

LGA analysis and research bulletin

Welcome to the Local Government Association analysis and research bulletin (LGAARB), the regular one stop publication that keeps you informed about key issues and developments in research impacting on local government. The bulletin brings together our work as well as that of the other members of the LGA group (IDeA, LACORS, LGE, Leadership Centre for Local Government and Local Partnerships), and features relevant publications from the wider research community. The information in LGAARB is grouped under themed areas and our aim is to provide, on behalf of the LGA group, high quality:

- horizon scanning;
- analysis; and
- research.

Information about each of the members of the LGA group can be found along with website details overleaf. This publication is produced by LGA analysis and research which has been established to deliver a high quality and single research service to support the policy, lobbying and service delivery needs of the LGA group.

How to register

You can register to receive this bulletin by visiting:
<http://www.lga.gov.uk/research>

NEW DYNAMIC LINKS

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information about the LGA group

The **LGA** is the single voice for local government. As a voluntary membership body, funded almost entirely by the subscriptions of our 424 member authorities in England and Wales, we lobby and campaign for changes in policy and legislation on behalf of our member councils and the people and communities they serve. We work with and on behalf of our membership to deliver our shared vision of an independent and confident local government sector, where local priorities drive public service improvement in every city, town and village and every councillor acts as a champion for their ward and for the people they represent.

www.lga.gov.uk

The **IDEA** supports improvement and innovation in local government, focusing on the issues that are important to councils and using tried and tested ways of working. We work with councils in developing good practice, supporting them in their partnerships. We do this through networks, online communities of practice and web resources, and through the support and challenge provided by councillor and officer peers. We also help develop councillors in key positions through our leadership programmes. Regional Associates work closely with councils in their areas and support the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs).

www.idea.gov.uk

LGE works in partnership with local authorities, regional employers and other bodies to lead on and create solutions for pay, pensions and the employment contract. LGE offers advice on all employment issues, and represents local government employer interests to central government, government agencies, trades unions and European institutions.

www.lge.gov.uk

LACORS promotes quality regulation to councils in the areas of trading standards, environmental protection, licensing and gambling, food safety, hygiene and standards, animal health and welfare and private sector housing. LACORS offer comprehensive advice and guidance to councils and their partners, disseminating good practice and providing up-to-date information on policies and initiatives that affect local people and local services. We lobby on behalf of councils and ensure that legislation and government policy can be practically implemented, and with our colleagues in the LGA group, ensure we contribute to sector-led improvement.

www.lacors.gov.uk

Leadership Centre for Local Government

We believe great places require ambitious leadership that paints a picture of the future, inspiring and carrying with it the local residents' hopes and happiness. We support local government leaders to create the future through building effective and efficient partnerships, improving the lives of local people and fundamentally transforming communities for the better. Place is contested space for local government leaders, so we focus on the unique realities of the relationships involved helping members and officers develop their skills and thinking on leadership, through national and regional initiatives.

www.localleadership.gov.uk

Local Partnerships

Local Partnerships is a joint venture between the LGA and Partnerships UK, incorporating 4ps and all its current services. Local Partnerships mission is to enhance the quality of people's lives by giving trusted, professional support to local public bodies to improve their ability to source and deliver high quality, cost-effective public services and infrastructure. Local Partnerships will work at the market interface and work 'shoulder-to-shoulder' with public bodies to develop and deliver innovative solutions to new and emerging problems. This will be done by working alongside local public bodies to improve their sourcing and commissioning skills, programme and project management capabilities, procurement, negotiating and contract management capacity, and their delivery, funding and partnering abilities.

www.localpartnerships.org.uk

Employment pay and workforce trends

Understanding and tackling worklessness: lessons and policy implications

This Communities and Local Government (CLG) report provides a synthesis of key messages emerging from the two volumes of 'Understanding and tackling worklessness at the neighbourhood level (2009)' also produced by CLG. For more information visit: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/worklessnesslessons>

LGA analysis and research employment digest

This monthly publication keeps you informed on the labour market, pay issues and trends and the economy in general. Core data include: inflation, unemployment, pay settlements and average earnings. For the latest edition visit: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelid=1094987>

Transport

Impacts of better use transport interventions: review of the evaluation evidence base

