membership organisation.

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 2026 will be:

- Associate Membership – free
- Full Voting Individual Membership – £20
- Corporate Membership – £175
- Corporate + Full Voting Membership – £195

Thank you for your continued support for LARIA as we look ahead to 2026.

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## The Case for Transformation in Scotland

Hello and welcome to the latest LARIA newsletter. I'm Nick Cassidy and work at the Improvement Service, which is the organisation responsible for supporting local government in Scotland with improvement activities. I also co-chair LARIA in Scotland with Dave Blackbell (Scottish Policy and Research Exchange) and Erin Murray (Scottish Borders Council).

In this introduction, I wanted to give a quick update on some of the transformation work we are doing in Scotland and particularly the evidence that makes the case for this.

As we are all well aware, the past few years have been especially challenging for local government across the UK thanks to financial constraints and rising demand. As a response, a new [programme](#) of work across local government in Scotland was developed, which seeks to establish a new operating model for our councils. This year, the Scottish Government has also launched its own [Public Service Reform Strategy](#), with a similar set of commitments and recognition of the need and scale of reform required. Transformation is, then, high on the agenda.

Underpinning these pieces of work is a recognition that the current ways of working are not delivering. The evidence suggests that we literally can't afford not to change. As outlined in a [recent Improvement Service publication](#), Scottish public services face a worsening and potentially unsustainable financial situation, largely driven by poor health. Scotland already has the worst health inequalities in Western and Central Europe. Healthy life expectancy, the number of years a person can expect to live in good health, is lower now than in 2009, with males in the least deprived areas of Scotland expected to live 26 years longer in good health than those from the most deprived. This means a huge number of years will be spent in poor health, particularly for people from our most vulnerable communities. This will come at a cost for those who must live with the health consequences, but also for our public services who will support them. With an ageing population (not to mention climate change) this is only likely to get even worse.

Although the outlook is worrying, the transformation programmes set out by local and national government recognise that change is possible. We can improve our collective health by focusing on the social determinants that drive health outcomes. That means embedding preventative approaches that tackle the underlying causes of poor health. By shifting focus to prevention and early intervention, councils and other public service providers can reduce long-term costs and improve outcomes for communities. Scotland has made good progress in certain areas like reducing child poverty, but major inequalities and factors such as the ongoing cost of living crisis remain.

This work is important for LARIA, too. The focus on transformation means we need to strengthen our research, evaluation, and analysis capacity. If we are going to deliver the required change,

then we need to put evidence at the centre of our plans. Data-driven approaches need to be taken to deliver these changes and to measure their impact. LARIA helps by connecting researchers and analysts to best practice across the UK, ensuring we have the skills and capacity to support this work, but also making the case for the importance and value of what we do. As the transformation work proceeds, evidence and insights will, hopefully, be at its core.

2026 will be a year of elections across the UK. Here we have elections to the Scottish Parliament. The shape of the new Scottish Government will be an important factor in the future direction we take, but whoever is in power will need to understand and listen to evidence, and, ultimately, to deliver.

If you're interested in any of work around transformation, please get in [touch](#).

## News

### **Are you, or do you know, the lead for children's services data in your authority?**

The Local Government Association (LGA), in partnership with Coram, D2I, ICT Revolutions and Social Finance, is currently undertaking a data and digital maturity survey of councils for the Department for Education (DfE). This is

to inform the design of a new [Centre of Excellence](#) in data and digital for children's services. This is **an opportunity to influence** the design of the centre. If you're the lead, and haven't received a survey link, please contact [niamh.skelly@local.gov.uk](mailto:niamh.skelly@local.gov.uk) to request one. If you know the lead, please forward this item to them and encourage them to take part.



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### **Why UPRNs and data standards are central to the next generation National Land Information Service (NLIS)**

The next generation of the National Land Information Service (NLIS) is putting UPRNs and data standards at its core to create a trusted, consistent property data platform, important for property transactions including land charges.



