



LOCAL AUTHORITIES &
RESEARCH COUNCILS' INITIATIVE

LARCI Newsletter



Bringing Local Government and
the Research Councils into closer
partnership, leading to better informed
research, policy and practice

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Strategic Board

Chaired by Professor John Benington, the strategic agenda for LARCI is set by our Board which includes Chief Executives from a number of Local Authorities as well as senior staff from devolved administrations and LARCI member organisations.

For information on LARCI Strategic Board members, please view our website: www.larci.org.uk

Welcome

Welcome to the LARCI Winter 2010 Newsletter

LARCI is delighted to announce the launch of its new-look website. For the first time, colleagues working in local government will be able to view the £2.8 billion annual investment in research by the UK's Research Councils (RCUK), by topic areas such as 'Community Wellbeing', 'Children and Young People' and 'Environment'.

The new-look site makes it easier to find researchers and research that can inform both local government policy and practice.

Also in this issue we learn about how a rise in house prices can lead to an increased sense of well-being, and not only amongst homeowners and landlords.

Local authorities are currently writing policies to implement a recent change in the ways in which clubs are licensed. A timely piece of research by ESRC makes regulatory recommendations for lap dancing workers in the UK.

This newsletter also provides concise summaries of the latest research, funded by the LARCI member organisations, of interest and practical use to those working with and within local government.

We also signpost opportunities for collaboration with Research Council programmes, share best practice through publicising research conducted by local authorities and publicise reports and events supported by related organisations.

For more LARCI information please visit our website:

www.larci.org.uk

Cover Photograph

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If you would like to provide a photograph for the newsletter front page please email: LARCI@rcuk.ac.uk

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LARCI Launches New-Look Website

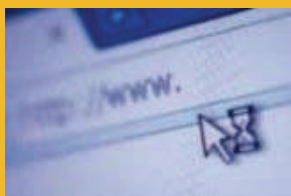
The New-Look LARCI Website offers a Gateway to Research Council Resources

The Local Authorities & Research Councils' Initiative (LARCI) is delighted to announce the launch of its new-look website. This site makes it easier to access LARCI services, including the outputs of £2.8 billion spent on academic research each year by the UK's Research Councils ([RCUK](http://rcuk.ac.uk)).

Other LARCI services include work driven by our unique partnership approach, for example research on critical questions such as whether pooling budgets across areas and organisations is effective as a response to improving services in the face of unprecedented cuts in public spending.

View the new-look site at: www.larci.org.uk

A unique feature of the revised site is that it organises the Research Council UK investments and key knowledge transfer scheme outputs by area of interest to local government, including 'Children and Young People', 'Community Wellbeing' and 'Environment'



In 'Accessing Research', current research activities of relevance are highlighted in the areas of ageing, assisted living, climate change, flooding, crime and many more. Users will be able to identify researchers working in areas of interest. Visitors can also click on the 'Access to Funding and Research' leaflet which provides information on all of the Research Council websites, databases, funding opportunities, news bulletins and consultations.

In 'Funded Schemes', local authorities can find the latest information on what knowledge transfer schemes are available to them, by linking to the RCUK Knowledge Transfer Portal. There are also illustrations of what it is possible for local authorities to achieve by using these schemes. Under 'Knowledge Transfer Partnerships', we have an example of a partnership between Fife Council and the University of Stirling looking at delivering services for people with dementia, and another between Coventry City Council and Loughborough University implementing a cost calculator for the support of 'looked after' children.

The information does not represent a comprehensive listing of the Research Council offerings to local government, which is vast, however it is a big step in the right direction. Furthermore, an upgrade in the hosting platform which will take place in December will enable a user searching from the LARCI page to search all of the Research Council websites (excluding grants on the web) simultaneously. This has previously not been possible.

John Benington, Emeritus Professor, Governance and Public Management, Warwick Business School and Chair of LARCI said:

"LARCI has championed a number of reviews of evidence in key areas ranging from the co-production of services to integrated budgets and joint decision making for local communities. This website brings the findings of these reviews direct to the people working in local government, who can make best use of the lessons learned."

Fiona Armstrong, Head of Knowledge Transfer at the Economic & Social Research Council said:

"The revised LARCI website acts as a signpost to resources for local government, which have previously been hard to find. We would encourage anyone working in or with local government to take a look at the website and to promote this important new resource to their colleagues."