This Department for Transport (DfT) report reviews existing evaluation evidence in relation to a variety of small-scale, low-cost transport interventions, such as walking and cycling schemes, small-scale traffic management and sustainable travel initiatives. For more information visit: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/evaluation/evaluationguidance/existingnetworks/betteruse.pdf>

International sea passengers: provisional estimates November 2009

This DfT release updates key statistics on passengers arriving and departing Great Britain by ferry. For more information visit: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/maritime/passengers/seapassnov2009.xls>

Provisional port statistics: quarterly results to Q3 2009

These DfT statistics provide provisional figures for freight traffic at major UK ports for the third quarter of 2009. For more information visit: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/162469/221412/221658/374865/portstatsq309.pdf>

Survey of foreign road goods vehicles United Kingdom May - August 2009 - provisional unweighted results

This DfT survey provides information on the activity of foreign-registered heavy goods vehicles (HGV) in the United Kingdom and was undertaken during the period May to August 2009. For more information visit: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/162469/221412/221522/222957/surveygoods.pdf>

Air passenger experience: results from CAA survey module Quarter 1 and 2 2009

This DfT report summarises the provisional results of passengers' experiences at six surveyed airports (Heathrow, Stansted, Manchester, Gatwick, Luton and Edinburgh). The report covers passenger satisfaction with; check-in, flight information, facilities, public transport links and security screening. For more information visit: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/162469/221412/221513/caasurveyq1q209.pdf>

Bus and light rail statistics Great Britain: Q3 2009

These DfT statistics provide information on bus and light rail patronage and bus passenger satisfaction. For more information visit: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/162469/221412/221535/224295/477931/q32009.pdf>

Road conditions in England: 2009

This DfT bulletin provides a picture of the state of the roads in England from 2006/07 to 2008/09. For more information visit: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/162469/221412/221546/224866/rce2009.pdf>

Housing

New house building and social housing sales, July to September 2009

These statistics from the Welsh Assembly Government provide information on the number of new dwellings, started and completed, and the number of social housing sales in Wales for the period April to June 2009. For more information visit: <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/2010/100112sdr62010en.pdf>

Education and children's services

The state of happiness: local wellbeing report

A major new report from the Young Foundation and the IDeA highlights that promoting and influencing happiness is no longer just an aspiration. As the recession forces difficult public spending choices, services focused on wellbeing are delivering widespread economic and social benefits – especially to children. For more information visit: <http://www.youngfoundation.org/publications/reports/the-state-happiness-new-report>

Gifted and talented pupils in schools

Ofsted surveyed a small sample of 26 schools to evaluate their capacity to respond effectively to changes in policy in terms of making provision for gifted and talented pupils, and to identify good and less effective practice. For more information visit: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Gifted-and-talented-pupils-in-schools>

GCSE attainment by pupil characteristics, in England 2008/09

These Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) statistics provide information on attainment at Key Stage 4 by different pupil characteristics, specifically gender, ethnicity, eligibility for free school meals (FSM), special educational needs (SEN) and English as a first language.. For more information visit: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000900/SFR34_2009.pdf

GCSE and equivalent results: England 2008-09 (revised)

These updated DCSF statistics provide information on the overall achievements of young people in GCSE examinations and other approved and accredited qualifications in 2008/09. For more information visit: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000909/SFR01_2010.pdf

Children, schools and families committee - second report

The Children, Schools and Families Committee has issued its second report of session 2009-10, on The Review of Elective Home Education. The question of if, and how, home education should be regulated, has been the subject of a series of consultations and research studies commissioned by the Department. This report provides various recommendations. For more information visit: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmselect/cmchilsch/39/3902.htm>

Neglect: research evidence to inform practice

This report from Action for Children outlines the various definitions of and types of neglect. It considers the outcomes for neglected children; contexts and causes of neglect; assessment of neglect; interventions in neglect cases; and more general interventions. For more information visit: <http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/uploads/media/36/8002.pdf>

Child poverty: research review 7

This publication from the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO) aims to provide a clearer understanding of the development, implementation and evaluation of whole-area child poverty strategies. For more information visit: http://www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/poverty/childpovertystrategies/files/child_poverty_kr_7.pdf

Educational attainment in rural areas

This Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) report assesses whether there are true differences in educational attainment at key stages three and four between rural and urban areas. For more information visit: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DEFRA-2009-12-02.pdf>