[Find out more here.](#)

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**Indices of Deprivation update complete - LG Inform and LG Inform Plus**

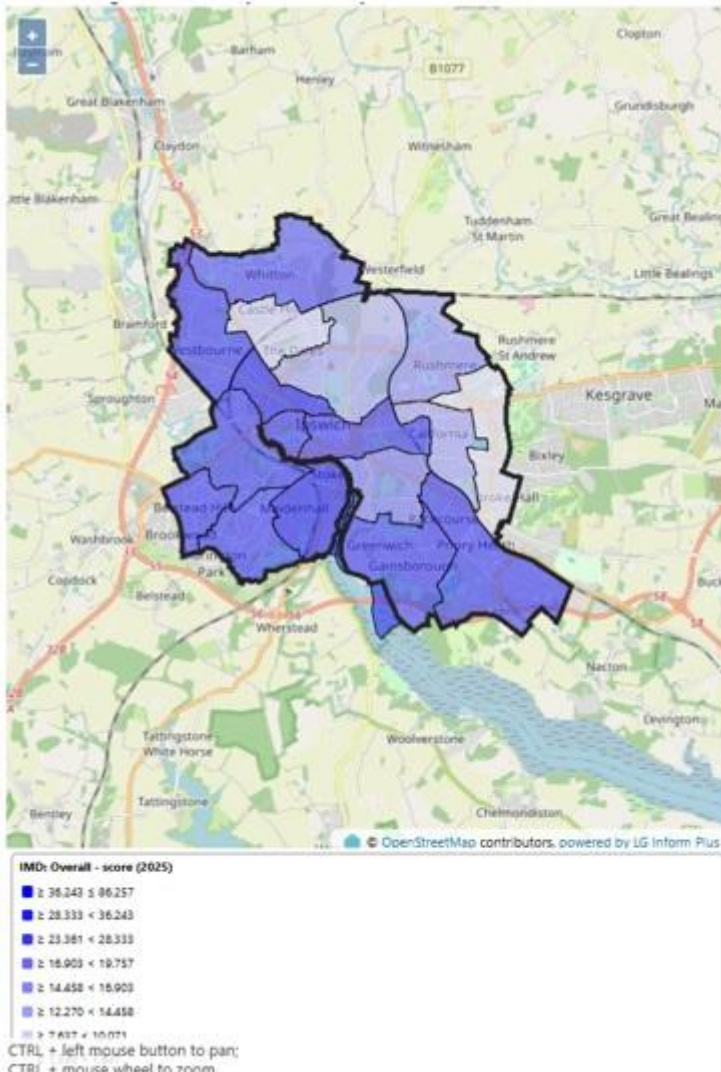


We are pleased to confirm our [full update of the Indices of Deprivation update is complete](#) - Two Indices of

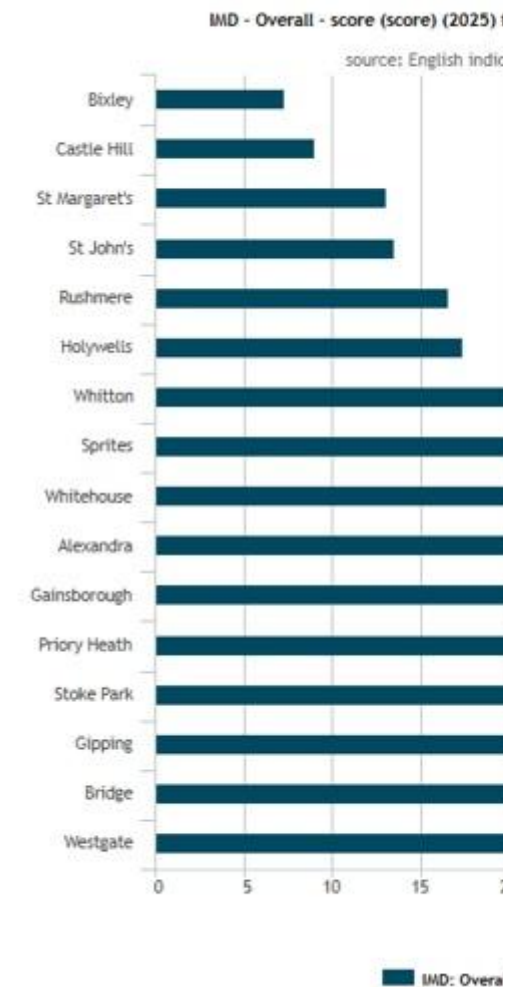
Deprivation LG Inform reports are available to all users for single tier and district comparisons:

