



Laria News

supporting local researchers in the public sector

Contents

Contents	Page
From the Chair - Andy Davis	1
Research and Corporate Information Management at Scottish Borders Council	2
2007 Census Test	4
2011 Census Output	6
Updating the Indices of Deprivation 2004	7
Migration Special	8
Town and Gown - Students in the Working-Age Population	12
Health Profiles for Local Authorities in England	14
Job Opportunity	16
Performance Management of Councils' Waste Services	17
Getting to the Knowledge behind the Numbers in Newham	18
Improving Services and Support for People with Dementia	20
Bristol's Viewfinder - The Future of Consultation?	21
Learning to Love Local Activists	23
A New Way to Evaluate User Satisfaction Levels	25
Public Service Workforce - Recruitment and Retention	26
LARIA in Scotland	27
ALGIS in LARIA Update	29
R & I News	30
LARIA People	33
Noticeboard	35
LARIA Excellence in Research Award 2007	36
Guide for Contributors	37
Next Issue	37
Just the Job	37

This edition was produced by Anne Cunningham, Alan Holcroft, Spencer Payne, Graham Smith, Richard Stevens, Joy Thompson, Mike Towers, John Wicks.

From the Chair

Hello, and welcome to this edition of LariaNews.

Well, it's certainly been a busy few months!

One of the LARIA events that took place over the summer that I was able to attend was the LARIA in Scotland 'New Start' meeting.

LARIA in Scotland (LiS) promotes public sector research in Scotland and represents the interests of our Scottish members. Although the group hadn't met for a little while, there was a recognition that it should reconvene to get itself up and running again, attract new members, and pick up on the emerging issues for the public sector research community in Scotland.

In organising the meeting we anticipated that maybe a handful of researchers would be interested in attending. However, we had such a high level of initial interest that we needed to book a bigger room at Edinburgh City Council, and on the day even our larger meeting room was full.

Issues that were identified as key to public sector research and researchers in Scotland included: Job evaluation; Performance management; Shared services; Customer satisfaction; Ethics in research; New technology; Multi-agency research and intelligence; Training for researchers; Skills and competencies; Funding for research; Changing role of the researcher in local government; Balance between qualitative and quantitative research; and a range of other topics.

Although these are issues that are familiar to us generally in local research across the UK, it was extremely interesting to hear how these issues impact specifically on the research community in Scotland.

There was also plenty of good discussion on what LiS could and should be doing to help researchers in Scotland. An outcome of the 'New Start' meeting was an agreement for LiS to meet again during September to agree how the group operates in the future, and to start working on an Action Plan of issues for the group to tackle. There is clearly no shortage of things for LiS to get to grips with.



Andy Davis

Later in July came the publication of the government's *Review of sub-national economic development and regeneration* in England. Although a range of proposals in the document are still to be clarified, there are a number that will have an impact on public sector researchers and their work.

For me, three aspects (among many) stood out initially as being of particular interest. Firstly, the establishment of the new centre for spatial economic research, envisaged to be operational in 2008, and part of the wider package of improvements to the economic evidence base.

Secondly, the development of single regional strategies to cover the economic, social and environmental objectives for each region, where there will be some impact for those of us that have been involved with the monitoring activities of the current separate Regional Spatial Strategies, Regional Economic Strategies, etc.

Thirdly, the proposed requirement for upper tier local authorities to take the lead in producing an assessment of economic challenges in local areas, in partnership with a range of stakeholders. Whilst many local authorities do this already, it will be the scope, scale, coverage, and range of partners which is likely to prove fundamentally different.

Certainly the focus on greater evidence-based policy making in the sub-national review is welcomed. But with plenty of detail still to come around the working arrangements for many of the proposals, it's clearly one to watch.

See you next time.

Andy Davis

Research and Corporate Information Management at Scottish Borders Council

By Heidi Goodship

Introduction

Scottish Borders Council (SBC) is a Scottish Unitary Authority which covers a large rural area of southeast Scotland. In 2006, it had a population of 110,240 in an area of 4,703 square kilometres, giving it the third-lowest population density in mainland Scotland after the Highland Council area and Argyll and Bute.

Half of the population lives in the main towns of Hawick, Galashiels, Peebles, Kelso, Selkirk and Jedburgh. The region has good road links to Edinburgh, particularly in the central Borders, on the east coast (A1 corridor) and north of Peebles, which makes it an increasingly popular place to live. The rural towns and villages in the Scottish Borders are associated with a high quality of natural environment and a strong sense of community. Many of the settlements enjoy unique Common Riding or Civic Week festivities during the summer months, in which the whole community takes part.

The challenge for Scottish Borders Council is to meet the needs of the diverse communities over this large area. SBC's strategic objectives are spearheaded by the Business Improvement Unit (BIU), within the Chief Executive's department. Particular objectives of the BIU that are within the scope of this article include the following:

- to deliver well-researched and informed policy direction in a number of strategic areas;
- to promote consistent policy direction and practice across Council service portfolios and with our partners' policies;
- to encourage information sharing within the Council and with our partners.

Part of the function of the BIU involves corporate research, for example: commissioning and administering the household survey and people's panel, and creating area profiles and the social atlas. Departments also have their own information and research functions, for example the Strategic Housing section within Social Work commissioning a Local Housing Assessment.

Corporate Information Management Framework

In order to meet the BIU's requirements, a Corporate Information Management Framework (CIMF) was

approved for use in the Council in 2006. This was a significant milestone because the CIMF's existence serves as a mandate to a range of projects with the central objective of improving the way information and knowledge is managed and processed in Scottish Borders Council. This article will focus on the products, projects and successes that continue to come from the benefits of having a Corporate Information Management Framework in place. Here are just a few examples.

Corporate Information Management Group

The Corporate Information Management Group (CIMG) was set up as a working group to develop the aims of the CIMF, to share best practice and provide a conduit for sharing R&I skills, in line with the BIU's objective to ensure consistent R&I and policy development across all the services.



The photograph shows selected members of Scottish Borders Council Corporate Information Management Group, from left to right:

James Chiles (Business Performance Officer, Social Work), **Laura Hill** (Research Officer, Planning & Economic Development), **Duncan Nisbet** (Business Support Manager, I.T.), **Clare Malster** (Community Engagement Officer, Chief Executive's), **Joy Snape** (Assistant Adviser, Education & Lifelong Learning), **Heidi Goodship** (Research & Information Officer, Chief Executive's), **Aziza Taylor, Neil Cameron**, (Account Managers, I.T.) **Erin Murray** (Research & Policy Analyst, Chief Executive's) and **Alison Clifton** (Personal Assistant, Planning & Economic Department).

Because the information and research function is devolved throughout Council departments, the CIMG is an important forum that brings officers together to discuss current projects, and, if necessary, to work together to achieve results for the benefit of the Council. Crucially, therefore, the CIMG has representation across a range of service areas. The

Research and Corporate Information Management at Scottish Borders Council cont...

CIMG meets once every two months, and can call extra meetings to discuss particular topics, for example when a corporate response was required recently for the 2011 Census Consultation. The CIMG is chaired by the Head of the Business Improvement Unit (BIU), demonstrating continued commitment at a senior level.

Community Engagement

SBC recognises that engagement with the community and with voluntary groups is vital in order to get service delivery right. The Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to listening to the Borders communities and sets out how this will be done, through a set of ground rules. The strategy also underlines the Scottish Borders Compact, which was produced by the New Ways Community Planning Partnership, and lists commitments made by public sector organisations to working with the voluntary and community sector. A Scottish Borders Council Household Survey was conducted in late 2006, in which a random sample of householders was questioned about their attitude to Council services and what improvements they would like. Over 4000 responses were received and will be used to improve services. This research demonstrates that SBC is listening and is responsive to its stakeholders.

Corporate Information Bank

The Corporate Information Bank project is in the process of being scoped out from the CIMF. Sometimes called a "Data Observatory" or "Data Library", this project will collect a stock of socio-economic data, small-area statistics, area profiles, maps and performance information in a way that makes them easy to access and to re-use. Many requests for information are for similar kinds of information; re-using information is essential to reducing duplication of effort. The host structure of the Corporate Information Bank will be sufficiently flexible to allow public access and ongoing addition of new data sources as they become available.

Social Atlas

The Social Atlas is a document that showcases the increasing range of small-area socio-economic statistics in the form of maps. It can be thought of as the "glossy front-end" of the Corporate Information Bank. Two editions of the Social Atlas have already been produced, showcasing variations within the Scottish Borders of a wide range of population,

social and economic information. A third edition is in the early stages of research. The statistics used in the Social Atlas are either already in the public domain, such as Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics, or datasets created by partnership working with Community Planning partners, for example the Community Safety Partnership. The Social Atlas adds value to these statistics by publishing them in an accessible map-based format, and is regarded as a useful tool by researchers, community leaders and policy-makers, as a means of identifying small areas where funding and assistance is most needed.

Transforming Children's Services (TCS)

In June 2006, the Council agreed to undertake a comprehensive review of all its services to children and young people as part of its Corporate Improvement Plan. The project involves portfolios across the council as well as key partners such as the Children's Reporter, Lothian & Borders Police and the voluntary sector. The BIU, with its commitment to delivering R&I for well-informed policy direction, was well-placed to help out with collecting some of the background data required for several of the work packages. Information on school rolls, current and historical population trends, and current and historical Council facilities, was analysed in ArcGIS, and matched with information from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. This information has been fed into the TCS and serves as an example of good practice and Best Value.

GIS and I.T. Support

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and I.T. are not officially included in the CIMF because they are part of a separate strategic framework which runs alongside it. However, GIS and flexible web-based solutions already play an integral support role in the CIMF, and this will become more important as more of the projects go online.

Further Information:

The Corporate Information Management Framework, the minutes from the Corporate Information Management Group, the two Social Atlases, the Community Engagement Strategy and other documents mentioned in this article are available from our website, www.scotborders.gov.uk, or on request from **Dr Heidi Goodship, R&I Analyst, Scottish Borders Council, Tel 01835 824000 x5831, email hgoodship@scotborders.gov.uk**

2007 Census Test: some early observations

In a Census double-bill, we bring you the ONS perspective on the 2007 Census Test, followed by a preview of possible mechanisms for distributing the 2011 Census data.

By Ian White

The Census Test took place in England and Wales on 13 May 2007 in five local authority areas: Bath and NE Somerset, Camden, Carmarthenshire, Liverpool and Stoke-on-Trent. The main aims of the Test were to evaluate the effect on response rates of including a question on income and the use of post-out to deliver questionnaires, and to assess the feasibility of some major innovations in operational procedures, such as the development of an address register and the outsourcing of field staff recruitment, training and pay. Half the sampled households received a form by post and half were enumerated traditionally. Half the households received a census form which included an income question, and the other half had a form without the question. Response to the Test was voluntary.

Fieldwork

The numbers of questionnaires delivered within each Test area were:

Bath and NE Somerset	9,749
Camden	30,273
Carmarthenshire	8,983
Liverpool	37,932
Stoke	14,859
Total	101,976

On the ground a temporary field force was recruited to carry out the work. Hays Specialist Recruitment were contracted to conduct the field recruitment, training and pay. Some 273 Delivery Enumerators and 284 Follow-up Enumerators across the five Test areas were required. The recruitment and training of the Delivery Enumerators was completed within the timetable, but recruitment of follow-up staff was harder than anticipated.

Systems and services

Various suppliers have been working closely with the ONS Census team to develop essential systems and services for the 2007 Census Test. This will ensure that they have a shared, detailed understanding of system requirements and will be able to proceed quickly with development of full systems and services

for the 2011 Census. ONS has shortlisted two suppliers, Lockheed Martin UK and T-Systems International, and each was awarded a contract to provide services for the 2007 Census Test. Following the Test, further performance evaluation of the two shortlisted suppliers will be carried out, and one supplier will be awarded the contract to design and deliver the 2009 Census Rehearsal and the 2011 Census.

An innovative operational intelligence (OI) system has been employed for the Test. This technology provided a form tracking system that linked questionnaires to addresses, enabling intelligence to be gathered through all delivery channels. The ability to track and relate questionnaire identity numbers to households allowed a greater degree of control over the whole process whilst providing more detailed information to make decisions. The OI system supported the operation of a number of teams, including the Contact Centre (CC) helpline.

Helpline

The helpline was set up in Milton Keynes and was functional between 23 April and 25 June. CC staff took details from households who had not received a form, updating address list information and the form tracking system in the process, and posting out uniquely referenced forms as necessary. There was a peak of calls on the first day that the posted-out forms were delivered and at the start of the follow-up phase. Census Customer Services at Titchfield took over from the CC on 26 June, after follow-up was completed on the 22 June, and remained open until the 6 July to deal with queries, requests for materials and 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

The CC answered a total of 2,271 enquiries during its lifespan (around 1,300 were forecast). The most frequently asked question related to whether or not the Test was compulsory. From the language help available, Cantonese translation booklets were the most frequently requested, the majority of these requests coming from residents in Liverpool. There were six requests for the large print format of the booklet, but no requests for the Braille version.

Follow-up

Follow-up activity commenced on the 23 May and extended to 22 June, during which period there were three attempts to contact households in order to maximise return rate of questionnaires. In Stoke-on-

2007 Census Test: some early observations cont...

Trent the timetable was extended beyond 22 June to allow for a complete third follow-up. By 12 July (when processing ceased) some 45,842 forms had been received.

A Census Evaluation Survey, which started on 1 June, re-interviewed a sample of both respondents and non-respondents to assess the quality of responses and reasons for non-response. Initially, a sample of 12 responding households in each of 87 EDs across all five Test LAs were interviewed, followed by a further sample of 8 responding and 4 non-responding households in a second tranche of interviews.