Post-16 educational choices in rural areas

This joint Defra and DCSF report illustrates the difference in post-16 participation rates between rural and urban areas and determines the extent to which such differences can be explained by characteristics of the two types of areas and the people who live there. For more information visit: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DEFRA-2009-12-01.pdf>

The 2009 school and college (post-16) achievement and attainment tables

These DCSF tables provide information on the achievement and attainment of students of sixth-form age in secondary schools and further education sector colleges. They also show how the results compare with other schools and colleges in the area and England as a whole. For more information visit: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/performance/tables/16to18_09.shtml

The 2009 secondary school GCSE and equivalent achievement and attainment tables

These DCSF tables give school level information on the achievement of students in secondary schools, and also show how they compare with other schools in the local authority (LA) area and England as a whole. For more information visit: http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/performance/tables/schools_09.shtml

GCE/Applied GCE A/AS and equivalent examination results: England 2008-09 (revised)

These DCSF statistics provide revised information on the overall achievements of young people in GCE and A/AS and other equivalent examinations in 2008-09. They include revised national-level analyses by school type, gender and subject and revised local authority-level analyses by gender. For more information visit: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SFR/s000906/index.shtml>

The role of finance in the decision-making of higher education applicants and students

This report from the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) summarises findings from the Going into HE research project. The aim was to establish the role and importance of finance in the decision-making process of English-domiciled people from different groups who are considering entering full-time Higher Education (HE) in the UK; and to ascertain the impact of the support arrangements on their decisions. For more information visit: <http://www.dius.gov.uk/~media/publications/B/BIS-RP-009>

Environment

Enhancing participation in kitchen waste collections

This Defra report gathered evidence on how householders respond to the provision of food waste collections. This included; how their response varies across socio-demographic groups and housing situations, how service design affects behaviour and which participation barriers need to be addressed through communications. For more information visit: http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=WR0209_8618_FRP.pdf

Energy and communities collaborative venture

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) announce the opening of a new, jointly funded £7.5 million investment: the 'Energy and Communities Collaborative Venture'.

This call for proposals forms part of an investment being made by the Research Council's Energy Research Programme (RCERP). The initiative aims to advance an understanding of issues surrounding energy use within communities with a view to contributing to the government's green house gas emissions targets. The call invites applicants to address a broad range of research challenges such as community ownership, energy innovation, policy, governance and social movements.

The call for proposals encourages active engagement with community organisations and other community stakeholders. The venture provides an opportunity for councils to link up and benefit through partnership working with a suitable academic institution. Applicants are encouraged, where appropriate, to demonstrate how they will engage with relevant organisations and groups.

Ideally, the successful research proposals will begin in mid 2010 with the longest lasting up to five years. The call closes at 4pm on 11 March 2010. For more information visit: http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/current_funding_opportunities/Energy_and_Communities_Collaborative_Venture.aspx#0

Health and social care

Increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation'

This review describes what works in increasing the number of care leavers in 'settled, safe accommodation', on the basis of a systematic review of the research literature and analysis of key data. It gives evidence that will help service providers improve services and, ultimately, outcomes for children, young people and their families. For more information visit: http://www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/vulnerablechildren/careleavers/files/increasing_care_leavers_in_safe_accommodation_research_review_3.pdf

Adult family members and carers of dependent drug users: prevalence, social cost, resource savings and treatment responses

This report from the UK Drug Policy Commission seeks to estimate the number of adult family members affected by a relative's problematic drug use, the costs of the harms they suffer and the value of the care they provide. It also reviewed the evidence for interventions to support families in their own right and for ways they can be involved in their relative's treatment and recovery. For more information visit: http://www.ukdpc.org.uk/resources/UKDPC_Families_of_drug_users_research_report_final.pdf

Services that manage the care needs of drunk and incapable people: a review of the literature

This report from the Scottish Government reviews the worldwide literature on services that exist to manage the care needs of drunk and incapable people. It assesses the makeup of these services and identifies what is considered to be good practice in providing for the needs of this particular group. For more information visit: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/289894/0088833.pdf>