For further information please visit the LARCI website: www.larci.org.uk or contact Victoria Morrisroe at: Victoria.morrisroe@esrc.ac.uk

Opportunities for Local Authorities

How to become involved with the Research Councils

Local Authorities can become involved in the research process in a number of ways. You can:

Use results from Research Council UK projects to inform policy and practice:

- access results from each Research Council UK through searchable on-line databases and websites
- check on dissemination events and knowledge exchange mechanisms through Research Council websites, the LARCI newsletter and bulletins.

Input directly to research projects:

- apply with a joint or lead partner for specific Research Council funding
- respond to calls for participation through individual research programmes

Inform future research direction:

- become involved in Research Council consultations (promoted on individual websites and flagged in LARCI newsletters).

Making Contact

The websites and databases highlighted on page 12 of this newsletter are a good starting point to develop working relationships with an academic in a particular subject area.

For more information please contact: larci@rcuk.ac.uk

Community Wellbeing



Maintaining Mobility in Older Age

A study by the New Dynamics of Ageing Programme (NDA), a joint initiative by the RCUK, examines the relationship between successful ageing and mobility patterns. While maintaining mobility plays a significant part in healthy ageing, a new study highlights a high degree of inactivity even among an 'elite' sample of healthy older people aged between 72 and 92 years.

The study used innovative methods, such as location awareness technologies for mapping the mobility of the oldest-old members (75 years and over) of an existing 25-year longitudinal study of ageing.

Lead researcher Dr. McInnes points out: "New methods are needed to examine how much activity an individual does throughout a day. Monitoring activity levels by using tracking devices will help to assess the mobility ability of older people. Additionally, monitoring health and well-being can help identify individuals who may be at risk."

In addition these findings highlight the importance of providing effective transport networks and a good range of local services to meet older people's needs," Dr. McInnes explains. "Being able to stay mobile is crucial to older people's well-being, as loss of mobility means the loss of so many other things from their lives such as the ability to go shopping, meet friends and pursue hobbies and interests."

This project has helped to establish a reliable mobility profile of the oldest-old members of society by determining where individuals go and how active they are in the process and shows there is a clear relationship between mobility, health and well-being.

For further information contact Dr. Lynn McInnes at: lynn.mcinnnes@northumbria.ac.uk, tel.: 0191 2273571 or visit: www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk/mobility-and-ageing.html

The Wealthy Benefit Most from the 'Big Society'

The coalition government is a strong advocate of the 'Big Society' in which communities devise their own solutions to social problems. But how able or willing are voluntary organisations and the population to get involved?

Research by the Third Sector Research Centre (TSRC) finds that rates of volunteering have been very stable for many years with between 26-29% of the population providing unpaid help to organisations at least once a month.

Much of the work – volunteering, charitable giving, and civic participation – is done by a small subset of the population. Some 7.5% of the population provide half the voluntary effort and 41% of charitable giving; 30% of the population account for 87% of unpaid help, 79% of charitable giving, and 72% of civic engagement; and 1% of the population are in the "core" on all three groups, providing between 8% and 10 % of total effort.

The most active volunteers live in the most affluent areas of the UK. This regional disparity in volunteering activity is exacerbated by the fact that there are very few charities registered in some parts of the country, principally the former industrial regions of the North of England, but hotspots in prosperous rural areas of the south-east.

It is likely to require investment in the infrastructure needed to recruit and retain volunteers, as well as in supporting organisations which provide vital services, to achieve substantial change in the numbers of volunteers or in their social and geographical distribution. Without this, the most prosperous communities will benefit most from the 'Big Society'.

For more information contact Prof. John Mohan at: J.Mohan@tsrc.ac.uk, tel.: 023 8059 6681 or visit the TSRC website at: www.tsrc.ac.uk

House Prices and Happiness

The state of the housing market seems to foster a 'feel good factor' among the British public when house prices perform well - and vice versa. That is one of the conclusions of new research by the Centre for Market and Public Organisation (CMPO), reported in the latest issue of Research in Public Policy. The study by Anita Ratcliffe finds that:

- There is a positive relationship between house prices and reported well-being for both homeowners and non-homeowners
- This suggests that house prices reflect something that is relevant to well-being, such as economic circumstances, rather than influencing well-being via wealth effects
- The association between house prices and well-being is not explained by measures of local earnings and unemployment rates, financial expectations or subjective neighbourhood assessments. A possibility is that house prices are a barometer of confidence in the economy.