- [Indices of Deprivation - LG Inform](#) and
- [Indices of Deprivation \(Part II\) - LG Inform](#)

All indices are now available in LG Inform Plus for subscribers. We have also produced this data for many other geographies such as wards, parliamentary constituencies and combined authorities.



Ipswich as a whole is ranked number 19 out of all 164



**NIHR RSS Specialist Centre for Public Health - [Public Health Grassroots Award, Round 2](#)**

Opportunity to apply for Public Health Grassroots Awards funding (up to £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-informed practices, with support from local and national infrastructure.

**NIHR RSS Specialist Centre for Public Health - [Public and community partnerships funding award](#)**

Opportunity for local authorities to apply for up to £10,000 to explore new and improved ways of involving people and communities in public health research. Funded projects will explore new or improved ways that local authorities can involve people and communities in public health research. The aim is that they will generate evidence and insights that can be shared with other local authorities to strengthen public health outcomes through inclusive research practices.

**NIHR RSS Specialist Centre for Public Health - [Local Authority Research Practitioners \(LARPs\) call, Round 5](#)**

Opportunity for local authorities to apply for £52,500 for 24 months (pro rata) or more to appoint a LARP.

Details in this round are slightly different to previous:

- the latest date a LARP can be recruited and in post is 30 June 2026
- the latest date SCPH can provide funding for a LARP is 30 June 2028
- submissions for this funding call open 1 September 2025 and can be submitted at any time. We are reviewing and providing outcomes on a rolling basis between 1 October and February 2026
- the earlier a local authority applies, and if they gain a successful outcome, the longer the funding period could be. e.g. if a successfully awarded local authority can recruit and have their LARP in post by 30 January 2026 -30 June 2028, and can match fund for the longer period, they can receive funding for 29 months instead of the original 24

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**PhD in Social Statistics**  
**University of Manchester**  
**2026-2029**

[www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/social-statistics/](http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/social-statistics/)



The University of Manchester

Applications are invited for a PhD in Social Statistics at the University of Manchester. The PhD can be focused on one of the following UK policy areas: **Ageing, Civic Engagement, Education,**

**Family Life and Communities, Governance and Policy Making, Housing, Lifelong Health, Migration and Population Change, Public Attitudes, Social Mobility, Work and Employment.**

This is an excellent opportunity for a highly motivated and qualified applicant to conduct social research using quantitative data and mixed methods. The successful applicant will be working in a vibrant community of PhD students in Social Statistics, Data Analytics, Biosocial Research and Sociology. They will be able to join in the research activities of the Department, such as seminars and research away-days. They will have an opportunity to teach and undertake professional development training during the PhD.

Candidates require a Master's degree (Merit level or higher). If you do not already have a Master's degree, it may be an option to apply to study for an MSc in Social Research Methods and Statistics first. [See more details here.](#)

PhD Funding: If you are accepted on to the PhD programme you will be supported to apply for funding to cover tuition fees and an annual maintenance stipend, but this will be a competitive process.

To apply for a PhD [please see details here.](#)

Choose - **Research Programmes: PhD Social Statistics**

Deadline: **16th December 2025.**

With your application, please upload: (1) a 1,500-word proposal outlining your research idea; (2) CV; (3) A 500-word statement outlining your motivation and qualifications, indicating why you would like to undertake a PhD and explaining how your experience and skills link to the proposed research; (4) your academic transcripts and (5) two references.