Test questions

In addition to the inclusion of a question on income (as noted above), the Test included a number of potential new questions to help provide information in drawing up the final selection. These included:

- national identity - to allow respondents to record their identity as English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, Irish or other;
- language - to collect information on proficiency in English, Welsh, British Sign Language and other languages;
- frequency of the use of the Welsh language in Wales;

- second address - to identify the number of people with a regular second address and the purpose and frequency of its use;
- month and year of entry into the UK - to collect extra information about international migration.

The final selection of questions for the 2011 Census - the range of which will be dependent on the adoption of a 3 or 4 pages-per-person questionnaire - will be made in the spring of 2008, and (as reported in LariaNews 83) will be announced in a Government White Paper in autumn 2008 and approved by Parliament towards the end of 2009/early 2010.

Further information about the 2007 Census Test is available on the National Statistics website at: <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census/2011Census/2011Project/2007test.asp>

A full report and evaluation of the Test is scheduled to be published in spring 2008.

For further details, please contact Ian White, ONS, at ian.white@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Get Heard



**Planning.... Research... Evaluation...
Mapping... Feasibility**

Get Heard is a consultancy organisation with a growing reputation for our work.

Why not see what we can do for you?

Free initial consultation.

**Contact Dr Gary Kitchen: 0845 643 1794,
gkitchen@getheard.org.uk**

View our portfolio: www.getheard.org.uk

2011 Census Output: possible mechanisms for data distribution

By Chris Ashford

This article describes two very similar suggestions for data distribution that are currently being put forward independently by users of Census data. The first arose at a workshop on 20 March 2007 attended by representatives of ONS, GROS, NISRA, and a selection of data distributors with long-term experience of managing Census data. The second was presented in April 2007 by Eurostat to an EU Task Force formed of representatives from Member States to consider options for providing future Census data to Eurostat.

At this stage no commitment is being made by the UK Census Offices. However, these suggestions will be taken into account in the analysis of user requirements, after wider and fuller consultation, and in the development of a strategy for output.

Background

Significant advances were made in the distribution of Census data from the 2001 UK Census. All three UK Census Offices established web-based systems that enabled data users to access a vast range of statistics and employ various mapping and analytical tools. In addition, a number of established data distributors were able to extend and enhance their services, systems and software to better meet the needs of their user communities. The period after the 2001 Census also saw an increase in the distribution of census data via the Internet by other organisations, particularly local authorities.

The UK Census Offices supplied all 2001 Census data on CD and DVD, and a large amount of this was provided in a format designed specifically for loading into database systems. However, users raised concerns that the format was not consistent across the three Census Offices, and data distributors who managed UK data had to reformat some data themselves.

The Registrars General for England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland have published an Agreement that states their intention to promote UK harmonisation in the 2011 UK Census, and to produce consistent and coherent outputs for the UK and for each component country.

Ideas from UK data distributors

The three UK Census Offices are therefore

considering ways in which 2011 Census data might best be made available to systems that distribute data to users.

It is important that the Census Offices understand the technical and cultural environment that is likely to exist when the 2011 Census data is released over the period 2012-2014 and subsequent years. No-one can know for certain but there are trends developing, particularly in the use of the Internet, that are likely to strengthen in the next few years.

A workshop was therefore conducted in March 2007, to establish basic principles for the supply of data to organisations intending to distribute it through their own systems. This brought together the UK Census Offices with a number of distributors of Census data to discuss, without prejudice or commitment, how 2011 Census data might be accessed and used by the different user communities. The meeting provided an opportunity to share thoughts about future dissemination and identify the issues involved in developing an efficient and cost effective delivery of 2011 Census data.

The workshop concluded that 2011 Census dissemination should make significant use of the Internet, as at present, but that the development of new systems would most likely rely on open source approaches that share software and applications. This would require data to be supplied from the Census Offices in a format that is compatible with a range of software. It was suggested that the Internet practice of providing live data feeds could be used allowing all data to be stored at the three Census Offices and avoiding the need for distribution on physical media.

There was much support for the development of prototypes and pilots using 2001 Census data, and the three UK Census Offices will be considering how best to be involved in such projects, taking cognisance of available resources. Some data distributors are carrying out further discussion and investigations and will be contacting the Census Offices with their findings.

Eurostat proposal: a Census European Hub

ONS, GROS, and NISRA also operate within an European perspective, and there are a number of initiatives that may influence the eventual dissemination model used to supply 2011 UK Census data. One of these is the Census European Hub,

2011 Census Output: possible mechanisms for data distribution cont...

which could have a significant impact on the way in which the Census Offices meet their obligation to supply data to Eurostat. The initiative shares many features of the type of dissemination model discussed at the UK workshop.

The Census European Hub is a concept, developed by The Statistical Office of the European Community (Eurostat), of a new system to publish European Census data on the Eurostat website. Although the system is still conceptual, prototypes and pilots are planned to take place soon.

How the hub would work

Eurostat are proposing that each national statistics institute (NSI) creates a set of non-disclosive 'cubes' of data. These would be available for Eurostat to use as the base for their Census dissemination system. Each NSI would provide web access to their data according to standard processes, formats and technologies, and applying appropriate levels of statistical disclosure control.

Data providers would be able to make data available directly from their systems through a querying system managed by the hub, notifying the hub of any new sets of data and corresponding metadata. Users of the dissemination system would browse the hub to define a dataset of interest and receive the dataset

from the hub, the latter having retrieved the data from the appropriate NSIs.

Eurostat envisage the Census European Hub using standards set out by the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) initiative, launched in 2001 by Eurostat together with six other sponsors: the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the European Central Bank (ECB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) and the World Bank. The stated aim was to develop and implement standards and guidelines for a more efficient transmission and dissemination of statistics, including both data and metadata.

Eurostat are intending to start the development of the Census European Hub by involving three NSIs in a pilot phase throughout 2007 and 2008. A complete implementation is planned for late 2010.

For further details please contact Chris Ashford, ONS, at chris.ashford@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Updating the Indices of Deprivation 2004

Department for Communities and Local Government

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) announced in 2006 that it would be updating the Indices of Deprivation 2004 (ID 2004), with a view to publishing the new Index by the end of 2007.

The new Index (ID 2007) will largely be an update of the ID 2004, with few changes being introduced. This is being done to provide scope for comparability with the last Index and to allow users to track changes over time. Changes have been proposed only where indicators are no longer available or where the data is now very out-of-date (e.g. Census indicators) and new indicators are known to exist.

There will be no fundamental changes to the methodology or structure of the Index. This means that there will still be seven domains of deprivation (Income; Employment; Health and Disability; Education, Skills and Training; Barriers to Housing and Services; Living Environment and Crime). It is also expected that all 37 indicators will be retained but will be based on 2005 data.

In addition to publishing the updated Index, CLG is also hoping to publish an Index of Child Well-being and an Economic Deprivation Index, both at small area level. Together with the new ID 2007, these new Indices will provide local areas with a greater understanding of the patterns of deprivation at local level.

For further information, please contact Ros Lynch (email Roslyn.Lynch@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Migration Special

Migration is an issue high on the agenda for many public sector researchers, and was the topic of a well-attended LARIA seminar in May. Here we report on the day's proceedings, followed by expanded contributions from the Audit Commission, Wakefield Council and LGAR.

Migrant Workers – Local Authority Initiatives

Report of LARIA/LGA One-Day Seminar, 10th May 2007, London

The impact of migrant workers, primarily from Eastern Europe EU accession countries (A8), has become an issue for local government and other public service providers since 2004. In particular, the impact is largely being felt away from the main conurbations, in areas with less experience of managing services for in-migrant populations.

Staged by LARIA and chaired by **Crispin Moor** of the **Commission for Rural Communities**, this one-day seminar pulled together a range of speakers with direct experience of the issues involved. Over eight sessions, close on fifty delegates heard from speakers drawn from academia, a consultancy, the Audit Commission, local authorities and their partners.

Migrant Workers in the East Midlands Labour Market was the title of the opening session, presented by **Anne Green** of the **University of Warwick**. Setting the scene, Anne spoke of the large growth in economic migration since the turn of the Millennium. Whilst measurement is proving difficult due to significant data deficiencies and personal mobility, a three-fold increase in National Insurance Number (NINO) registrations over the last three years is nearly wholly attributable to A8 migrants, with significant impacts on the more rural areas of the region. The study shows that this has not led to a detrimental impact on wages levels but that there has been some displacement into unemployment of low-qualified UK-born workers. Overall, the study found that migrants play an important role in the regional economy in filling skill and labour shortages.

A focus on ***Slough Council's Community Cohesion Audit*** followed, given by **Rafiq Chohan** from the Council's Economic Development Team. Rafiq painted a picture of Slough as a prosperous



Rafiq Chohan

town, well used to hosting economic migrants for more than seventy years. With 4,500 businesses and over 80,000 jobs, Slough has attracted a large Polish community in addition to existing significant Indian and Pakistani communities. In-migration is being driven by the continuing prosperity of the town and its environs, and a broad

acceptance of diversity. The Council sets out to promote good community relations in a proactive way and has conducted large scale surveys as one way to keep in touch with migrants' needs and concerns. It appreciates that there is a balance to be struck between existing and new migrating communities in sustaining and managing community cohesion, and that stability is possible so long as the local economy remains buoyant.



Ian Richardson

The final session of the morning, ***Researching EU Migrants in Crewe***, was presented by **Ian Richardson**, a community development officer with **Crewe & Nantwich Borough Council**. Crewe was an early focus for A8 migrants, who now form a community of around 3,700.

The session raised several of the key concerns and issues arising from relatively large numbers of migrants arriving in areas previously unused to such influxes. Amongst these were the impact on health and education services, cultural differences in behaviour, and the need for translation services. The presentation concluded with an outline of the "Support for the Changing Community" project, which the Council had helped to set up in the Borough.

Following lunch, six of the speakers together with **Tim Allen** from **LGAR** as Chair provided a **Panel** to which follow-up questions on the morning sessions were put. These included points on:

- The treatment of migrant communities alongside those from existing BME groups;
- Need for clarification on the Workers Registration Scheme;

Migration Special cont...



Tim Allen with Matt Lund, Anne Green and Drasute Zaronaitė

- Obtaining better data and the lobbying role that LGAR could play;
- The value of using other data sources such as utility companies' data;
- The even greater impact of A8 migrants in the Irish Republic;
- Understanding how migrant workers make use of Jobcentre Plus;
- Establishing a common research agenda on migrant workers.



Ewan Kennedy

The afternoon presentations were kicked off by **Ewan Kennedy** from the **Norwich & Norfolk Racial Equality Council**, speaking about ***Migrant Workers in Norfolk and Their Demographic Profile***. The very large agriculture and horticulture sectors in Norfolk have attracted a significant influx of East European migrants, but the

County is not accustomed to large in-migration flows. Ewan described how a Demographic Profile had been compiled, to offset much of the dubious anecdotal 'evidence' in circulation. He discussed the criteria for data inclusion, and some of the difficulties and learning points encountered, including issues such as the adequacy of the Workers Registration Scheme, and the influence of university populations. The Profile had led to a better awareness of housing and education needs, community cohesion issues and distribution patterns, but to maximise these benefits it was important to develop methods for keeping it updated.

Drasute Zaronaitė continued the East of England perspective with a talk on: ***Sustainable***

Communities – the Dynamics of Migrant Labour in South Lincolnshire. She presented results from a survey of nearly 700 migrant workers, 100 labour users, 15 gang masters and a range of community members and supportive organisations in the Boston & South Lincolnshire area, where migrant workers constitute around 10% of the population. Some of the key issues arising were: lack of English language skills and the consequences for accessing information and rights; long hours of work and travelling to work; the dependency on agencies and gang masters for employment; poor skills match to available employment; and overcrowded accommodation and discrimination. The attitude of local people and community organisations was also explored, as well as their views on how migrant workers could be helped to integrate with the local community.

Sarah Quartermain from the **Audit Commission** gave an account of the main findings from the Commission's report ***Crossing Borders – Responding to the Local Challenges of Migrant Workers***. With the impact of migration from the A8 states unexpected in its speed and scale, the report demonstrates the major impact on local services. The problem of inadequate data sources was highlighted, often contributing to poor local intelligence and understanding of issues. This can lead to unsettled local communities and rising tension. In a related article below, Sarah provides some advice on sources of migration data and intelligence. Early recognition of cross-boundary, cross-service and cross-provider issues is very necessary to maintaining stable communities, as is engagement with migrant worker groups and the raising of accommodation and employment standards. Local authorities need to look out for examples of good practice and implement them locally.



Jane Callaghan

The final presentation of a packed day was jointly given by **Jane Callaghan** from **Wakefield Council**, and **Matt Lund** of **QA Research** on ***Developing the Wakefield BME and Economic Migrant Group***. Set up in response to a recognised gap in Wakefield's consultation strategy, this sub-panel conducts peer research with BME communities and economic migrants. Comparing the results with those

Migration Special cont...