House prices may matter for well-being because homeowners are made wealthier when house prices rise whereas non-homeowners lose out because they need to save more to get onto the property ladder. Alternatively, other factors such as economic conditions or area attributes may drive both house prices and well-being. The study compares how homeowners and non-homeowners respond to house price fluctuations to identify which of these explanations matters in practice.

Since both homeowners and non-homeowners report higher well-being when house prices rise, the evidence points towards other factors affecting both house prices and well-being. In the end, it looks like a strong performance in the housing market may foster a 'feel good factor' insofar as it signals the economic outlook is bright.

For a copy of the full article visit: www.bristol.ac.uk/cmipo/publications/bulletin/winter10/winter10.pdf



'Black Africans' in Britain: integration or segregation

A new study shows that the ability of 'Black Africans' settling in the UK to integrate with society varies according to their national and ethnic background.

The study, by Dr. Lavinia Mitton and Mr Peter Aspinall of the University of Kent, finds that 'Black Africans' in the UK are a diverse group with a wide range of experience and needs depending on country of birth, religion and native language. Understanding these distinctions between different Black Africans is the first step to providing better support, improving their quality of life and helping integration into society.

There are now 737,000 'Black Africans' in England and Wales (according to an estimate by the Office for National Statistics for 2007) and they are one of the fastest growing ethnic groups. Unlike some other ethnic groups, 'Black Africans' are predominantly migrants. Many encounter significant language difficulties together with financial and other problems when they settle in the UK. The Somalis and Congolese are the most disadvantaged and deprived communities amongst the 'Black African' group.

The study concludes that Somalis and Congolese need to be targeted with intensive support, including help with language skills, such as English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) training, while the government needs to work with employers and trade unions to improve the occupational status of 'Black Africans'.

Commenting on the findings, Dr. Mitton said: "The research should inform policy and practice and enable actions that are sensitive to the diverse needs of the Black African community. It will also help public services secure support for a future integration strategy and will be particularly useful to London boroughs, local authorities and Primary Care Trusts in areas with a high proportion of Black Africans."

For further information contact: Dr. L. Mitton at: l.mitton@kent.ac.uk or tel.: 01227 824409

Children and Young People

Abolishing League Tables reduces School Effectiveness

Secondary school league tables have been an annual fixture of the English school system since 1992, providing comparative information on school performance to both parents and local government. Until 2001 similar information was also available for Welsh secondary schools. Following devolution, however, the Welsh Assembly government abolished the publication of league tables.

Such a policy change represents a 'natural experiment' that removed a key element from the accountability system of two otherwise-similar educational systems. Research led from the CMPO exploits this change to investigate the impact of league tables on school effectiveness to test the hypothesis that school effectiveness in Wales after league table abolition is lower than that of schools in



England. The study compares education outcomes in England and Wales before and after the change.

The researchers find systematic significant and robust evidence that abolishing league tables markedly reduced school effectiveness in Wales. The effect is concentrated in the school in the lower 75% of the distribution of ability and poverty, while schools in the top quartile of the league tables appear unaffected by the reform. The study suggests that the policy reform in Wales reduced average school performance and raised educational inequality.

The results show that such school accountability policies hold promise for raising school performance, particularly for pupils in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

For the full report visit: www.bristol.ac.uk/cmpo/publications/papers/2010/wp246.pdf

Schools: meeting Europe's social inclusion objectives

In today's knowledge society, education can serve as a powerful means of achieving the key objective of the Lisbon Strategy for Europe to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion." However, at present, many schools in Europe are excluding citizens from educational and social benefits that should be available to all.



The five-year research project **INCLUD-ED** (*Strategies for Inclusion and Social Cohesion in Europe from Education*), which started in 2006, identifies ways that schools can contribute to social inclusion. Research institutes in fourteen EU Member States study compulsory educational provision at pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels, including vocational and special education programmes within regular schools. In particular, they focus on five vulnerable groups at risk of social exclusion - women, young people, migrants, cultural groups and people with disabilities.

