



Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

## LARIA 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**

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## News

**What 2025 taught us about data in local government — and what's next?**



**Insights from CACI, Snowflake and AWS' Local Government Immersion Day: available now!**

Hi there,

In November, CACI, Snowflake and AWS brought together local government organisations from across the UK for a Local Government Immersion Day - focused on how strong data foundations and accessible data can help local authorities meet rising complexity and growing demand.

Local government leaders from Manchester and Coventry City Councils shared how they are:

- Democratising data across departments
- Building data foundations ready for AI
- Using real-time insights to improve service delivery

### **How CACI can help you on your Snowflake journey**

As a Snowflake partner, we help local authorities unlock the full potential of their data - setting it up, supporting activation on the Snowflake platform, enriching it with insights, and ensuring it's easily accessible.

To make getting started simple, we're currently working with Snowflake to offer a Starter Pack with implementation and strategic support from CACI. If you'd like to learn more, I'd be happy to help.

[Access the sessions today](#)

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### **Adopting a strategic approach to data – Cornwall Council**



Cornwall Council adopted a strategic, organisation-wide approach to data management to break down silos and improve decision-making.

A major step was creating a single view of property by using UPRNs drawn from its LLPG, covering every property in Cornwall, not just those owned by the council. This definitive property dataset was built by combining information from multiple sources and helps eliminate duplication and inconsistency.

The improved data foundation supports better operational planning and enables targeted service interventions across the council.

[Read more here.](#)

### **A data driven approach to housing and homelessness: Reigate & Banstead Borough Council**

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council transformed its housing and homelessness service by adopting a data-driven approach that uses UPRNs to join up and visualise property and housing data.

By linking UPRNs across datasets, the council could map all social housing properties — including details like bedroom numbers, accessibility features, and restrictions — giving a clear, comprehensive view of the housing stock.

This improved data sharing with Registered Providers and supported more transparent decision-making, strategic planning, and efficient allocation of properties, helping the council better meet local housing needs.

[Read more here.](#)

## How UPRNs can help improve housing safety, quality and sustainability

The housing safety and quality system in England is complex, with data spread across many organisations and legislation, making it hard to get a complete picture of a property's history.

UPRNs offer a simple but powerful solution: a consistent, unchanging identifier for every property that links inspections, compliance, complaints and other data back to the right place.

Find out more in our recent blog on how consistent UPRN use helps reduce fragmentation, improve safety, increase transparency and strengthen accountability across the housing system: [How UPRNs can help improve housing safety, quality and sustainability.](#)

## UPRNs in practice: accessing, using and applying address data

If you're interested in the use of UPRNs in the case studies above, you might like to review two recent webinars that GeoPlace and Ordnance Survey ran with ONS Local. These were aimed at helping local authorities make good use of UPRNs:

- [UPRNs in practice: accessing, using and applying address data](#)
- Why UPRNs matter - [Address data essentials: Why UPRNs matter](#)

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## MSc in Social Research Methods and Statistics (FT/PT) at the University of Manchester 2026-2027

<https://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/social-statistics/>

The MSc in Social Research Methods and Statistics provides a firm grounding in advanced quantitative methods, taught within an applied framework. The programme is designed to be accessible to people without a statistical background. It includes training in: survey design, how to analyse data and how to use statistical analysis software such as R, SPSS and Stata.



The University of Manchester

The MSc modules are taught with an emphasis on hands-on training in the application of methods and software to real-life social questions. Modules include: **Statistical Foundations, Introduction to Statistical Modelling, Survey Research Methods, Advanced Demographic Analysis, Social Network Analysis and Longitudinal Data Analysis.** The MSc includes a series of pre-sessional training workshops.

The MSc is available full-time over one year or part-time over two years as well as Postgraduate Diploma route (course work without dissertation).

[www.manchester.ac.uk/study/masters/courses/list/07982/msc-social-research-methods-and-statistics/](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/study/masters/courses/list/07982/msc-social-research-methods-and-statistics/)

Two additional pathways are also available:

[MSc Social Research Methods and Statistics with Demography](#)

[MSc Social Research Methods and Statistics with Computational Social Science](#)

The MSc offers relevant and marketable skills for a career in research and is recognised for PhD training by the Economic and Social Research Council.

Advanced skills in data analysis and research are at the heart of social research, policy making across government and consultancy. Graduates of the MSc are in a good position to develop their careers in government, the academic sector, local government and within the commercial research sector. Many SRMS MSc graduates often go on to study for a PhD.

#### **How to apply:**

[Please apply on-line here.](#)

For informal enquiries please email the [pg-soss@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:pg-soss@manchester.ac.uk)

or Dr. K. Purdam

Email: [kingsley.purdam@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:kingsley.purdam@manchester.ac.uk)

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#### **New adult social care funding scheme launched**

The NIHR School for Social Care Research (SSCR) has launched a new Practice Evaluation Scheme. This scheme will give adult social care practitioners the opportunity to lead research projects.

Through the scheme, practitioners from a range of organisations can work alongside experienced researchers. This will help them to tackle real-world challenges and generate evidence that improves services.

Grants of between £75,000 and £100,000 are available to support practitioners and their organisations. These will help deliver projects that are co-produced with academic partners.



Find out more and [apply via the NIHR SSCR website](#) by 5pm on Friday 13 February.

### Commissioning prevention work

Commissioners may be interested in how preventive work undertaken in day centres often falls under the radar as a systemic contribution to the preventive agenda within health and social care. Read the article on stakeholders' views in the [International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Wellbeing](#) or the [blog introducing it](#). We identified perceived strengths and opportunities at all three levels of prevention - primary (prevent), secondary (reduce) and tertiary (maintain). There were also systemic opportunities, such as more joined-up working.

Those wanting to find out more could peruse the [Day Centre Resources Hub](#) which summarises and links to the wider research evidence about day centres (see the research evidence section).

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## 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](#)

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### 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](#)

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### **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](#)

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## **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](#)

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## 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](#)

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# 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](mailto:Mike.Williams@essex.gov.uk) or 03330 134255.

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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 19th February](#).

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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 logo for Laria, with the word "Laria" in a large, bold, teal font.

Local Area Research + Intelligence Association

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

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