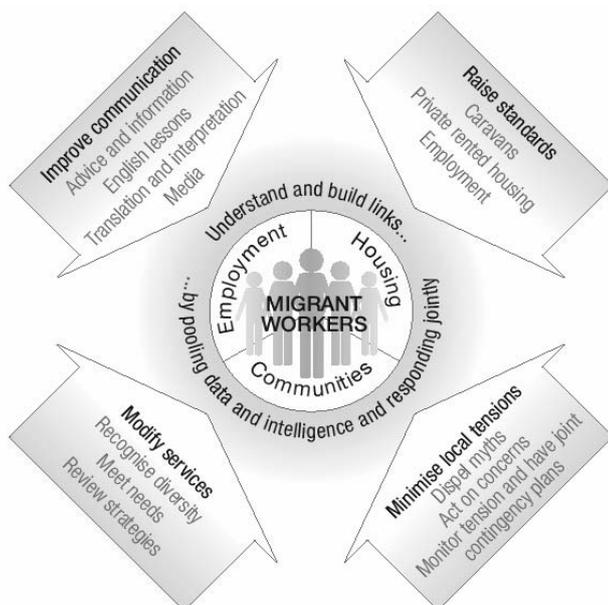
from the broad community shows up some interesting cultural differences, which are explored in more detail in the article below.

In summing up the day, **Crispin Moor** commented on the critical importance of local data collection in feeding intelligence on these emerging migrant communities, and the support needed by local service providers from national research and leadership.

Migrant worker data and information

By Sarah Quartermain, Audit Commission

This short summary is based on the talk given by Sarah Quartermain at the LARIA seminar. Slides are available on the LARIA website.



Collecting data and intelligence is the first step towards tackling local concerns

Many colleagues will know that national and local data on international migration does not give accurate comparative numbers on the number and make up of foreign nationals working and/or living in local authority areas. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is looking at ways of improving current estimates, but this is expected to take several years. The Greater London Authority and some other agencies are also involved in research on longer term alternatives.

Meanwhile local authorities need to know if and how their local population is changing, as this should inform their strategies and services. They can draw up a profile of local new arrivals and gain an idea of local numbers and local speed of change by pulling together available national and local sources, drawing on intelligence from a range of different partner agencies. Change can be rapid, so information and profiles should be updated regularly.

The Audit Commission website (www.auditcommission.gov.uk/migrantworkers) gives details of available national and local data and intelligence, and advice on how to build a picture of local change. The three key national datasets most people use are:

- foreign national insurance number (NINO) registrations;
- workers registration scheme (WRS) data; and
- pupil level annual school census data (PLASC).

For those who have not yet accessed local WRS data, this is available on the Local Government Analysis and Research (LGAR) website: tinyurl.com/3x2v7m

Early examples of how local authorities have used migration data and intelligence can be downloaded from our website. We are also interested in any examples you may want to send us of good local research activity in this area. If you have any queries, or would like to send in your own examples, please contact g-green@audit-commission.gov.uk.

Wakefield BME and Economic Migrant Sub Panel

By Jane Callaghan

Wakefield's BME and Economic Migrant Sub Panel was set up by Wakefield Council and the Wakefield District Partnership (WDP) to ensure that the views of residents from these backgrounds were being heard and used to help inform policies. The Sub Panel complements the work of both the Wakefield Citizens' Panel and WDP's BME engagement programme.

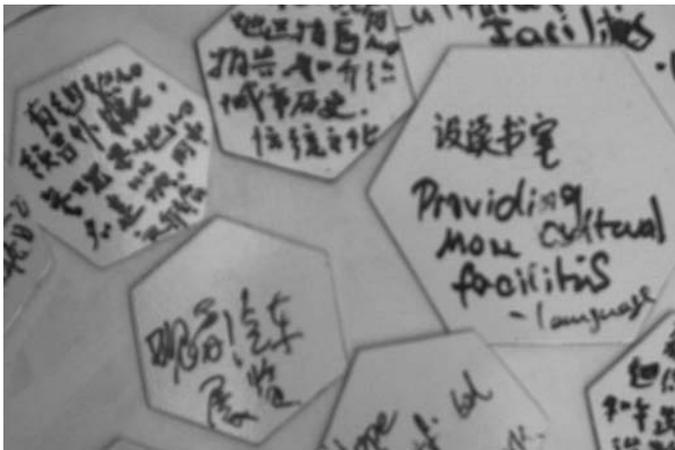
The Sub Panel was set up following discussion-based consultation with representatives from BME and

Migration Special cont...

economic migrant groups in the district who were keen on the idea of using peer researchers to gather views from their own community.

The peer researchers were fully trained by the Council's Communications and Marketing Team and QA Research. They use semi-structured questionnaires to carry out one-to-one interviews and small group discussions with residents from their own backgrounds, including the following groups:

- Mixed black
- Albanian
- Polish
- Black African
- Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese)
- Pakistani



Multilingual comments

Consultation takes place three times a year, with questions and issues based on the Citizens' Panel surveys. Findings from the consultations are discussed amongst all the peer researchers at joint feedback sessions, using interpreters where necessary. These findings are reported alongside those from the full Panel, both within the Council and across WDP. Feedback is provided to Sub Panel members via face-to-face briefings and a newsletter, detailing results and outcomes of previous consultation.

Recently the Sub Panel have been consulted about culture within the district. Findings showed that each of the groups had different views on what culture was. For example, Albanian and Polish residents are more likely to view sports and spending time in bars and clubs as part of their culture. In contrast both



Members of the Sub Panel during a feedback session

Mandarin and Cantonese residents do not agree that bars and clubs form part of the district's culture and prefer to visit parks and public spaces. All groups were keen to share their own culture and learn about the cultures of others in the district.

The BME and Economic Migrant Sub Panel provides both the Council and Wakefield District Partnership with a valuable way of engaging with residents from these backgrounds, led by the insight of the community researchers themselves.

For more information on Wakefield's BME and Economic Migrant Sub Panel please contact Jane Callaghan, Citizen Consultation Officer, on 01924 305123 or email jcallaghan@wakefield.gov.uk

LGAR Migration Programme and Conferences

Local Government Analysis and Research (LGAR) has initiated a wide-ranging work programme on migration and the impacts of migration. We are working with experts in local government and beyond to develop a proposition for ensuring better local population estimates through a coherent national system. This will need to be capable of taking into account short-term changes such as that experienced recently through international migration.

We hosted a national conference on September 19th, with another scheduled for January 2008. The first, entitled 'Talking sense about migration and local

Migration Special cont...

population change', provided an opportunity to hear and debate findings from research on how to establish a better system for monitoring population change, and understand the impacts. The second will take a wider and longer view, including trends in international labour and population movements over the next twenty years or so. For more information visit: tinyurl.com/3ybrpu

We are also developing a web resource to signpost authorities to research and policy work in the field. An early resource list, including major initiatives on

Community Cohesion and the Equality Review, as well as specific policy and research work on migration, can be viewed at:

<http://www.lgar.local.gov.uk/lgv/aio/35288>.

For further information on LGAR's migration work programme, please contact Louise Dove on louise.dove@lgar.local.gov.uk

Town and Gown

– the effect of students in the working-age population

By Geoff Oxendale

Introduction

This article describes a piece of work originally undertaken as part of the City Strategy pilot in Greater Nottingham. The Strategy is a Department for Work and Pensions initiative aimed at identifying and reducing worklessness in the conurbation, particularly focussing on Incapacity Benefit claimants and people claiming Income Support for Lone Parents. However, given Nottingham's status as a university city, concentrations of students will have a large effect on the calculation of any rates using the working-age population.

Students are not expected to be in work and are not eligible for many of the benefits which were being monitored, but were still being included in the working-age population and reducing the rates. As the Census is now relatively out of date and there is no other source of the number of students in small areas, Nottingham City Council attempted to identify where university students were living, and to recalculate rates for certain relevant statistics, excluding students from the working-age population.

Method

The disaggregation of students was based on three main data sources: the 2004 ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates for Super Output Areas, an address list supplied by the University of Nottingham, and a postcode list supplied by Nottingham Trent University. After cleaning the list to ensure as many postcodes as possible were correct and usable, 30,469 students with postcodes in the NG postal area were identified. According to figures from HESA (the Higher Education Statistics Agency), this was approximately 75% of students enrolled at the two universities.

The students were then attributed to a Super Output Area using postcode lookup tables. As postcodes can cross SOA boundaries, there was a problem in that some students could be put in the wrong SOA. To minimise this, the number of students was cross-checked against the number of people aged 16-29 from the Mid-Year Estimates. This identified two SOAs where a student Hall of Residence had been attributed to the wrong SOA. The number of students in each Super Output Area could then be subtracted from the working-age population to give new population denominators.

Effects of Disaggregation

The majority of students at Nottingham's two universities live in the City of Nottingham, and the effect of removing students from the working-age population can be seen more clearly in the City than in Greater

Town and Gown cont...

Nottingham. The percentage of the working-age population in Greater Nottingham who are claiming one or more DWP benefits rises from 15.3% to 16.5% when students are eliminated from the denominator. In the City the increase is from 20.6% to 24.0%.

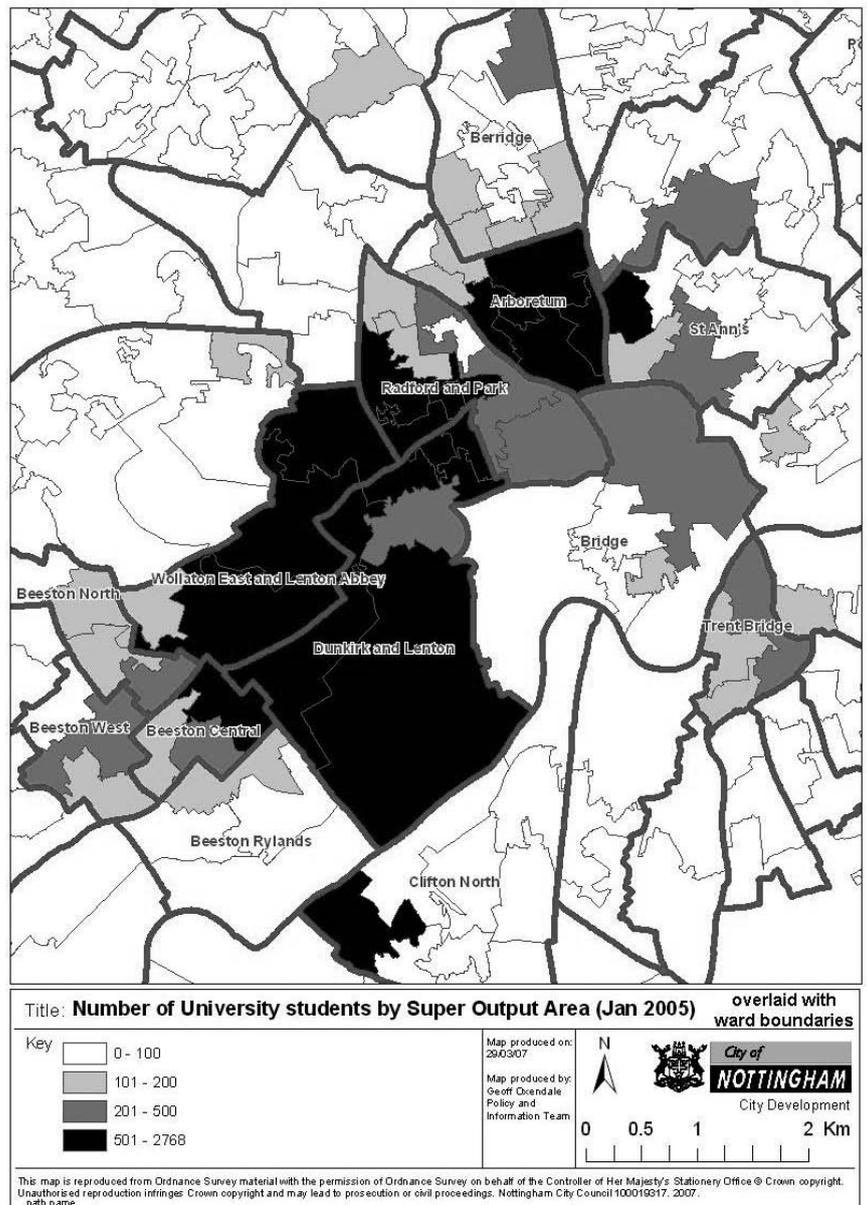
The increases become more significant at ward and Super Output Area level, as students are heavily concentrated in certain areas. At ward level, Wollaton East and Lenton Abbey ward, which contains the University of Nottingham's Halls of Residence, increased from 7.0% claiming at least one benefit to 22.4%. For small areas, 14 SOAs have increases of more than 10 percentage points once students are excluded from the figures. One SOA saw a rise from 46.6% to 70.7% of working-age people claiming at least one benefit.

Policy implications

The effect of removing students had two main effects on the City Strategy policies. Firstly, it identified some areas which had not previously been identified as possible priority areas for employment initiatives. The large numbers of students in these areas had masked the levels of benefit claimants amongst the non-student population, and without this exercise the area might not have been included in the City Strategy pilot. Secondly, it provided a more accurate picture of the overall scale of the problem to be addressed in Greater Nottingham.

For further information, please contact **Geoff Oxendale, Information and Research Officer, Policy and Information, Nottingham City Council** (E-mail: Geoff.oxendale@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

The full report *Labour Market Analysis (Excluding Students)* and a *Statistical Appendix* are available at: <http://tinyurl.com/35x6t3>



Health Profiles for Local Authorities in England

By Anne Cunningham

Introduction

The central role of local authorities and strategic partnerships in promoting the health of their communities is firmly established. However if their health strategies and interventions are to be based on solid evidence, local partners will require relevant data at county and district level in a user-friendly format. Official recognition that the lack of such data was hindering public health initiatives came in the 'Choosing Health' White Paper, and the proposed solution was to introduce annual local authority-based Health Profiles for England.