For informal enquires please contact [K. Purdam.](#)

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## Courses, Training Events and Webinars

**Upcoming webinar on data use in public health**, how analytics is used to improve population health outcomes, and how councils are using R and Sql in public health.

[20 November 2025 14:00-15:30](#)



**Upcoming webinar on accessible Power BI dashboards**, how councils have made dashboards more inclusive, and how to collaborate on improving Power BI accessibility.

[27 November 2025 10:00-11:00](#)

**Upcoming webinar on skills, recruitment, and retention in local government.** How councils launched recruitment campaigns, capabilities frameworks, and retaining data talent.

[11 December 2025 14:00-15:30](#)

**Upcoming webinar on data strategies**, how councils are developing data strategies, why they are important, and how to gain buy-in within the organisation.

[27 January 2026 13:00-14:30](#)

We also have a small number of masterclass sessions specifically for elected leaders and councillors. If you are aware of any members that would be interested in these sessions, please do pass these on.

**Upcoming data masterclass for elected leaders of the council.**

[13 January 2026 10:00-12:00](#)

**Upcoming performance and data training for councillors.**

[04 December 2025 10:00-12:30](#)

[15 January 2026 17:00-17:30](#)

[11 February 2026 14:00-14:30](#)

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### **Address data essentials: Why UPRNs matter**

This introductory webinar from ONS Local is designed for technical teams who manage, use or might want to use, or integrate address data. [Find out more here.](#)



### **The power of identifiers in an AI world**


AI thrives on high quality, clean, consistent, and well-structured data. Unique identifiers play a vital role in ensuring data accuracy, efficiency, and reliability. They provide a consistent way to distinguish records, connect related data across systems, and streamline access to information. [Find out more here.](#)


### **Why UPRNs and data standards are central to the next generation National Land Information Service (NLIS)**

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**Webinar: The benefits of evidence-based decision making**

 Thursday 4 December


 10 to 11am


Dr Susan Hampshaw explains and give examples of the benefits of evidence informed decision making and how evidence can be used to create policies that work best for the residents of a local authority.

**NIHR** | Research Support Service

Specialist Centre for Public Health  
delivered by Newcastle University and Partners


[Webinar: Designing ethical research](#)


 Thursday 11 December

 11am to 12 noon

Dr Deborah Harrison will outline key principles of ethical research including informed consent, confidentiality and avoidance of harm. Deborah is a Research Design Methodologist based in the NIHR RSS Specialist Centre for Public Health. Her background is in applied public services research, and she has worked with local authorities, VCSE organisations, social care providers, NHS and emergency services.

[Webinar: Research with the LGBTQ+ community](#)

 Thursday 18 December

 11:30am to 12:45pm

This webinar will offer support for public health researchers thinking about research involving the LGBTQ+ community, and offer guidance around building relationships and encouraging participation.

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The first 2026 event in [this series](#) is:

**Harm Reduction in women's homelessness services**

Wed 14 Jan 2026, 10 – 11am [Book here](#)

A reminder of December's event:

**Homeless applications: barriers to finding in-person help and the impact on hospitals**

Thu 11 Dec 2025, 10 – 11am [Book here](#)

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## Update on HSUG Webinar Programme

### Webinar on Healthcare Productivity – 13th November 2025

The Health Statistics Users Group (HSUG), in collaboration with the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) Official Statistics Section, held a webinar on 13 November to discuss the statistical approaches used for monitoring healthcare productivity.

Speakers were:

**Katherine Kent** – Public Service Productivity Lead at ONS, who presented ONS work on healthcare productivity, drawing on the Review of Public Sector Productivity that was published on 13th March 2025.

**Paul Healy** – Deputy Director of Efficiency and Productivity Insight at NHS England, who discussed the methodology and estimates for their trust productivity growth statistic, as well as more broadly the plans and analysis on NHS productivity.

**Ahmar Shah** – University of Edinburgh, who presented work and findings from the Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on elective care backlog trends, recovery efforts, and capacity needs to address backlogs in Scotland (2013–2023): a descriptive analysis and modelling study.