The project examines the interaction between educational systems, agents and policies; analyses the effect of streaming according to ability; studies the linkage between educational exclusion and employment, housing, health and political participation; analyses the overlap between educational policy and other areas of social policy, and identifies strategies which overcome social exclusion and build social cohesion in Europe. It also studies communities involved in learning projects which have achieved the integration of social and educational interventions that promote social inclusion and empowerment.

The project emphasises that family participation is vital and that training relatives to be involved in their children's learning is key to increasing school success and social inclusion.

Evidence from schools where these community-based education programmes have been implemented, such as in a disadvantaged neighbourhood near Barcelona, shows that improved educational performance is not linked to the ethnic composition of the class but rather to implementing best practices and evidence-based methods.

For further information visit the project website at:

www.ub.es/includ-ed/

Environment



CEH Launches Environmental Information Gateway

The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) Information Gateway was launched this Autumn providing researchers and the wider public with quick, easy and direct access to a diverse range of environmental data. The CEH Information Gateway is the first major output of the Environmental Information Data Centre (EIDC), the NERC Data Centre for the Freshwater and Terrestrial Sciences. The EIDC hosts a wide variety of datasets including many nationally and often globally unique long-term datasets. It brings together data facilities such as the Biological Record Centre, the National River Flow Archive, the UK Environmental Change Network, Countryside Survey and the NERC Environmental Bioinformatics Centre. The CEH Information Gateway can be used to search the data catalogue and read descriptions of the nature and scope of datasets; view, access and overlay maps of key spatial datasets; download key datasets in seconds (subject to terms and conditions of use). Gwyn Rees, Director of the EIDC, said, "The Gateway provides a shop window for CEH-held data: an invaluable resource for the sharing of data with the entire research community and wider public, and one that should stimulate loads of new research."

For further information about the Gateway and the Environmental Information Data Centre visit: www.ceh.ac.uk/CEHInformationGateway.html

To access the Gateway go to: <https://gateway.ceh.ac.uk/>

Impact of Climate Change on UK Seas

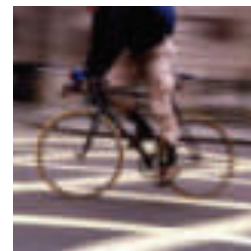
Scientists at the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) have made a substantial scientific contribution to the Marine Climate Change Impacts Partnership (MCCIP)'s third Annual Report Card, which was launched on 15 July by UK environment ministers. MCCIP is a partnership between scientists, government, its agencies, non-governmental organisations and industry. Its principle aim is to provide a co-ordinating framework for the UK, so as to be able to transfer high-quality evidence on marine climate change impacts, and guidance on adaptation and related advice, to policy advisors and decision makers.

The 2010-2011 MCCIP annual report card involved around 100 scientists from 40 leading UK science organisations, including NOC. The report covers 30 marine and coastal topics. It considers how UK Climate Projections (UKCP09) can help predict future marine climate change impacts, which is important for planning how best to adapt to climate change, and for the first time covers air-sea exchanges of carbon dioxide, deep-sea habitats, waterbirds and human health.

A downloadable copy of the summary report can be found at: www.mccip.org.uk/media/7562/mccip-report-2010-2011.pdf or for further information visit: noc.ac.uk/news/mccip-annual-report-card-launched-impacts-climate-change-uk-seas

Missing Carbon Reductions?

Households are expected to play a pivotal role in reducing the UK's carbon emissions, and the Government is targeting specific household actions to help meet its targets. However, focusing on discrete actions fails to take account of the Rebound Effect – a phenomenon through which carbon reductions estimated by simple 'engineering' calculations are frequently not realised in practice. For example, replacing short car journeys by walking or cycling reduces consumption of personal transportation fuels. But this frees up money that may be spent on, for example, purchasing extra clothes or flying on vacation. Alternatively it may be put into savings. All these options give rise to carbon emissions, so that the total carbon saved turns out to be less than predicted. Indeed, in some instances, emissions may even increase – this being known as 'Backfire'.