The task of producing the profiles was assigned to the Association of Public Health Observatories (APHO), which now covers the whole of the UK and Ireland, including the nine regional PHOs in England. The first profiles appeared in 2006, and the latest version was launched on 22nd June 2007.

All 386 profiles (for 34 counties and 352 local authority districts) can be found at www.communityhealthprofiles.info, along with downloadable data, a feedback form, user guide, and other background documents.

Aims and objectives

With a target audience of local authority members and officers, plus healthcare and public health professionals, the Health Profiles aim to:-

- provide a consistent, concise, comparable and balanced overview of the population's health that informs local needs assessment, policy, planning, performance management, surveillance and practice;
- be a distillate of the absolutely key, most useful (currently available) indicators;
- be primarily of use to joint efforts between local government and the health service to improve health and reduce health inequalities.



The need for 'consistent' and 'comparable' data does mean that some potentially excellent data sources such as local surveys cannot be utilised, but these are acknowledged where known about.

Guided tour

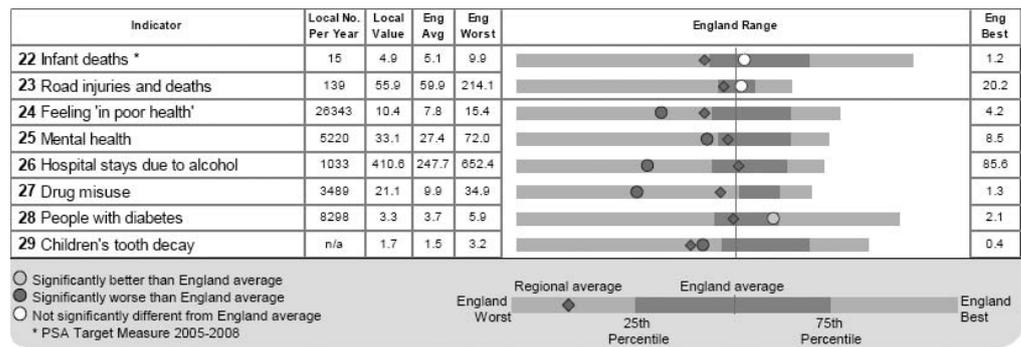
The front page of each profile provides a district or county map, and a bulleted summary of the main findings from later on in the document. Most summaries also include points contributed by the local council and PCT, such as information on socio-economic context, key strategies and interventions, or the existence of local surveys and other research.

Deprivation is known to be a key determinant of health, and each district profile contains two maps of income deprivation by Middle Super Output Area, one shaded according to national deprivation quintiles and one showing local quintiles. Beneath the second map is a chart depicting the relationship between life expectancy and deprivation quintile. For practical reasons, county profiles convey similar information using charts alone.

The upper half of Page 3 focuses on change over time, tracking the local rise or fall in life expectancy and in early death rates from major causes. The lower half examines the proportion of residents in each ethnic group who are in 'routine and manual' occupations, as this occupational group is known to suffer poorer than average health.

Health Profiles for Local Authorities in England cont...

The 'pièce de résistance' of the Health Profiles is the 'spine chart' on the back page, summarising a range of indicators. An excerpt from the chart is shown opposite.



This diagram lets the user compare each local indicator (circle) with the regional average (diamond), the England average (centre line), and the best and worst in the country (right and left extremes of grey bar). If the circle is shaded, the district value is significantly different from the England average.

Spreading the load

The challenge of producing 386 four-page profiles, packed with charts, maps and bullet points, was met in 2007 by delegating some tasks and centralising others. Reporting to a strategic Project Board, representatives from each PHO convened regularly to thrash out technical issues, ranging from the statistical niceties of confidence intervals to whether to include rivers on the maps.

Each PHO was responsible for advising on the best choice of indicator for several topics. Once agreed, the indicators were carved up between the nine PHOs for the data to be collated, and then sent to a different PHO for quality assurance. The same rigorous approach to QA was applied to every component of the profiles, and to the finished product as a whole.

The key bullet points on the front page are the only element tailor-made for the district or county in question, and for which local knowledge was a necessity. Each PHO therefore wrote the bullet points for all the profiles in their own region, with input from local councils, PCTs and other partners.

One thing the PHOs were happy to entrust to a central specialist team was the highly technical task of turning all the raw data and text into hundreds of precision-formatted maps, charts and profiles. The sheer size of this project, and the tight deadlines involved, necessitated the development of a dedicated computer tool to automate the process.

User involvement

Users are encouraged to submit their feedback and queries via the dedicated website (see above), or by contacting their regional PHO. Known contacts were also surveyed for comments and ideas a few months after the launch of Health Profiles 2006, so that lessons could be learnt for 2007, and were invited to join a User Panel which helped to refine the design and layout. The User Panel is about to be consulted again as work gets under way on Health Profiles 2008.

Looking ahead

Updating the Health Profiles is a delicate balance between continuously improving the product and maintaining consistency from year to year. It is intended that the main focus of innovation in Health Profiles 2008 will be the website rather than the profiles themselves. By next summer, users can expect to find a much more interactive interface, giving access to an expanded range of supporting data and evidence. An external evaluation will also have taken place by then, to inform the direction of Health Profiles 2009 and beyond.

Health information for local authorities has always been thin on the ground, and the PHOs cannot remedy this situation overnight. However, they are becoming increasingly adept at finding ways round this problem, such as by apportioning results from one geography to another. As the Health Profiles become more firmly established, it may be hoped that by their very existence they will influence increasing numbers of data providers to observe local authority boundaries in the future.

For further information please visit the www.communityhealthprofiles.info website. If you have any queries, or would like to join the User Panel helping to shape Health Profiles 2008, please contact Anne Cunningham at the Yorkshire and Humber Public Health Observatory (tel 01904 724488, email larianews@aecmail.plus.com)

Job Opportunity

LARIA Administrator

**Do you want part-time work,
are you retired, semi-retired,
about to retire,
or know someone who is?**

Graham Smith, LARIA's administrator, is retiring in March 2008 and LARIA wants to appoint a highly organised and professional replacement. The role involves administering LARIA's membership system, booking delegates on events, managing and distributing LARIA's publications, dealing with queries about the organisation and some financial management.

The administrator is responsible to the LARIA Admin and Policy Group, which will steer your work. This can involve liaising with the officers and council members of LARIA, attending meetings, preparing reports, managing databases and spreadsheets, and general administration and clerical work. The role also involves providing administration support to ALGIS (Affiliation of Local Government Information Specialists), an autonomous group affiliated to LARIA.

Currently the role is undertaken on a self-employment basis and the rate of pay is £10.70 per hour (revised annually). LARIA would like to continue it on this basis. The Administrator can expect to earn about £5000 per year. On average this relates to about 9 -10 hours per week, although the work tends to be more heavily concentrated in the winter months. Appropriate travelling and other expenses are also payable. The Administrator will be expected to attend day events and the LARIA conference. Graham's assistance will be available during a handover period.

This is a good opportunity for a flexible, adaptable and responsive organiser. You should have strong IT skills and be a good communicator. It would be desirable for applicants to be familiar with local government and have a range of contacts in public sector organisations, though this is not essential. It would also be useful if you were able to work flexible hours.

If you would like an informal discussion then please telephone Graham Smith, the current LARIA Administrator, on 01642 316576. A full job description can also be obtained from Graham at lariaoffice@aol.com. To apply, your application letter should be sent to Graham at 9 Cortland Road, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough, TS7 0JX by 7th November 2007.

LARIA, being committed to Equality of Opportunity, welcomes applications from all sections of the community.

Performance Management of Councils' Waste Services – Theory and Practice

By Dr Tim Walker

The author undertook research over a number of years examining the impact of Best Value and performance management upon councils' waste services. Using five case studies, the research examined how these waste services were managing change, and found that their service delivery reflected differing aspects of the theory of operations management.

Readers will be aware that performance management has been getting increased airplay in the public sector over the past few years. This article describes an extended piece of practitioner research investigating (i) whether Best Value and performance management had introduced culture change within councils' waste services, and (ii) if so, whether they had used performance management frameworks to structure this change.

Setting the scene

Initially, considerable Best Value guidance was issued by Government and other agencies, such as the IDeA. In order to get a handle on what was being recommended, the research project commenced with a substantial literature review, looking at aspects such as the Local Government Modernisation Agenda (LGMA), performance management frameworks and tools (such as the Balanced Scorecard and Investors in People), and barriers and enablers. In the waste management context, it explored the driving force of the EC Landfill Directive and its regime of restrictions and possible fines.

It was clear that strong, consistent leadership would be needed to address all these challenges, and that behaviour change could be expected within councils and their waste services.

Case Studies

Once completed, the review informed a conceptual model, which was then applied to five UK case studies (comprising four English 'Beacon' Councils plus Belfast), and subsequently refined. Amongst the findings was that councils' waste services were focusing explicitly upon the requirements of the Landfill Directive, to the virtual exclusion of many other Government initiatives. The cases chosen appeared to be out-performing other councils' waste services, largely down to their hands-on leadership approach.

Single-issue focus

Generally, Government has been promoting a performance management perspective of "what gets measured, gets done." Donnelly and Mackenzie (1998) commented upon the LGMA and the tensions it had created between councils and Government over differing priorities and outlooks. They also highlighted that Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) was forcing councils to consider how to "do less, better", and there was "now a noticeable trend of councils retreating into their statutory shells, focusing on what is required by statute, being less creative...".

Whole-systems approach

The contrary 'whole-systems' school of operations management seeks to embed operations within corporate strategy, bringing them under a corporate performance management framework which is informed using a bottom-up approach.

In the cases studied, waste services had risen up the corporate agenda as a direct result of the emphasis upon national and international legislative compliance, but managers had yet to expand their horizons beyond the specific requirements of their own service. However the elevated priority now accorded to waste means that in the longer term, a more holistic approach to waste management may evolve, with greater corporate engagement and understanding at all levels.

Conclusions

Two opposing philosophies of performance management are both illustrated by the case studies in this piece of research. There is a possible emergent conflict here between councils' aspirations for a corporate performance management framework, and their waste services' focus upon avoiding fines in the face of rising standards and expectations.

© *International Journal of Productivity & Performance Management*

For further information, please contact Tim Walker, Head of Waste Management at Belfast City Council, at: WalkerT@BelfastCity.gov.uk

REFERENCES

Donnelly M & Mackenzie S, 1998. "Issues in strategy formation in local government service operations." Papers from the 5th International Conference of the European Operations Management Association, Dublin, pp 159-164

Getting to the Knowledge behind the Numbers in Newham

Introduction

How do differences in educational achievement, ethnic background, age and gender affect the likelihood of being in or out of work locally? What are the characteristics of inward migration by neighbourhood? What is the geography of social class in Newham? These are just some examples of questions that colleagues, partners and the public are asking the Neighbourhood Information Management System (NIMS) team to provide answers to.

There are areas of high deprivation across the East End of London and in Newham. In particular, in some areas, factors including child poverty levels, life expectancy below the national average and high rates of unemployment are present and need to be better understood. Levels of inward migration into Newham, especially from the newly joined EU countries, are also difficult to quantify. Health outcomes for illnesses such as heart disease and cancers are unevenly spread, indicating that complex underlying factors may be contributing to these local patterns.

NIMS was first launched in 2004, funded by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF), and envisaged as a tool to enable the London Borough of Newham and its partners, including the local health services, fire, police and third sector organisations, to share the valuable data they each collect independently. NIMS was set up to provide a web environment where access to this data becomes possible. This improves analysis of local conditions based on detailed access to data from many different sources and therefore benefits each service and the whole community.

Local Information Systems

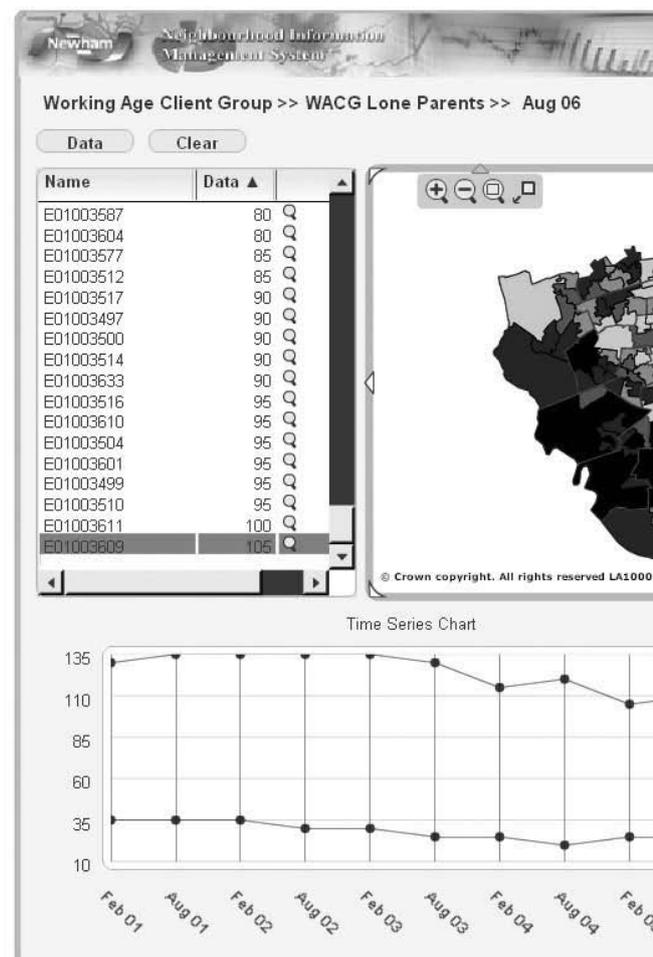
The idea of providing web access to statistics about local authority areas, especially when this incorporates a spatial element, has been growing in popularity in town halls across the UK. With NIMS, Newham became one of the first to set up a web-based local information system. Building on earlier good ideas and expertise, the current NIMS team have continued to develop a system that takes advantage of emerging web technologies and responds to the growing emphasis from central government upon customer-focused services and collaborative partnership working.