Investigating the longer term impact of home care re-ablement services

This report from the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York is the first study of five well-established re-ablement services to show which features are considered to contribute to success. Home care re-ablement is high on the English adult social care policy agenda. It aims to help people regain skills and confidence so they can live as independently as possible, thus reducing needs for longer-term home care services. However, little is known about what re-ablement involves or how best to organise services. For more information visit: <http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/research/pdf/ReablementOrg.pdf>

Population and migration

The Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) 2004 and 2004 extension: monitoring report

This Home Office report is the assessment of the 2004 VARRP and covers the period from 1 March 2004 to 28 February 2005 and the VARRP 2004 Extension (1 March 2005 to 31 July 2005). Under VARRP co-funding arrangements between the UK Home Office and the European Commission's European Refugee Fund (ERF), an independent assessment of the programme is required each year. For more information visit:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/horr30b.pdf>

Factors affecting participation in assisted voluntary return programmes and successful reintegration: a review of the evidence

This Home Office report aimed to map the existing knowledge of Assisted Voluntary Return (AVR) in order to establish what factors encourage or discourage AVR participation, what the key factors are for the successful reintegration of AVR participants and what are the most effective policy and operational prescriptions for successful AVR programmes. For more information visit: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs10/horr29b.pdf>

Economy / economic development

Testing times

This Audit Commission report provides findings which show how the recession has affected benefits services. The publication describes key issues and some of the strategies councils are using to lessen the impact of the downturn. For more information visit:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Downloads/9122benefitssurveyreport.pdf>

Cities outlook 2010

This Centre for Cities report shows that the recession has widened the gap between UK city economies and suggests that as we move out of recession, the UK will face an uneven recovery. For more information visit:

<http://www.centreforcities.org/assets/files/10-01-15%20Cities%20Outlook%202010.pdf>

Local government

Local services assessment website launched

Oneplace, the reporting website for Comprehensive Area Assessment, has gone live. The site shows how places in England are coping with their local priorities, such as the recession, obesity in schoolchildren, crime, and care for the elderly. It provides assessments of performance on the environment, services provided for children and young people, raising school standards and cutting disparities in health. For more information visit:

<http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

A report on the awareness and use of the leading health and safety at work publication

This report was conducted by LGA Analysis and Research on behalf of LGE. The research showed that 56 per cent of strategic managers within local government were aware that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) /Institute of Directors (IoD) Guidance had been produced whilst 43 per cent were also able to name the guidance, 'Leading health and safety at work'. The research will inform the work currently underway within the HSE to evaluate the effectiveness of the guidance in improving the strategic management of health and safety. For more information visit: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/6685949>

Local authority swine flu survey

This survey of emergency planning officers across England and Wales showed that local authorities are taking the risks associated with swine flu and its impact on their authority's business seriously. Ninety-one per cent of respondents reported that their authority has a business continuity plan in place to ensure that services can be maintained in the event of a swine flu pandemic. The survey also gathered feedback on how councils are proactively supporting communities and how the LGA Group's work in this area was being received by the sector. For more information visit: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelid=7085410>

European and international

Attitudes of Europeans towards corruption

Previous European Commission surveys in 2005 and 2007 highlighted that the majority of Europeans believed that corruption was a national problem, and many also felt that EU institutions had a problem with corruption. This latest survey asked respondents: which levels of government have the biggest challenge with corruption, whether respondents believe there is corruption within EU institutions and whether the punishments given are a sufficient deterrent to corruption. For more information visit: http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_325_en.pdf

Civil protection

This European Commission report explores European public opinion on disaster management and civil protection. The survey asked what disasters people feel most at risk of in Europe, how informed respondents feel about measures put in place to deal with these and to what extent EU citizens are in favour of a common crisis management. For more information visit:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_328_en.pdf

International review of performance management systems in Public Employment Services (PES)

This Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) research examines how other PES across Europe use performance measurement in support of their organisational objectives in order that Jobcentre Plus can learn from this when considering future improvements to its performance measurement regime. For more information visit:

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2009-2010/rrep616.pdf>

Crime and disorder/ safer communities

Improving public confidence in the police a review of the evidence

This Home Office literature review summarises evidence on 'what works' in terms of improving public confidence in the police. It also identifies which other interventions look to have potential benefits and merit further exploration.