Researchers at the Research Group on Lifestyles, Values and Environment (RESOLVE) and the Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group (SLRG), based at the Universities of Surrey and Sussex, have estimated that the combined rebound effect for a set of three abatement actions (reducing internal temperatures by 1°C; reducing food waste; and walking or cycling for trips of less than 2 miles) is around 34%. This implies that only around two-thirds of 'hoped for' carbon reductions will be achieved in practice.

Their study also points to two key strategies to minimise rebound: encouraging households a) to shift their spending towards goods with lower green house gas emissions; and b) to direct their savings towards low carbon investments.

For further information please contact Angela Druckman at: a.druckman@surrey.ac.uk

Helping Local Government Manage Water Resources

Local government is being asked to take on new responsibilities for managing natural resources, including water, and the "Big Society" vision of the new coalition is likely to reinforce this process. European legislation will also make demands and climate change adds to the mix. But there are opportunities too, for authorities to take the lead in building partnerships and finding novel ways of working, to ensure that communities get the safe water supplies they need, and to minimise flood risks.



A new policy and practice note for local government on managing RCUK's Rural Economy and Land Use (RELU) Programme is tailored specifically to a local government audience and draws on research from across the programme to support authorities in addressing these new challenges. This note was funded by the Local Authorities & Research Councils' Initiative (LARCI).

A PDF version of the note can be found at: www.relu.ac.uk/news/policy%20and%20practice%20notes/20%20Farnsworth/PPN20.pdf

To view the complete RELU series of policy and practice notes visit: www.relu.ac.uk/news/policyandpracticenotes.htm

Renewable Energy Needs More Community Power

The renewable energy sector needs to use a wider range of business models in order to ensure a fairer distribution of power plants across the UK, according to research funded by the ESRC. Renewable energy policies should encourage more community-owned projects to avoid a concentration of commercial power plants in poorer areas, argues Dr. Dan van der Horst at the University of Birmingham who led the research project.



An analysis of wind farm applications in England shows that rejection of wind energy projects is connected to areas with high political engagement and high life expectancy. The current trend shows that many technically suitable locations may remain unused because of the threat of effective local resistance by people who are relatively privileged.

Planning delays and rejections encourage commercial developers to instead focus on remote or deprived communities as sites for new power plants. In areas of economic fragility, commercial plants are more easily established without having to provide many benefits for the local community.

Many small scale community-driven renewable power plants have been successfully developed in recent years, providing a valuable potential for building and sharing practical knowledge. But this potential can only be fully utilised if new ways to encourage community-led social enterprises, extending beyond remote sites to more urban landscapes are found.

"Policymakers should embrace policies to encourage a wider sense of ownership of projects," says Dr. van der Horst. "There should be structures to ensure that more benefits flow to local communities in economically fragile areas, and encouragement for residents to invest in local projects - especially in more privileged areas."

For further information contact Dr. Dan van der Horst at: d.vanderhorst@bham.ac.uk or tel.: 01214 145525

Experiment Earth?

The results of the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) public dialogue on geoengineering have now been published. The aim of the dialogue was to assess public opinion on how future research relating to geoengineering should be directed, conducted and communicated. It may also be of

value to science users, such as industry and policy-makers, who may play a role in further research and deployment of geoengineering as well as to science communicators. This project was undertaken in partnership with [Sciencewise](#), which supports public dialogue activities in government, and [The Royal Society](#).

The full report and a leaflet summarising the top-level findings can be downloaded from: www.nerc.ac.uk/about/consult/geoengineering.asp



Improvement

The Sound of the Underground!

A new type of sound sensor system has been developed to predict the likelihood of a landslide.

Thought to be the first system of its kind in the world, it works by measuring and analysing the acoustic behaviour of soil to establish when a landslide is imminent so preventative action can be taken. Gauging the increased rate of noise generated by movement under the surface as the slope becomes unstable enables accurate prediction of a soil collapse.

Funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), the technique has been developed by researchers at [Loughborough University](#), in collaboration with the British Geological Survey (BGS).

Professor Neil Dixon, principal investigator on the project, explains how the system works. "In just the same way as bending a stick creates cracking noises that build up until it snaps, so the movement of soil before a landslide creates increasing rates of noise," said Professor Dixon. "What we have been able to do is to capture and process this information so as to quantify the link between noise and soil displacement rates as it happens, in real time – and hence provide an early warning," he added.