In 2006, following a national study into local information systems undertaken by Communities and Local Government, NIMS was listed as being among the best examples of systems that are successfully addressing the public service transformation agenda outlined in the Varney Report.

How NIMS is used

NIMS aims to help users to understand better how diverse factors such as access to housing, recent migration patterns, healthy eating, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and local employment issues relate to the demographic characteristics of their area. Those interested in using an online resource for this purpose include the following:

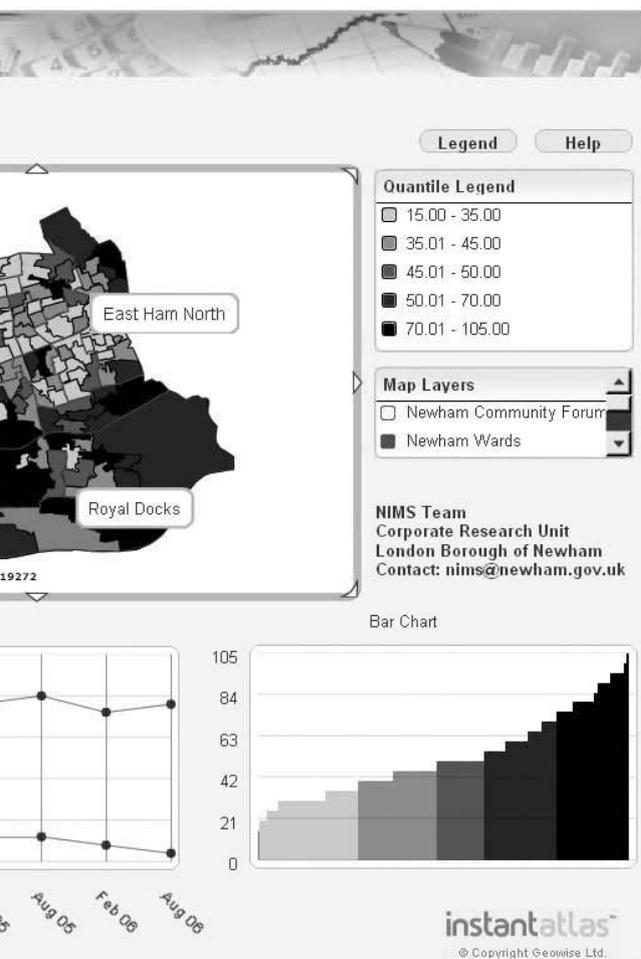
- London Borough of Newham Adults' and Children's Services, who wish to map the data they routinely collect to see how take-up of services is spread and what effects proximity to service outlets might be having on service users.
- Health providers who will need to plan future activities which reflect the changing composition of local communities and to be able to demonstrate where distribution of these interventions has really matched the characteristics of those whose needs are greatest.
- Local police who wish to move repetitive ward-level reporting tasks to an online system, so that changes in crime patterns are updated and distributed automatically, freeing analysts to concentrate their resources on more complex tasks such as the identification of causal relationships in the data.



Lone parent benefit claimant count at Super Output Area level for August 2006: Source DWP.

Getting to the Knowledge behind the Numbers cont...

- Newham residents who also use NIMS, for example, to answer questions as diverse as the reasons for falling clientele numbers in a pub, and also how the number of vehicle break-ins in their area may compare to other areas.
- The Olympic Delivery Agency, along with local organisations contributing towards the 2012 Games, who all have an evolving agenda to monitor the effects the Games will have on Newham. Data such as changes in employment availability, property values and local perceptions about healthy living and its relationship to sport, can all be captured and analysed from a central and shared source.



The time-series graph compares two wards, and shows that high rates within Royal Docks and low rates within East Ham North have persisted through time

disparate data updates? Consideration must also be given to periodicity – for example, how often do crime statistics need to be updated to be useful to community safety officers and is this different to the needs of other users?

Local information systems like NIMS demonstrate why evidence is important and that information is powerful stuff. Lower level geographies can show detailed patterns of the distribution and relationships for many different factors whilst more aggregated information is useful for making comparisons with other boroughs, London and the UK. There may also be surprising messages in the data that do not conform to preconceptions.

NIMS is based in the Corporate Research Unit of the London Borough of Newham. Version 3 was launched on September 12th and can be visited at www.newham.info

For further details please contact Lavinia Irving at lavinia.irving@newham.gov.uk

- Newham's councillors, who will also be able to refer to the latest statistics for their wards from a central source, using an interface that requires no specialist knowledge. Subject areas reflect residents' concerns and as such are very varied, local, and often not captured by national agencies such as the ONS.

User feedback

This year research into how to increase the number of NIMS users and data contributors was undertaken via user groups, online surveys and face-to-face interviews with potential users and made the following points:

- There is a need for the most recent possible data to be captured for very small localities (below ward level) to enable local projects to link data to just their areas.
- Policies for local improvement need to focus on how their interventions can be measured to quantify policy impacts. Data suitable for this purpose often exists in disparate units but must be identified at the project's outset through early discussions between policy and data specialists.
- There are substantial numbers of users who require data about the same topic but over different periods of time or at different geographic resolutions. Demand for the different elements of information within a data-set need to be communicated early in the process of system data entry, if eventual information display is to meet user needs.

Accessible online resource

To continue to grow into being a useful resource, NIMS needs to offer a number of options to conduct a range of analyses and be intuitive to use.

Data must be up to date. How must a system be organised to ensure that latest data is always included so as not to miss

Improving Services and Support for People with Dementia

By Paul Forte

The National Audit Office report *Improving Services and Support for People with Dementia* (<http://tinyurl.com/25svuq>), published on 4 July, contains a wealth of data and analysis on where and how older people with dementia are cared for in the health and social care system. It is estimated that 560,000 people in England have dementia and that two-thirds of them live in the community, cared for by 476,000 unpaid carers. This has huge implications for the provision and organisation of services across not only health and social care, but housing, the independent and voluntary sectors.

The report concludes that spending on dementia services by both health and social care services is significant, but at too late a stage of diagnosis, and, in the community and care homes, services are neither consistently delivered nor cost effective in supporting people to live independently as long as possible. Recommendations focus on improving management of services and support in the community, the implications of which go well beyond the conventional health and social care sectors into housing and other public service sectors, and into independent and voluntary sectors.

Lincolnshire Case Study

A key component of the NAO study examined drivers and barriers faced by commissioners and providers of dementia services at a local level, and explored the potential for alternative care settings to those currently used. The Balance of Care Group, working closely with health and social care organisations in Lincolnshire, undertook this work, the centrepiece of which was a one-day survey at the end of November 2006 of 863 adult inpatients in medical and orthopaedic acute hospital beds, long-stay beds for older people with mental health problems, and intermediate care settings across the county. Of those surveyed, 111 (or 13%) had an explicit 'dementia' diagnosis. The Lincolnshire study is documented both in the main report, and separately at <http://tinyurl.com/yp3vqo>.

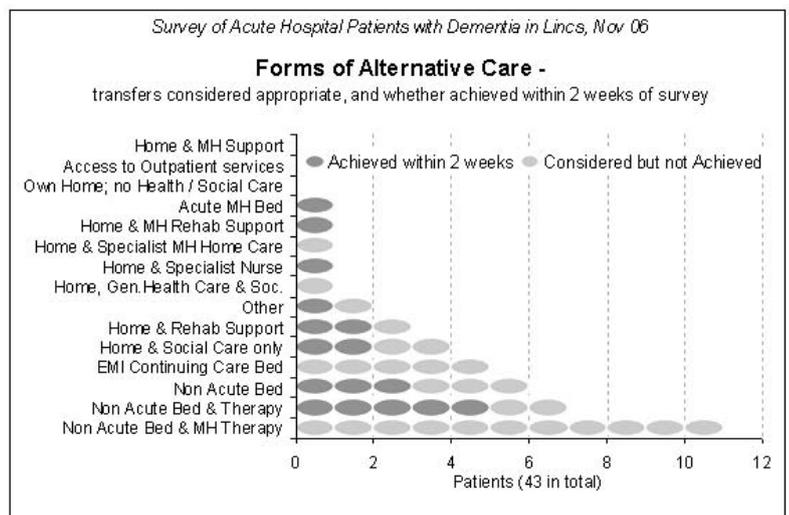
The survey was conducted by nearly 60 local health and social care professionals, specially trained for the task, and who were able to provide the expertise necessary for consideration of potential alternative

locations for care given the medical and social characteristics of the patients.

Alternative Care Settings

The data showed that 65 of the 111 people with recorded dementia were in medical and orthopaedic acute hospital beds (most of the others were in units for older people with mental health problems; a few were in intermediate care). The survey showed that most people with dementia are over 65 and had one or more other medical conditions which had led to their acute admission. However, as the survey also showed, once the acute intervention had taken place most of the patients with dementia (43 out of 65) still in hospital beds required care that could have taken place in non-acute care settings – usually some form of rehabilitation, health and social support, or continuing care.

Data gathered in the survey enabled a more detailed exploration not only of the types of health and care circumstances of dementia patients currently in different bed-based care settings, but also the potential range and volume of alternative care



settings that might be provided. Here the survey identified a wide range of potential options which included specialist beds in non-acute settings (for both short-term rehabilitation and for long-term care), or community-based care provision with patients receiving different care options in their own home settings. (Note that where 'home' is specified this means the patient's own home).

The graph above shows alternatives considered appropriate for patients with dementia in the acute hospitals only on the day of the survey. There is a

Improving Services and Support for People with Dementia cont...

wide range identified, mostly involving access to mainstream services. The study included follow-up investigation two weeks after the survey to see where - or whether - these patients had subsequently been discharged. The graph highlights certain types of alternative care settings where there is clearly some shortage or difficulty of access - care home settings with mental health therapy, and long term care home settings for people with mental health problems stand out particularly here.

A similar analysis for people with dementia currently in specialist hospital units for older people with mental health problems also indicated a potential for alternative care sites in both care homes and the community.

Comparisons with data from other parts of the country paint a fairly consistent picture and indicate that Lincolnshire is not exceptional in having this

pattern of bed utilisation and range of potential alternatives to hospital care.

Conclusion

The important challenge for local authorities will be in working in partnership with Primary Care Trusts and other stakeholders to identify the mental health needs of older people locally and consult widely with commissioning, provider and user stakeholders. Although the scale of the issue may appear initially overwhelming there is real potential to recast service provision in more cost efficient, effective and imaginative ways.

For further information, please contact Paul Forte, Balance of Care Group, at paul.forte@balanceofcare.com, or go to www.balanceofcare.com

© Paul Forte, Balance of Care Group

Bristol's Viewfinder – The Future of Consultation?

By Anna McDermott

Viewfinder is a consultation website developed as a pilot by Bristol City Council with funding from the Ministry of Justice. It uses the principles of websites like YouTube and Google video to allow a two-way communication process where the council can introduce the issues it wants to consult on, via video, to capture the attention of a wide audience, who can then respond directly by video, text or audio clip. These can be sent from mobile phones, computers or I-plus points that are located around the city. The aims are to humanise the consultation process and bring it up to date with contemporary methods of communication.

Using video to engage young people

The pilot was initiated following research into young people and democracy, which showed that rather than being disengaged and apathetic, young people are actively interested and engaged with political issues. However, they are alienated from formal politics because the traditional methods of participation are not appealing. To combat this, Viewfinder was designed to enable young people, and all members of the public, to have their say and feed into decision making in a way that they are familiar with, using what is now commonplace

technology. Recently websites like YouTube have capitalised on the mass-market availability of technology which enables people to produce videos. YouTube has been the fastest growing website in internet history, with 65,000 new video clips uploaded every day. We wanted to see if the appeal of user-generated content websites would transfer to consultation processes.



How we developed the website

We formed an advisory group of representatives from the Bristol Young People's Forum who gave practical advice on the design of the website, marketing and publicity materials. The advisory group had a role in choosing the supplier to work with. Multimedia agency Public-i were appointed to design and host the website that would enable video to be embedded within discussion forums in a way that was fresh and appealing to young people. To get the website started we made two short films. The first introduces the Open Discussion. This highlights issues raised within Bristol's Young People's Manifesto such as public transport, safety and facilities. Comments and videos received from the public will be passed on to Bristol's Young People's

Bristol's Viewfinder – The Future of Consultation? cont...

Select Committee for further consideration and response.

The second film introduces a specific topic we wished to consult on – the refurbishment of Bristol's oldest working swimming pool. The feedback on Viewfinder will help to inform proposals for the development. As well as using the video content to write reports, the website offers the unique opportunity to show the videos to decision makers, providing a high impact, direct approach. Featured consultations will change regularly and outcomes are fed back via the website.

E-mails will alert users to changes on the website.



As part of the initial publicity and promotion, outreach sessions were held at universities, colleges and schools as well as at the swimming pool in question. People were encouraged to be filmed giving their feedback. The site was then publicised through press releases, posters, e-mails and postcards. We have also tried some different approaches such as posting links to the website on community group forums and experimenting with viral marketing through people who have used the site already.