For more information visit: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/09/horr28c.pdf>

Crimes occurring and prevented in new deal for communities areas

This CLG report examines the economic cost of crime potentially prevented by the new deal for communities programme between 2000-01 and 2004-05. It also examines evidence showing that the new deal for communities programme resulted in reduced levels of crime, and therefore reduced costs of crime. For more information visit:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1425014.pdf>

Communities and place shaping

Evidence from research and development work in Bradford

This Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) paper summarises findings from eight research projects about Muslim women, Pakistani Muslim young men, recent migrants to Bradford and life on former council estates. Since 2004 JRF has been committed to a ten-year programme to improve life in Bradford, where people of different ethnicities, religions and cultures face common challenges of poverty, disempowerment, social and economic division and the impact of recession. For more information visit:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/Bradford-research-development-summary.pdf>

Sustainable Eastside project

Located in the rapidly changing socio-economic and urban environment of Britain's second largest city, Birmingham Eastside is the largest current city-centre redevelopment scheme in the UK, and it presents complex challenges to a range of stakeholders in both the public and private sectors.

The Sustainable Eastside project, funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), was active in the early planning and conceptual stages of the regeneration project from May 2003 through to June 2008.

The aim of the Eastside Sustainability Project was to explore how sustainability is addressed in practice in the regeneration decision making process and to assess the sustainability performance of completed development schemes against stated sustainability aspirations. The timing of the research, at the very beginning of the regeneration project allowed findings to positively influence decision-making and test claims of sustainability concept integration in a real-life urban regeneration programme.

For more information visit: www.esr.bham.ac.uk or contact Co-investigator: A.Barber@bham.ac.uk and Carina Weingaertner: C.Weingaertner@bham.ac.uk at Birmingham University; or co-investigator Dr Libby Porter: L.Porter@lss.gla.ac.uk at University of Glasgow.

Community engagement for science and sustainability: insights from the Citizens Science for Sustainability (SuScit) Project

The Citizens Science for Sustainability (SuScit) Project, part of the EPSRC funded Sustainable Urban Environments (SUE) Programme, was the first of its kind to attempt to provide local communities with a voice in the future of urban sustainability research and in so doing, identify a distinctive community-led agenda for future research.

Centred around the Mildmay area of Islington, North London, the SuScit Project comprised an innovative programme of action research and networking activities designed to promote engagement and dialogue between the EPSRC research community, professional stakeholders and most importantly local citizens: particularly socially and economically excluded citizens, such as older people, single parents, young people, and those from black, Asian and ethnic minority communities.

The process sought to explore whether it was possible to identify a distinctive community-led agenda for urban sustainability research and if so, what such an agenda might look like by using an innovative 'bottom-up' public engagement and foresight process. SuScit then used the information gathered to set out a ten point agenda for urban sustainability research.

A DVD including a short 10 minute documentary about the project has been produced. To obtain a copy contact project Principal Investigator, Professor Malcolm Eames: eamesm@cardiff.ac.uk

To download copies of the SuScit project reports and for additional information about the project go to: <http://www.suscit.org.uk/resources/>

The InSITU project: engaging local people to improve public places

InSITU (Inclusive and Sustainable Infrastructure for Tourism and Urban regeneration) was a 15-month scoping study to support those who are working to improve public spaces and walking routes with the active participation of local communities, especially in areas of economic and social deprivation.

Funded as part of the EPSRC's Sustainable Urban Environment's programme, the cross-disciplinary research team developed and tested new approaches and tools to widen user participation and inform design solutions, in areas where leisure and tourism is being nurtured as a catalyst for regeneration. Through innovative application of Geographic Information Systems for Participation (GIS-P), lay participants with in-depth local knowledge contributed to the physical design of schemes on an equal footing with the regeneration practitioners.

A key aim of InSITU was to allow all participants - regardless of their expertise - to frame the issues, problems and suggested solutions in their own terms. In particular, it was designed to encourage involvement by disadvantaged social groups and people who tend not to respond to traditional forms of consultation, such as questionnaires, surveys, exhibitions and public meetings. Instead InSITU worked closely with the project partners to create local panels whose opinions and preferences provided valuable insights that were then represented on high quality digitised maps. This adaptation of GIS-P has allowed the annotated maps produced by local users to be interpreted with clarity and acted upon by key specialists, especially urban designers, planners, engineers, tourism and heritage attraction managers and conservationists.