As well as the life-saving implications for countries prone to disastrous landslides, the technique can also be used in monitoring the condition of potentially unstable slopes built to support transport infrastructure, such as rail and road embankments, in developed countries such as the UK. A commercial Alarms sensor is expected to be launched in the next two years.

For more information contact: Neil Dixon at: n.dixon@lboro.ac.uk, tel.: 01509 228542



Turning Research into Commercial Enterprises

Funded by the EPSRC and Technology Strategy Board (TSB), two new 'Innovation and Knowledge Centres' (IKCs) will mix business knowledge with the most up-to-date research to harness the full potential of emerging technologies – ensuring the UK is first to develop this cutting-edge research.

The new centres will focus on areas where world class scientific breakthroughs have already been achieved. They will build on the success of the existing centres at Cambridge, Cranfield, Queen's Belfast and Leeds Universities and will become centres of excellence to achieve major scientific breakthroughs. The new IKCs will bring together high calibre teams with a proven research excellence to explore the potential of these breakthroughs and bring new technologies to market more quickly.

Talking about the centres to be based at [Swansea University](#) and [Cambridge University](#), EPSRC's Chief Executive, Professor David Delpy, said: "Taking exciting research from the university laboratory to the commercial sector through close collaboration with user stakeholders is vital to ensuring the UK's economy continues to be innovative and globally competitive."

For further information visit: www.epsrc.ac.uk/newsevents/news/2010/Pages/InnovationandKnowledgeCentres.aspx

The TRANSFORMATION Project



Management Tools for Performance Improvement

Retrenchment management is underway. Implementing the necessary strategic responses is notoriously difficult – the figures vary, but many projects fail, wasting valuable resources. In order to maximise success, The TRANSFORMATION Project created The TRANSFORMATION Pathway. You can find it in The TRANSFORMATION Workbook by visiting: www.thetransformationproject.co.uk.

The Receptivity for Change Toolset The Actor Analysis Toolset

The Toolsets have been developed by working in partnership with colleagues from the public, third and private sectors, and accurately diagnose transformation potential – they specifically reveal what is done well and areas for development, so initiatives can be targeted.

The Workbook explains how to use the Toolsets. Too many organisations rush to implementation and change fails. Our focus is on improving the planning phases of the project management life cycle.

Using the Toolsets, Warwickshire Police achieved their goal of 'protecting communities from harm' by successfully implementing the Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) Project – targets have been exceeded, road safety improved and crime reduced. Within a couple of months the Project found:

23,347 vehicles with no current registered keepers
3,657 vehicles without insurance

We are now working with two other departments using the Receptivity Toolset to embed transformational leadership.

The TRANSFORMATION Project is funded by the ESRC and supported by the Association for Project Management.

For further information contact Dr. Michael Butler, Aston Business School, at: m.j.r.butler@aston.ac.uk

Safer Communities

Police Force Crime Records: understanding crime, disorder and community safety



The Administrative Data Liaison Service (ADLS) is funded by the ESRC to help improve administrative data research in the UK. The service works in tandem with both data holding organisations and academic researchers.

There are 52 police forces in the UK and each collects and owns a wide variety of administrative data in the course of their

daily activities. The Police Force Crime records dataset held by each force contain a wealth of information about their recorded incidents of crime and disorder. This includes types of offences, geographical data, details on offenders, victims and detection.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition from the Police, Central Government and academic researchers of the need to utilise these rich administrative data sources to improve our understanding of crime and disorder and to help evidence and shape policy for safer communities.

The ADLS has released detailed information about Police Force Crime Records on their website to help raise awareness of the dataset and encourage the use of this data for crime and community safety research. Information on the website includes how to make such applications, historical research uses of the data as well as technical guidance and considerations to take into account when using the data.

For more information in using the Police Force Crime Records dataset visit: www.adls.ac.uk or contact Darren Lightfoot at: adls@st-andrews.ac.uk, tel.: 01334 463901

Youth Justice System Treats Ethnic Groups Differently

New research from the Institute for Criminal Policy Research at King's College, London, examines whether the police and the youth justice system treat young people from different ethnic groups in different ways.

Funded by the ESRC, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the research shows that black and mixed-race youths are over-represented in the youth justice system. This over-representation starts at the point of entry into the system, and is largely preserved as young suspects and defendants pass through it.