The pilot

The objectives of the pilot were to:-

- Test whether some of the popularity of user participation websites could be transferred to council consultations;
- Bring a human face to the consultation process;
- Test the extent to which those involved are comfortable using the video to engage with one another and the council;
- Encourage those not previously democratically active to engage with the authority;
- Test the scope for continuation of the project in a sustainable way beyond the pilot phase;
- Identify improvements to the usability of the website and the way it is promoted.

Evaluation

There was a feedback questionnaire on the website and we asked members of the Bristol Young People's forum to evaluate the site. It is a beta site, which means it will be regularly tested and refined through feedback from users.

Measuring against our objectives, we have found that using video does liven up the consultation process. As one young person put it: 'our tone of voice shows true feelings'. However, it is not for everyone. It has been much easier to attract text comments than video. We did not make it clear enough that it was free for the public to send both multi media and text messages from mobile phones. Many people are not yet comfortable using the equipment to create and upload their own videos, even if they have access to it. Despite the huge numbers of people uploading videos to YouTube, it is still very early days in using these methods of communication, particularly within the public sector.

Viewfinder still has an important part to play in feeding out information from the council in an accessible way and encouraging a response. It is known that a high proportion of people visiting user participation websites are 'lurkers' rather than contributors, but they are still absorbing the information that is on there and after a while will participate if something motivates them to join in.

What next

Our evaluation has identified that there is scope for



the continuation of Viewfinder as a consultation tool. We are making changes to the website to make it even more user-friendly, and have amalgamated Viewfinder with our consultation e-forum and other consultation tools such as e-petitions and consultation finder, so the public have one easy route into the council's e-participation tools. This will enable us to have one easy-to-manage database to keep users informed of all ways to participate.

Viewfinder will not replace traditional methods of consultation. But it is a way of communicating with the new generation of citizens, allowing them to really get their views seen and heard. It means that they can participate in the way that they choose, at a time and place that suits them.

Try Viewfinder at www.askbristol.com or contact Anna McDermott, Consultation and e-Participation Officer, Bristol City Council (email anna.mcdermott@bristol.gov.uk)

Learning to Love Local Activists

By Anna Pierce

Introduction

In July, Ipsos MORI's Participation Unit released a report on the key findings of a research study carried out to explore theories of influence and to identify a meaningful Socio-political Influencer group. It brings together our wealth of data on political activism and places it in the broader context of related literature,



Traditionally, influence in the public sector has been characterised mainly as efforts to influence 'upwards' (i.e. attempts to impact on those in power), and the emphasis has been strongly on formal mechanisms (letter writing, protest groups, joining political parties etc) rather than informal mechanisms of influence such as discussing issues with friends, family, and local interest groups. As the public sector starts to encourage the public to take advantage of the choice available to them, our report suggests that there are a group of people — the **Socio-political Influencers** — who may provide clues to how the wider public will react and future trends. These are people who some of us in local government call “the usual suspects”.



in order to understand how a small group of people may have a vital impact on public policy.

The context

As consumers we are becoming more demanding of private sector products and services. Similarly, Council Tax payers are becoming more demanding of public services – increasingly

people want choice, voice and empowerment in relation to council services.

At the same time, there has been a decline in trust in and deference to experts and traditional institutions - for example, our trends show a significant drop in the belief that government acts in the people's interest and that it uses information honestly. In parallel with this, we have seen a huge increase in the sources of information available to people on social and political issues, making it more difficult to decide which to believe.

Furthermore, we have seen a rise in the importance of personal contact and recommendations in people's decisions and views; for example, the proportion identifying word-of-mouth as their best source of ideas and information has increased from 67% in 1977 to 92% in 2005.

In this context, it is vital for public services such as councils and those designing public policy to understand the mechanisms by which people influence others and to understand the nature of effective communications. Government needs to consider how to use a more diverse mix of approaches to encourage "good" behaviours (neighbourliness) and discourage "bad" behaviours (anti-social behaviour).

Who Are These Socio-Political Influencers?

Our definition of Socio-political Influencers is based on four main characteristics:

- **They are gregarious / outgoing:** in order to influence widely, an influential individual will have to share their views with many people and not be shy about expressing an opinion;
- **They are part of a number of networks:** equally, the evidence suggests that attempts to influence are far more effective when the Influencer is known to those being influenced. Therefore, the number of networks an Influencer belongs to and the number of friends and acquaintances an Influencer has will both impact on how far their message spreads;
- **They are well-informed / have expertise:** they also need to be seen as a source of expertise on a subject if their views are to be seen as credible;
- **They have a high level of activism:** they are also much more likely to be involved in more traditional, formal approaches to influencing social and political issues - being involved in local/other groups etc.

Our definition also requires Socio-political Influencers to think they have influenced others on social or political issues - which is clearly based only on their own perception, but has been shown in other studies to be an important indicator of actual influence. Overall, around 8% of people are Socio-political Influencers - one in twelve of the population.

Learning to Love Local Activists cont...

Thinking about this profile, it is easy to see how it fits with a number of local people councils frequently come into contact with - for example, members of tenants and residents groups, members of Public and Patient Involvement Forums, and Parent and Teacher Associations.

What Use Are Socio-political Influencers?

There are three main reasons it is vital for government and public services to understand Influencers:

- Firstly, we need to understand their views, as they are likely to influence others. For example, 52% of them say that they have changed someone's mind about an important issue compared with 20% among the general public. And, even more markedly, 44% say someone has used a different public service or complained about a service because of something they've said, compared with 14% among the general public. They are the people who start conversations and express strong and committed views from a well informed perspective - understanding how best to communicate with this group could be vital to getting messages out to the wider public.
- Secondly, their relatively high knowledge and understanding of the issues means they could provide some insight into how policy is likely to be received by the public once they are given more information. They will therefore be a vital source of information for those developing policy

and approaches to service provision - in a similar way to how "leading-edge" consumers or "early adopters" are used in the private sector.

- Finally, although no better than the public at estimating current public opinion, Socio-political Influencers were much better at anticipating future public opinion when asked to predict satisfaction with the Government in six months' time.

Although more work needs to be done to establish the predictive power of Influencers, instinctively it makes sense that this group of people, with their high levels of knowledge and access to a wide network of people, are able not only to influence, but also to anticipate public opinion.

There is much more to do to understand and verify the importance of this new group. We have now developed a panel of over 4,000 Socio-political Influencers with whom we will be conducting further research over the coming months.

In the meantime, perhaps more thought needs to be given by local authorities about how they can get the best out of Socio-political Influencers.

Further information please contact: Anna Pierce or Debbie Lee Chan at Ipsos MORI's Participation Unit. Tel: 020 7347 3000

Now you can put all your eggs in one basket...



Have you ever stopped to consider how much time you and your staff spend searching for companies to cater for your design, print, exhibition and promotional requirements?

It can be a lengthy process and as you know in business lost time means lost money.

Well, help is at hand. One single phone call to **Printel** and all that wasted time could be a thing of the past - it really is a case of putting all your eggs securely in one basket. Here at Printel we have the knowledge and expertise to translate your ideas into effective and dynamic projects. We work with you as well as for you, which results in complete customer satisfaction and leaves you time to relax and concentrate on expanding or consolidating your business.

DESIGN · PRINT · SIGNS · COPY · ADVERTISING · PROMOTIONS · INTERNET · EXHIBITIONS

The Old Grammar School, 23 Derby Road,
Widnes, Cheshire WA8 9LG.
Telephone: 0151 420 0700
www.printel.co.uk



A New Way to Evaluate User Satisfaction Levels

By Alan Haylock

User satisfaction in Best Value reviews is traditionally associated with the percentage of respondents who are either satisfied or dissatisfied. There is however an alternative way to evaluate user satisfaction, one used by the Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group for the 2006 BVPI General Survey – mean scores converted to percentages to increase meaningfulness and comparability.

How do we turn Mean Satisfaction Score into a Percentage?

Where a question has, say, five response categories ranging from 'very dissatisfied' to 'very satisfied', we can allocate a score to each and calculate a Mean Satisfaction Score from the responses. The Mean Satisfaction Score is often used as it stands, but the approach recommended here is to express it as a percentage of the maximum possible. This is easiest if the scores start at zero (e.g. 0 for 'very dissatisfied' through to 4 for 'very satisfied'). Then the percentages will range from 0% if everybody is very dissatisfied, to 100% if they are all very satisfied.

The Benefits of using Mean Satisfaction Scores as a Percentage

A more accurate calculation of satisfaction: Using Mean Satisfaction Scores as a Percentage takes into account the proportions of respondents who are quite or very satisfied/dissatisfied. For instance, suppose that in one year 50% of respondents are satisfied, made up of 30% very satisfied and 20% quite satisfied. The next year 50% are again satisfied, but this time made up of 4% who are very satisfied and 46% quite satisfied. Looking at "% satisfied" would not show a fall in satisfaction levels – but the Mean Satisfaction Score as a Percentage would.

A single measurement for each specific variable: Mean Satisfaction Score as a Percentage takes into account the varying shades of satisfaction without producing cumbersome multiple outputs. It can be interpreted and compared without having to know how many categories are involved, which is particularly useful when mapping the results.

Trying it out

To date, there has been little or no use of this system in Local Government. LARIA members might like to trial it in survey research before the next BVPI General Survey (or its successor). This would enable an objective comparison between methodologies and add another measuring performance tool for use in survey research.

Find out more about the methodology by contacting Alan Haylock at The Research Group, Cambridgeshire County Council.

Tel: 01223 717997 Email: alan.haylock@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Public Service Workforce - recruiting and retaining staff for the future

Audit Commission National Study

People are a council's greatest asset, and yet often a council's workforce and its management are viewed as a largely operational area of limited relevance in achieving business objectives. As a result, there is often little strategic oversight and management of the planning, recruiting, developing, retaining and budgeting of councils' workforces.

Not effectively addressing these issues brings risks which include:

- the inability to deliver quality services where there are skill and staff shortages;
- rising costs and an over-reliance on agency staff in areas where there is competition for scarce resources;
- poor quality performance and morale issues where staff are not effectively managed, leading ultimately to recruitment and retention difficulties; and
- a workforce that is not diverse, which will impact on the quality of services delivered, the quality of applicants for jobs and the attractiveness of councils as a place to work.

Study aims

The Audit Commission is conducting follow-up research to its 2002 report *Recruitment and retention: A public service workforce for the twenty-first century* looking at a number of additional drivers that have emerged in the period since the original report was published.

These include:

- changing demographics - the impact of an ageing population and smaller numbers of young people coming into the workplace;
- the changing nature of councils as their role shifts from that of provider to commissioner and enabler;
- the advent of Comprehensive Area Assessments, placing a stronger emphasis on collaborative working with partners in a local or sub-regional area;
- the leadership role that councils are taking in the place-shaping agenda, which has important implications for the skilling and employment of the wider local workforce;
- growing budgetary pressures imposed through reductions in public spending and the efficiency agenda

The study will focus on how local government and its partners can ensure it has a workforce that is fit for the future through effective recruitment and retention practice. It aims to support improved performance among councils and their partners by sharing interesting practice and learning through case studies and signposting to practical tools. By this means it is hoped to support leaders, HR advisors and senior managers in sustaining a future supply of skilled and motivated staff and managing workforce-related risk.

Research phase

Following a review of relevant literature and discussions with stakeholders, we have conducted a series of structured telephone interviews with local authority HR professionals. We are now moving into the fieldwork phase where we will focus on highlighting areas of interesting practice in local authorities followed by focus groups in the autumn. The study is due to be published in March 2008.

Emerging findings

Encouragingly, recruitment, retention and workforce planning issues are now starting to register on senior manager and members' agendas. Councils are increasingly aware of the current and future issues facing them and there is a growing body of evidence of good practice among a number of councils. However, overall the picture remains one of a failure to adopt an integrated, strategic approach to tackling challenges head-on.

Supporting improvement

In addition to highlighting issues relating to recruitment, retention and workforce planning the research will also feed into the development of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment methodology to support local authorities in managing risk and improving overall performance. Our work will also inform and link into other national initiatives such as the 2007 Pay and Workforce Strategy to raise the profile of recruitment and retention and workforce issues in local government.

For more information, please contact Paulette Roberts on 08447982380 or p-roberts@audit-commission.gov.uk

LARIA in Scotland (LiS) – A New Start

By Jack Winchester And Graham Reid

A very important and well attended meeting was held on Monday 9th July 2007 in the City Chambers, Edinburgh City Council. The purpose of this meeting was to initiate a positive response from the Scottish public sector research community to the need for revitalising LARIA in Scotland as an effective arm of LARIA.

Chair of the meeting Andy Davis (Chair of LARIA) welcomed the gathering and introduced the key contributors - Graham Reid, Chair of LARIA in Scotland, and Graham Smith, LARIA Administrator. Andy then briefly identified the current issues facing LARIA, as well as its aims and aspirations, highlighting the key drivers, such as demographic change, migration/mobility, deprivation/closing the gap, globalisation, etc. He went on to identify the need for more evidence-based decisions, partnership, evaluation and consultation, and that LARIA is an open/sharing network providing support to researchers in the public sector, which promotes good practice and professional development.

LiS – role and challenges

Graham Smith provided a brief description of how LiS fits in with LARIA, explaining that it has its own Steering Group, which should meet at least 3-4 times a year and is responsible for arranging events in Scotland for Scotland. He stressed the importance of LiS to LARIA, and to the provision of events and networking in Scotland. Graham further noted that the LARIA website is to be overhauled soon, with LiS possibly having a specific section for its own news.

Graham Reid provided a brief history of LiS outlining recent problems and some current developments. He explained that the LiS 'terms of reference' were similar to those adopted by LARIA, and that LiS had been meeting regularly [4-5 times a year] up until recently, with its meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops being well attended.