For more information visit: <http://www.insitu.org.uk/>

Assessing neighbourhood level regeneration and public expenditure

This CLG report compares levels of public expenditure in the Bradford New Deal for Communities (NDC) area with that across the local authority. It focuses on the largest areas of public expenditure at the neighbourhood level, drawing on data from publicly available administrative sources. For more information visit:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1425131.pdf>

Tracking economic deprivation in new deal for communities areas

This CLG report is an in-depth study of economic deprivation in the 39 New Deal for Communities areas. It forms part of the wider national NDC evaluation and examines how NDC areas are performing compared to other deprived neighbourhoods, and whether they are narrowing the gap with more affluent neighbourhoods. For more information visit: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1424848.pdf>

Devolution's impact on low-income people and places

For the tenth anniversary of Scottish and Welsh devolution, this JRF round-up and series of reports, explores trends in social and economic disadvantage as well as policy developments in four areas: housing and homelessness, employment, neighbourhood regeneration and long-term care for older people. For more information visit:

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/devolution-and-low-income.pdf>

Culture, tourism and sport

Systematic review of the literature on Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in sport and physical recreation

This report from Sport England examines participation in sport and physical recreation by Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Communities over the last decade. It considers how opportunities might be extended and improved and aims to establish what works for whom in what circumstances and how programmes work. For more information visit:

<http://www.sportengland.org/research/idoc.ashx?docid=d12c2072-48f9-4562-8987-ce42640d683b&version=1>

Geographic information

Geographic information in Local Government survey 2009

Geographic Information (GI) underpins many local public services and is invaluable in local policy and decision making across partnerships. However, reduced public sector funding, changes in data policies to make data publicly available using common standards and the need to work more closely together, require local government organisations to transform their service to share their data and resources and be more efficient and customer focused. There are many enabling GI services that support working and collaboration across institutional and other boundaries.

This survey aimed to find out how and to what extent local government organisations make use of their data and services, share it across boundaries and are prepared to meet technical and policy changes. The survey was conducted by LGA Analysis and Research for the IDeA, LGA, and the WLGA in order to establish how GI services are currently provided, what the technical capabilities are and how they are used across partnership. The survey also aimed to gain an understanding from existing services about both the potential and barriers for transforming them to meet future needs.

The survey was carried out in October 2009 and over 50 per cent of local government bodies responded. The results indicate that GI services are predominantly provided corporately and are well established. They serve a large range of functions led by planning and building control, environmental protection and waste management. GI services mainly include data administration, data management and mapping. Two thirds use GI in analysis and research. Two fifth of all respondents indicated that GI supports the collation and monitoring of national indicators followed by accessibility analysis and customer insight.

Only a third of GI services were involved in partnership working such as community safety partnership or local strategic partnerships mainly to be able to share data. Just over one quarter use GI in joined data analysis. One of the largest barriers to partnerships working is licensing, funding and cultural and organisational barriers.

For more information on the survey visit: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelid=6597688> or contact: stephen.richards@lga.gov.uk 020 7664 3256

For more information on wider G.I issues contact: gesche.schmid@lga.gov.uk

European INSPIRE (INfrastructure for SPatial INfoRmation in Europe) Directive

The European INSPIRE Directive requires that member states provide public access to location based data related to the environment according to specific technical standards. Legislation that enables INSPIRE in England, Wales and Northern Ireland came into force on 31 December 2009. The LGA have produced a briefing on the Directive. For more information visit: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/aio/7417893>

Helping to secure proportional outcomes for rural communities through Local Area Agreements

The Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) recently completed a project with Essex, Cumbria and Devon County Councils, to analyse the extent to which the National Indicator Set can, in a practical way, be disaggregated to below the Local Area Agreement (LAA) geography level. Performance management at a sub-LAA geography level can help secure proportional delivery of LAA targets to localities and neighbourhoods. It is particularly important for rural areas because their LAA area will typically be a large county. Disaggregation provides a way of assessing whether rural communities are achieving and receiving the support they need from the government, and will also help councillors and communities by providing them with information about performance at the local and neighbourhood level. Some of the main findings show that around two-thirds of the NI set can be reported at this lower spatial level.