[See here.](#)

The presentations with links to further information, meeting report and recording of the webinar are available on the HSUG website (see link below)

### Webinar on Mortality Statistics - 11th December 2025 12:00 – 13:30

The Health Statistics Users Group (HSUG), in collaboration with the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) Official Statistics Section will be holding a webinar on mortality statistics on 11 December. The speakers at this webinar will give an overview of the breadth and scope of the mortality data their organisations publish. The webinar will address the comparability of the data across the four nations, as well as what has already been done and what is being planned to improve coherence.

[You can register for this webinar here.](#)

Please note that the webinar is free to RSS Fellows and e-student members. There are also a limited number of free places available to the HSUG community. If you would like to apply to HSUG for one of these free places, please email [info@hsug.org.uk](mailto:info@hsug.org.uk). There is a registration fee of £10 for other participants.

Speakers

**David Mais** (Office for National Statistics), England and Wales data

**Beth Watson**, (National Records of Scotland), Scotland data

**Rachel Giffen and Suzanne Toal**, (NI Statistics and Research Agency), Northern Ireland data

You can find further information about both these webinars and other HSUG activities by going to the [HSUG Community](#) on AnalystX within the Future NHS platform

HSUG also posts information on [StatsUserNetwork](#) in the Health and Social Care community.

If you have difficulty accessing either website please contact [webmaster@hsug.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@hsug.org.uk).

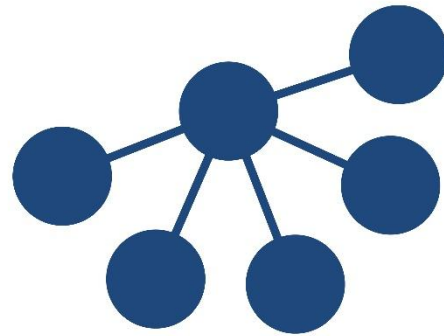
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## **The power of prevention: the economic and wellbeing impact of library activities for mental health and older adults**

Access the report here: [The power of prevention](#)

Webinar: Thursday 27th November 11-12

This report by Shared Intelligence and Moresight commissioned by the South East regional network of Libraries Connected used HM Treasury 'Green Book' methods to show that libraries deliver millions in value by supporting mental health and wellbeing. The activities included in this study were arts and crafts, volunteering and activities which alleviate loneliness.



Shared Intelligence

The data collected as part of this study, from a sample of activities across 12 of the 21 library services in South East England, puts the financial value of social benefits at between £1,746,069 and £1,877,959 per year. If every library service in the South East region was able to collect data across all of their users of these activities, then we would be able to see the true annual value and it would be many times greater. This research had unprecedented hands-on support from DCMS officials and is based on real data relating to actual library users as opposed to estimated or modelled data.

This research has produced a replicable process and toolkit that will enable any library service to use their own data to demonstrate economic value in the same way.

Join the webinar through the [Libraries Connected Website](#) or by getting in touch with [chad.bentley@librariesconnected.org.uk](mailto:chad.bentley@librariesconnected.org.uk)

Join the community of practice which is open to anyone working in public libraries by getting in touch with [chad.bentley@librariesconnected.org.uk](mailto:chad.bentley@librariesconnected.org.uk) who will sign you up.

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## Jobs

### Business Intelligence Analyst – Community Safety

Employer: [Warwickshire County Council](#)

Location: Warwick, Warwickshire

Salary: £39,152 to £41,772 per annum

Closing date: 27 Nov 2025

Reference: RA0007274

Permanent

Full-time – 37 hours per week

Location: Primary base in Shire Hall (Warwick), 1 to 2 days per week, remaining days working at home with a requirement to work a day from Police Headquarters Leek Wootton 2-4 times per month (to be agreed)

[For further information please see here](#)



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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 18th December](#).

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### 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](mailto:admin@laria.org.uk).

The next newsletter submission deadline is [Thursday 18th December](#).

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