The recent demise of the Research Unit at COSLA [Convention of Scottish Local Authorities], and of the SLGIU [Scottish Local Government Information Unit], had resulted in demands for LiS to fill the gap and assume a higher profile, which has not been easy for various reasons.

Graham also made reference to the importance of producing for Scotland an equivalent report to the 'Solesbury' report published by LARIA in England - to establish the legal basis for research activity in the public sector - and mentioned that discussions are currently taking place to achieve this.

Exchanging ideas

Three 'Brainstorming' sessions followed, which were led and facilitated by Graham Reid. The three questions addressed were:-

1. What are the key issues facing public sector research and researchers in Scotland?
2. What should LiS do to support and promote public sector research and researchers in Scotland?
3. How can we achieve our aims?

A wide-ranging discussion ensued with regard to the first question. Some of the issues identified are listed by Andy Davis in 'From the Chair' (p1), and others included:-

- Requirements generated from political changes;
- Partnership research and links with other agencies/groups – e.g. the Scottish Executive, the Scotstat network for users of official statistics, the Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, the Social Research Association (SRA), COSLA, etc;
- Support opportunities, e.g. with the Improvement Service.

LARIA in Scotland (LiS) – A New Start cont...

Question (2) provoked a range of suggested ways in which LiS could support and promote research, such as :-

- Lobbying the Scottish Executive
- A register of Scottish researchers
- Register of recent/planned research activity
- Sourcing and co-ordination of training
- Programme of seminars/workshops
- Reaching out to 'hard to reach' researchers
- Exploring opportunities for joint organisation and sponsorship of LiS events
- Potential for re-introducing the LiS annual conference
- Consideration of improvements to communication with LARIA Scottish members, e.g. Discussion Forum.

The way ahead

The discussion as to how LiS could achieve its aims led to some positive proposals:-

- There was strong support for the LiS Steering Group to develop a range of actions and activities to make progress on the issues above;
- Numerous participants expressed an interest in participating in a 'New Start' Steering Group;
- It was agreed to hold a meeting in the first half of September to take this forward;
- The meeting also agreed that the rejuvenated Steering Group should look at its own format and structure, start to set a new direction, and identify/agree the first steps/early actions required to take things forward.

Graham Reid agreed to organise and chair the first meeting, but with a clear aim to seek 'new blood' to refresh the membership of the Group.

Andy Davis thanked all who attended the meeting and confirmed his and LARIA's support to LiS in its efforts to rejuvenate LARIA's presence in Scotland.

Follow-up

The planned meeting of the 'New Start' Steering Group took place on 13th September, hosted by Stirling Council, and was well supported with 14 people turning up on the day out of around 20 expressions of interest.

The meeting generated a sub-group to identify themes for future LiS seminars and other events and, more specifically, to organise a networking event towards the end of the year or early next year. It also heard an update on excellent progress towards a review of the statutory requirements for research for Scottish Local Authorities, and details of a proposal from the Improvement Service to generate a Researchers Community of Practice under the LARIA banner. The meeting also elected a new LiS Steering Group Chair – Paul Davison of Stirling Council – to take over from Graham Reid.

It is still 'early days', but the levels of willingness to support and develop LiS suggest that we are on track to re-establish LARIA in Scotland as a predominant force in supporting the research community in the public sector throughout Scotland.

Jack Winchester / Graham Reid
LiS Steering Group member / Outgoing LiS Chair

ALGIS in LARIA Update

By Jane Inman

Guidelines for Official Publications in Local Authorities

Local authorities publish a vast quantity of information on a huge variety of topics. An authoritative new guide produced by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and supported by a range of bodies including LGAR, ALGIS in LARIA, and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), sets out how this information should be published to ensure it reaches the right people, can be traced in the future and is in an appropriate format.

The guide is designed to help everyone who has responsibility for writing, compiling and publishing official documents to make their publications as easy as possible for others to find, use, refer to and cite. It covers the essential and additional information for inclusion in official publications and sets out basic publishing guidelines, in the context of the various duties and responsibilities placed on local authorities by legislation and the nature of their work. The guide can be found at <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/pdfs/downloadable/guide.pdf>.

Visit to the Welsh Assembly

We enjoyed a fascinating visit to the Welsh Assembly's new Senedd building in Cardiff in June and were delighted to welcome some LARIA members. We were treated to a tour of the building which is an impressive mixture of Welsh slate, Canadian cedar and French glass and is designed to be as sustainable as possible. It is also designed to be accessible to the public. The Siambur or Chamber where the Assembly meets can be viewed from the public areas and all you need to gain access to sit in on the Plenary sessions is a ticket from the reception desk. We were also able to visit the Members' Library which is part of the Members' Research Service, so it was interesting for LARIA and ALGIS members to see research and information services placed together in an organisation.

LARIA Conference

The ALGIS Committee has decided that for 2008 we will hold our AGM as part of the LARIA Conference. We believe that the venue, which is Nottingham, will be accessible for members and we are planning a programme of speakers for the middle day, 2 April 2008. We are delighted that the current President of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals has already agreed to be one of our speakers. Ian Snowley is now Director of Academic Services with the University of London Research Library Services but has a background in Government libraries.

It promises to be a useful and interesting day so please book the date in your diary.

Remember ... ALGIS is keen to recruit new members so if there is someone in your organisation managing information - whether that is in a traditional library, through the web or an intranet or managing Freedom of Information requests – PLEASE tell them about us.

Jane Inman

Chair of ALGIS in LARIA

janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk

www.algis.org.uk

R & I News

Central and Local Information Partnership (CLIP)

New-look CLIP Website

The new-look CLIP website is now available. A review of the existing site was conducted by LGAR, and following user feedback, a new dynamic and easily navigable site has now been launched.

CLIP exists to foster greater communication between the different parts of central and local government so that statistical and related issues are better understood, and much of this work is undertaken by subject-specific sub-groups. The new look site contains the latest news from these subgroups, details of forthcoming events and links to other key organisations and groups. The recent work on data-flows undertaken by CLIP, which aims to identify and resolve duplication and near-duplication of data returns, is also featured.

The site offers a sign-up facility which allows users to register their interest in sub-groups. These deal with data and statistics related to the following topics: education, housing, census, finance, geographic information, environment, labour market, planning, population, social care and transport.

Please view the new CLIP website here:
www.clip.local.gov.uk

Hampshire County Council

Demographic Future of Hampshire

Understanding the size and composition of the local population and appreciating how it might change is essential if adequate services are to be provided and maintained. As communities become more diverse and more mobile, understanding the main drivers of these changes takes on a new importance.

The Demographic Future of Hampshire report brings together a wealth of demographic data both national and local. It describes and explores past and current demographic trends, as these are likely to hold at least part of the key to what might happen in the future. As well as setting out the overall picture for Hampshire, differences between the districts that make up the county are explored along with national and some international trends. The report then goes

on to investigate the likely impacts on Hampshire in terms of: housing provision; education; healthcare; and the labour market.

Hampshire, as with England and Wales as a whole, is facing profound changes to its demography. Its population (including the two cities of Portsmouth and Southampton) is projected to grow by over 100,000 people to 1,792,000 by 2026, and the number of dwellings by 120,000 to 850,000. Most of this population growth is projected to occur amongst those aged 45 and over, with implications for pensions and care provision. Hampshire is also seeing a rise in the number of people living on their own, particularly those in their 30's, 40's and 50's and as such at the peak of their earning capacity.

Profile of Hampshire

For some years now Hampshire County Council has produced annual Small Area Population Forecasts (SAPF). Based on the 2001 Census, along with up-to-date figures on births and deaths in the county, and completed and planned dwelling information down to output area level, these forecast the population of Hampshire seven years into the future and provide estimates down to ward and parish level. The forecasts can also be provided for a user-defined area using GIS. The 2006-based SAPF can be found at the web address given below.

Work has now begun to look at producing a 'Profile of Hampshire' report to accompany these forecasts. The aim of the report is to highlight the trends in population and dwellings over the forecast period using graphs and charts to give the user a picture of the likely trends. Overall county level figures are compared with individual districts to highlight the differences both between districts and over time. Work to date indicates that the older population is increasing relative to school-age and working-age populations in Hampshire. In particular the proportion of the population aged 85 and over is likely to see the greatest growth over the next seven years.

Individual district level reports for each district within Hampshire are also being developed so as to highlight the main trends seen at the district level and to focus down to ward level. It is hoped that at least the county level report will accompany the 2007-based SAPF results on the website next year.

R & I News cont...

To find out more about either of the above projects, or to receive a copy of the **Demographic Future report or 2006-based SAPF**, please contact **Gemma Quarendon on 01962 846794 or by email at Gemma.Quarendon@hants.gov.uk**, or visit our website at: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/environment-statistics/population.htm>

Local Government Analysis and Research (LGAR)

LGAR is the research and analytic function that supports the LGA and partner bodies in working to improve and develop evidence, data and research to support the local government sector. Our latest projects include the following.

The State of Local Government Database

This is a first step to initiate work across the local government sector to build what we hope will become a sector-owned system for accessing data and information on local government and the social economic and environmental context within which it works. The aim of this project is not to duplicate the work of others, but to work with them to rise to the challenge of providing easy and coherent access to information relevant to the work of local government. For more information, please see tinyurl.com/2ul6cq

What do you think? Let us know your views by contacting: louise.dove@lgar.local.gov.uk.

Smokefree Premises

From 1st July 2007 virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England became smokefree, and local councils, as enforcement authorities, will be key to the success of this legislation.

The Department of Health has commissioned LGAR to collect regular data from local authorities and port health authorities over the next year on the level of compliance with the legislation. Results will be published on the Department's smokefree website www.smokefreeengland.co.uk.

For more information, please visit: tinyurl.com/2mvnc7, or contact stephen.richards@lgar.local.gov.uk.

Climate Change Survey

This survey is being conducted by the Local Government Association to help the Local Government Climate Change Commission inform their work into how local government can respond more effectively to climate change, and to develop an understanding of the actions that authorities are already undertaking.

For more information, please visit: tinyurl.com/3eyqrq, or contact nick.shasha@lgar.local.gov.uk

Workforce Data Flows Programme

The workforce data flows programme forms a major part of LGAR's wider work on data harmonisation and the reduction of the data burden on local authorities. The programme will enable LGAR to describe the shape, nature and skills of the entire local government workforce for the first time.

For more information, please visit www.lgar.local.gov.uk/dataflows, or contact ben.hickman@lgar.local.gov.uk.

CLG Select Committee Inquiry into Ordnance Survey

We responded to an invitation to submit a memorandum to the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Select Committee Inquiry. To access what we said please visit: tinyurl.com/327zap. We understand that the Select Committee aim to publish a full report in the autumn.

For more information, please contact: stephen.richards@lgar.local.gov.uk

Keeping informed

LGAR produce two monthly publications: The Employment Digest and The Local Government Analysis and Research Bulletin (LGARB). The Digest focuses on the labour market, pay issues and trends and the economy in general. LGARB highlights the latest key issues, developments, research and statistical findings impacting on, or of interest to, local government.

To sign up for the Digest visit: tinyurl.com/213crx

To sign up for LGARB visit: tinyurl.com/2n2ncu

For more information about LGAR please visit: www.lgar.local.gov.uk

R & I News cont...

New East Manchester

Over the summer the Strategy and Evaluation team at New East Manchester (NEM) have undertaken a comprehensive baseline study for the revised Strategic Regeneration Framework.

The baseline provides an overview of the long term decline of the East Manchester area and a more detailed analysis of the shorter term issues, which may vary greatly across the area. Raw data was provided by all partners, in many cases in postcode anonymised/geo-coded formats which enable aggregation to the NEM Housing Market Renewal neighbourhoods.

The research conducted for the study has covered all aspects of quality of life for residents and quality of service provision. Many challenges have been found to remain, despite what has proved to be large steps made by the regeneration to date.

This has been followed by an extensive, in-depth consultation period. The consultation has been carried out in-house and results will feed directly into the final framework document over the coming months prior to its publication in the New Year.

For further information contact Joy Thompson at New East Manchester on 0161 223 1155 or email joy@neweastmanchester.com

Worcestershire County Council

The Research & Intelligence Unit at Worcestershire County Council are involved in an increasingly wide range of activities. Here we give a couple of examples.

Worcestershire Community Safety Partnerships Strategic Assessment

The Partnerships Strategic Assessment is intended to act as a medium- to long-term review of crime and disorder and related issues for Community Safety Partnerships. This will involve examining common themes or apparent gaps in partners' priorities, together with some specific data analysis where this adds value to the analyses already undertaken by partner agencies. The Assessment should inform the

planning process of the Partnerships, in that it will establish medium-term priorities, largely to be addressed through Community Safety Partnership Tasking.

The production will be led by the four Community Safety Partnership Analysts based in the Research & Intelligence Unit at Worcestershire County Council.

In consultation with the Government Office for the West Midlands, it was agreed that it was sensible to produce a document for each of the Police Basic Command Units in the County (North and South Worcestershire), together with a County summary to inform the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement.

For more information, please contact Rob Morris, Tel: (01905 768355), email: rmorris@worcestershire.gov.uk

Children's Services Clusters Needs Analysis

Worcestershire County Council will be undergoing a Joint Area Review (JAR) in 2008. This is when government inspection bodies assess services for children in the County across agencies. This inspection will form a core part of the government's view of Worcestershire County Council and other public bodies.

In preparation for the Joint Area Review, Worcestershire Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership needs to ensure the priorities in the County's Children and Young People's plan are robust. Additionally, the delivery of Extended Schools provision (with schools being a centre of activities for the local community) is coming on line in the next few months.