The results of this work have been published on the CRC's website:

<http://www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/events/atrulylocalviewlocalityreportingagainstthenationalindicatorset>

This includes:

- a set of searchable tables, for each of the National Indicators, which contain the technical analysis of the potential to disaggregate the data;
- a 'how to guide' for LSPs and councils who want to explore how to disaggregate the data;
- a narrative on why local reporting is important and useful for LSPs and local authorities (and for the communities they serve); and
- the experiences of Essex, Cumbria and Devon in testing out this disaggregated reporting approach.

For further information about this project please contact Justin Martin, Programme Manager, Tel: 01242 534092, Fax: 01242 584270, email justin.martin@ruralcommunities.gov.uk

Other research

The sustainable communities act: analysis of proposals submitted by councils

Commissioned by the LGA and conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), this report provides a thematic overview of the bids submitted to the LGA by English councils under the Sustainable Communities Act for England 2007 (SCA). It provides a snapshot of key patterns and trends emerging from the different types of local authorities in the nine English government regions. For more information visit:

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pageld=1095147>

Data.gov.uk

Advised by Sir Tim Berners-Lee and Professor Nigel Shadbolt and others, government are opening up data for reuse. This site allows users to search a wealth of government data and the site is under constant development. For more information visit: <http://data.gov.uk/>

regular publications and events

LARCI Newsletter – Issue 15, Winter 2009-10

LARCI's quarterly newsletter provides concise summaries of the latest Research Council-funded research of interest and relevance to those working with and within local government. The newsletter also signposts opportunities for collaboration with Research Council programmes, shares best practice through publicising research conducted by local authorities and publicises abstracts of reports and events from related organisations. The latest edition includes a special report on de-icing Britain's Roads. For more information visit:

<http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/cmsweb/downloads/rcuk/innovation/larci/newsletter15.pdf>

Myths and realities 3: crime and punishment in the 21st century

In the third of these events which look at contemporary social issues, leading researchers and practitioners explore our attitudes to crime and punishment. They will consider the way these differ from the views of policymakers and practitioners, and review the way the media portray the issues involved. The event is sponsored by the Academy of Social Science, the British Library and the Economic and Social Research Council. For more information visit:

<http://www.bl.uk/whatson/events/event104273.html>

Myths and realities 4: are we what we eat?

In the fourth of these events which look at contemporary social issues, leading researchers, policy makers and practitioners explore our attitudes to food: what we eat, what we buy, how we shop and how we cook. The event will look at the wider social and political role of the food industry, and the role government plays in promoting healthy eating, as well as the way that public attitudes differ from the views of policymakers. For more information visit:

<http://www.bl.uk/whatson/events/event104424.html>

LARIA annual conference 2010

Making research work - research for policy 2010

The LARIA annual conference will take place at The Royal Holloway University from Monday 12 - Wednesday 14 April 2010. This event is sponsored by LARCI, ONS and LGA. For more information and a booking form visit:

<http://www.mosaicevents.co.uk/docs/35/lariaconference.pdf>

CLIP annual conference 2010

Targeting Resources in Straitened Times: Bringing Together Local and Central Government to Make Best Use of Data'

The Central and Local Information Partnership (CLIP) Annual Conference will take place on Thursday 18 February 2010 at Local Government House, Smith Square, London.

The theme of this year's conference reflects the growing need for local and central government organisations to make the best use of data available to them. In the current economic climate particularly, data sharing provides an important and efficient use of resources.

The conference will be opened by Mark Easton, the BBC Home Editor, who will give a whistle-stop history of the tensions between politicians and statisticians from the early 19th century, through the Thatcher and Blair years to the present day and the influence of the UK Statistics Authority. Mark will also cover public anxiety over data sharing.

In addition, representatives from the Audit Commission, the Places Community, Leicester County Council and Neighbourhoods NW will be present, either speaking or presenting informative and interactive workshops.

For more information and booking details visit: <http://www.clip.local.gov.uk/lgv/core/page.do?pagelid=46162>



Local Government Association

The Local Government Association is the national voice for more than 400 local authorities in England and Wales. The LGA group comprises the LGA and five partner organisations which work together to support, promote and improve local government.



Tell us what you think

We hope to provide information which is useful and accessible. Please contact Michelle Pickford (michelle.pickford@lga.gov.uk) with your comments and feedback on LGAARB.

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