The Research & Intelligence Unit has been asked to support a major needs analysis programme for Children's Services to inform these activities. This work involves the collation and analysis of approximately 100 datasets over the coming months, focussed around the five outcomes described in the Children's Act 2006. The data will be analysed at Super Output Area level to enable consistent comparison, with this being aggregated to form the eleven Children's Services clusters, which are based upon school catchment areas.

R & I News cont...

As a specific part of the Clusters Needs Analysis, the R&I Unit are also providing support to the Family Information Service for its Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. This is a requirement of Section 11 of the Children's Act 2006, and means that lead local authorities must do an assessment of the availability of sufficient childcare, both from a quantity and a quality perspective.

A profile highlighting the main issues will be produced for each cluster, together with a countywide summary, to inform the Children and

Young People's Plan. Moreover, InstantAtlas will be used to make the underlying data available to a wider audience in an accessible format. The project is due for completion in February 2008.

**For further information, please contact David Onions, Tel: 01905 766712
e-mail: donions@worcestershire.gov.uk**

LARIA People

In this edition we introduce Joy Thompson, Chair of the LARIA Newsletter Activity Group which produces LariaNews.



Joy Thompson

After a run of LARIA People features about more experienced researchers - in fact mostly Research Managers - it has finally fallen to me to redress the balance! As the youngest Chair of an Activity Group at 29, and with the shortest Local Authority work history at a mere two years 9 months, I can vouch for the fact that LARIA really does need a cross-section of volunteers to represent the diversity of its members and readers.

Why do I volunteer to be involved with LARIA?

Given that I have only worked in the public sector for such a short time, having a network to call on is a no-lose situation. Just a matter of months ago, I needed to find out about costs of focus groups, and I remembered an earlier enquiry by a LARIA member about the very same thing. So how long did it take to resolve this query, and in the interim carry on with other tasks? A matter of a couple of hours. All too often the benefits of having a network or community of interest at your fingertips are overlooked, and I have not met one LARIA member who would not share their experience or give advice if they were asked.

And what exactly do I do?

Currently I work as one half of the Strategy and Evaluation team at New East Manchester Urban Regeneration Company (URC), together with my colleague Richard Crisp, who is seconded from CCSR at Manchester University. Since joining New East Manchester one year ago it has been an interesting time for the organisation

LARIA People cont...

and those working for it, with the mainstreaming of the NDC projects and the current revision of the Strategic Regeneration Framework.

We are the one-stop shop for statistics; research and evaluation project guidance and commissioning; GIS; performance management; and supervision/co-ordination of students' research in the area. The link with CCSR provides an academic slant to the work - and aren't we all borderline academics at heart?

Prior to working for the country's leading URC, I worked in the corporate policy unit at Tameside MBC. I would recommend working in a policy unit, purely for the learning experience of how local government interacts with the greater hierarchy of power. Starting as a graduate trainee, I worked primarily on the LSP agenda, and on the 'Quality of Life' reports which monitored progress against the Community Strategy, before corporate policy gave way to regeneration and new challenges.

Life before the public sector

School was in Alnwick, Northumberland – which as a claim to fame was opposite Harry Potter's school, although I am not a fan. After that I completed a degree in Economics from Coventry - an under-rated city. The next few years was spent working for Transco in various training, data quality and scheduling roles, based in locations ranging from the exotic (Mansfield), to the quaint (Dorking), to the more local (Bolton). However pipes could not hold my interest, and so back to school! An MSc in Economics from the University of Manchester was followed by various temping jobs, before joining Tameside.

Summing up

This part definitely does read like a bad CV: I will say that my hobbies are 'socialising' i.e. drinks after work (or late evening – or even weekends, you have to be flexible), reading, and let's say swimming – which all people are obliged to list regardless of actually ever getting into a pool (and I did, a couple of times, back in 2005).

Now that you have read this, if you are not involved in LARIA, why not? If I can do it, then so can you. Have a look on the back cover - the Chairs of the LARIA Activity Groups are listed and waiting to hear from you!

Noticeboard

Citizens' Juries in Britain and Germany

Invitation to Participate in Comparative Research Project

Have you commissioned a citizens' jury or similar project involving citizen deliberation recently? Would your organisation be interested in participating in a cross-comparative study on the use of citizen juries in Britain and Germany? The research aims to explore how citizens' juries are being used in these two different national contexts, and consider the future development of this approach to citizen involvement. It also aims to facilitate the networking of public authorities and practitioners across the countries.

If you'd like to know more, please contact Emmeline Cooper, TH Marshall Fellow, London School of Economics and Political Science, at: E.L.Cooper@lse.ac.uk

LARCI Seminar (Local Authorities Research Council Initiative)

Household Waste: Research, Targets and Opportunities

Speakers' presentations and the full programme from the LARCI seminar 'Household Waste: research, targets and opportunities', held on 26th October at the LGA London, can be found on the LARCI website at www.larci.org.uk/events

For further details, please contact: Andrea Turner on 01793 413121 (email andrea.turner@escr.ac.uk).

Statistics User Forum Annual Conference

Statistics on income, earnings and wealth. Where do they come from and why do we need them?

Thursday 15 November 2007

The Royal Society, 6 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG

Please see the enclosed flyer in the newsletter. LARIA Corporate members qualify for the concessionary rate of £135!

Aim of the Conference

Reliable and accurate statistical information on earnings, income and wealth form an important part of the knowledge we have about the operation of the economy and as indicators of economic well being. But where does this information come from, how should we use it and what are the problems that users face when attempting to understand these data? What can be done to improve our knowledge about earnings, income and wealth?

This conference aims to bring together the producers of statistical information on income, earnings and wealth with users (and potential users) to explore the wide variety of such data that now exist, to understand better the strengths and weaknesses associated with various sources of information and to portray some of the more interesting uses that have been made of these data for both research and policy purposes.

For more information, please contact Sarah Simpson at s.simpson@rss.org.uk

LARIA Excellence in Research Award 2007

Sponsored by CACI Limited

Get the recognition you deserve

We've all done research that we're really proud of. Maybe you have introduced an exciting new initiative to improve the quality of the research you carry out. Perhaps your research has changed the way your authority works or delivers its services. Or it could just be something you think went well. The range of research is open because we want as many local authorities as possible to enter for the award. This is your opportunity to get the recognition you deserve.

The prize

Once again, the award is being sponsored by CACI Limited, a leading provider of marketing solutions and information systems. As well as paying for a place at the LARIA Annual Conference 2008 for the winner, up to £2,000 worth of CACI data will be provided for use by the winning authority.

The winner will receive a trophy at a special presentation at the annual conference. The award winner will also have the opportunity to present their research either at the conference or at another appropriate event.

The award will be given to an authority, where it is hoped that the employees who carried out or commissioned the research will benefit.

What the judges are looking for

The judges, made up of LARIA council members and external researchers, will be looking for:

- a sound research methodology;
- research that involves trying something new and being creative;
- research that demonstrates an impact on policy and practice; and
- the overall presentation of your submission, including why your research should win the award.

How to enter

You should send a submission of up to 1,500 words. The judges will make their decision based on this, so please don't send any supporting documents or files.

Please email your submissions to Mike Walker, Chair of the LARIA Member Development Activity Group, at mike.walker@css.lancsc.gov.uk.

The closing date is 31 October 2007.

Good luck.

Guide for Contributors

The LARIA Newsletter Group actively encourages all relevant contributions – articles, news items and reports – about the work of Research and Intelligence units and other organisations involved in research and policy analysis. Details of relevant courses, conferences and services are also welcomed.

The aim is to produce an interesting and informative newsletter which appeals to as wide a range of research practitioners as possible, from statisticians to social researchers. Contributions should be as user-friendly and jargon-free as possible. Explanation of acronyms used is particularly important.

The Group meets shortly after the deadline for each edition to discuss contributions received. We need to ensure the content is suitable for our readership. Articles tailored to LariaNews stand a greater chance of making the final edition than general press releases. We also welcome cartoons, graphics and pictures which illustrate the text and offer additional insights.

As a guide, please try not to exceed about 300 words for a news item, and 1000 words for a feature article. And remember that's an upper limit, not a lower one! We're always happy to receive short snippets of news, or staffing announcements for LARIA People.

We occasionally receive longer academic articles which are less suitable for a newsletter. If the content is relevant to LARIA members we will publish an abstract in the newsletter and a link to the full article on **www.laria.gov.uk**.

Please send any comments about LariaNews to the Editor. We appreciate your feedback and will discuss any material received. Articles may be edited. The Editor's decisions are final.

Next Issue

Copy should be sent or emailed in Word format to the Editor (address on back page) to arrive by 27th November 2007.

Any graphs, tables, photographs or adverts need to be supplied in jpeg or bmp format.

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily of their employing organisation or of LARIA. Readers are advised to ascertain for themselves that courses, conferences or services advertised are appropriate for their needs.

Just the Job

Just a reminder that advertising research jobs on **www.laria.gov.uk** is free to corporate members of LARIA. And with corporate membership costing only £60, it could soon pay for itself. Look under 'Job Vacancies' and 'Membership' on the website.

LARIA was established in 1974 to promote the role and practice of research within the field of local government and provide a supportive network for those conducting or commissioning research.

There are three forms of LARIA membership - full membership and associate membership for individuals and corporate membership for organisations. LARIA is managed by a Council, mainly elected by the full members.

LARIA is registered as Specially Authorised Society under the Friendly Societies Act 1974. Its activities are of interest to all people working on Research and Intelligence activities for Local Authorities or allied fields, and depend upon active participation of such people to promote, maintain and develop professional practices.

LARIA in Scotland (LiS) has its own steering group, whose chair is also on the LARIA Council. It plans workshops, and other events, and is developing networking at a Scottish level.

ALGIS in LARIA is an autonomous group affiliated to LARIA. It represents the interests and concerns of information specialists within local government. The group organises small events and visits, publishes a quarterly Newsletter and undertakes any other activities designed to raise awareness of the potential and actual benefits of the work of information specialists within local government.

LARIA

CHAIR: Andy Davis
Warwickshire County Council
Email: andydavis@warwickshire.gov.uk
Tel: 01926 412511 Fax: 01926 491665

VICE CHAIR AND CHAIR OF MEMBER DEVELOPMENT GROUP:

Mike Walker
Lancashire County Council
Email: Mike.Walker@css.lancscc.gov.uk
Tel: 01772 533445 Fax: 01772 533353

HON. SECRETARY: Knud Moller,
Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Email: knud.moller@stoke.gov.uk
Tel: 01782 232347 Fax: 01782 232872

HON. TREASURER: Emma Burnett,
Manchester City Council
Email: emmacburnett@hotmail.com
Tel: 0161 234 3763 Fax: 0161 234 1828

ADMINISTRATOR: Graham Smith
9 Cortland Road, Nunthorpe, Middlesbrough TS7 0JX
Email: lariaooffice@aol.com
Tel: 01642 316576 Fax: 01642 314892

EVENTS ORGANISER: Aileen Wood
Tel: 023 8040 5863
Email: lariaevents@btinternet.com

PROMOTIONS CO-ORDINATOR: Bob Cuthill
Email: rcuthill@globalnet.co.uk
Tel: 01792 208907

LariaNews EDITOR: Anne Cunningham,
Yorkshire & Humber Public Health Observatory
Alcuin Research & Resource Centre, The University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD
Tel: 01904 724488 Fax: 01904 321870
Email: larianews@aecmail.plus.com

WEBMASTER: John Wicks, MVA Consultancy
Tel: 01483 728051 Fax: 01483 755207
Email: jwicks@mvaconsultancy.com

CHAIR OF MARKETING & PROMOTION GROUP:
Tony Todd, Wakefield & District Housing
Email: ttodd@wdh.co.uk
Tel: 01924 304429 Fax: 01924 304402

CHAIR OF EVENTS GROUP: Gerallt Evans-Hughes
Mott MacDonald MIS
Tel: 0151 242 0804 Fax: 0151 236 2521
Email: gerallt.evans-hughes@mottmac.com

CHAIR OF NEWSLETTER GROUP: Joy Thompson
New East Manchester
Tel: 0161 223 1155 Fax: 0161 231 7125
Email: joy@neweastmanchester.com

OTHER MEMBERS OF LARIA COUNCIL

Ann Atkinson – Newcastle City Council
Debbie Lee Chan – Ipsos-MORI
Jane Inman – Warwickshire CC
Paul Noble – Independent Researcher
Paul Davison – Stirling Council
Michael Soper – Cambridgeshire CC
Tim Allen – Local Government Association
Andrew Lavelle – North Staffordshire PCT
Roger Sykes – Audit Commission
Clive Lloyd – Worcestershire County Council

LARIA IN SCOTLAND (LiS)

CHAIR: Paul Davison, Stirling Council
Tel: 01786 443327
Email: davisonp@stirling.gov.uk

ALGIS in LARIA

CHAIR: Jane Inman,
Warwickshire County Council
Tel: 01926 418633 Fax: 01926 418631
Email: janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk

ALGIS in LARIA membership queries should be directed to the LARIA Administrator (details above)

ADVERTISING

LARIA welcomes copy for the Newsletter from advertisers, subject to the material not being in conflict with the interests of LARIA's members.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

LARIA wishes to encourage participation in its Activity Groups, its events, its newsletter and its other activities. It aims to remove barriers to participation associated with race, gender, age, faith, disability and sexuality. It expects its members, delegates and speakers at its events, and contributors to its newsletter to help in achieving that aim.