Most young people encounter the youth justice system through reactive policing when a victim of crime or a witness has made a report to the police. However, proactive policing still accounts for a significant number of arrests, meaning different approaches to policing determine who enters the system.

Researchers found great differences in the way the police carried out proactive policing of young people: some were highly personal and adversarial; others more professional, with clear leadership and standards of behaviour. The adversarial style was particularly prominent in inner-city areas, where the relationship between the police and young black people was shaped by a history of friction, and resulted in proportionately more arrests of black and mixed-race youths. Elsewhere, the more professional approach resulted in fewer arrests of black and mixed-race youths and improved relationships with their community.

Principal Investigator, Professor Mike Hough, said: "Police leaders need to promote a style of policing where policing is done according to due process, treating not only victims and witnesses but also suspects with fairness and respect, and using coercive force only as a last resort. This approach is needed most in the poorest communities, where relations between police and local people are often strained."

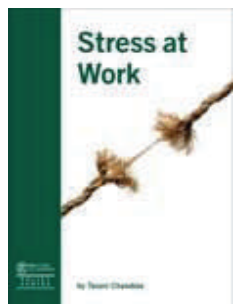
Based on the findings, the researchers have made a range of recommendations for practitioners, policy makers and further research.

For further information contact Professor Mike Hough at: Mike.Hough@kcl.ac.uk, tel.: 02078 481742 or visit: www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/PO/releases/2010/september/youth_justice.aspx



Workforce

Stress at Work



Stress caused by work has been increasing in Britain since 1992. The 2008-09 recession has increased work stressors including job insecurity, work intensity, and inter-personal conflict; and cuts in government spending will undoubtedly heighten these levels of work stress, particularly in the public sector.

'Stress at Work', a report written by Prof. Tarani Chandola and recently launched

by the [British Academy](http://www.britac.ac.uk) Policy Centre, outlines not only the trends and determinants of work stress, but the serious costs of it to health, employers, the economy, and to society. It considers existing evidence on these various costs, outlining future priority areas.

The report is directed not only at policymakers, but aims to both inform and caution employers and employees in all sectors and industries of the dangers of stress at work.

Further information and a PDF version of the report can be found at: www.britac.ac.uk/policy/Stress-at-Work.cfm

Lap Dancing

Funded by the ESRC and undertaken at [Leeds University](http://www.leeds.ac.uk), the first major empirical piece of research, on lap dancing in the UK is underway, exploring the rise and regulation of the industry. Focusing on the working conditions and experiences of dancers and the regulatory framework within which the industry operates, preliminary findings demonstrate that lap dancing is used as an income generating strategy for mainly young women who are in precarious labour circumstances and who are seeking to stabilise their situations. Particular groups such as students and migrant workers are attracted to the flexibility and informal nature of the work, but are often using this employment as a 'future-building' strategy. In the research sample there was no evidence of trafficking or forced labour, although financial exploitation from some management is evident.

The research is extremely timely as all Local Authorities are currently writing policies to implement a recent change in the ways in which clubs are licensed. We are able to make recommendations in relation to safety, reducing financial exploitation and increasing the working rights of dancers and welfare conditions in clubs, which have been considered within the consultation process by a number of Licensing Committees.

For further information visit: www.sociology.leeds.ac.uk/research/projects/regulatory-dance.php or contact Dr. Teela Sanders at: t.i.m.sanders@leeds.ac.uk

Breakfast at Birkbeck: flexible development programme

Birkbeck is well known for its high quality teaching and flexible evening study which every year enable thousands of working Londoners to obtain prestigious University of London qualifications. However, the College's Business School is now



offering workshops at the other end of the day, with a series of intensive workshops and networking breakfasts running from the 10th January to 15th April 2011.

The Breakfast at Birkbeck programme is led by internet pioneers, Red Cross negotiators and city bankers (amongst others) and consists of over 50 workshops which will equip management professionals to face the challenges of today's business environment. Whether it's considering Colin Powell's fourteen 'Lessons of Leadership', a masterclass on social media or building customer information into the business strategy, the workshops will bring real benefits for companies and for those wanting to develop their careers.

The flexible programme has workshops grouped under various themes and each event will consist of a networking breakfast from 8am, followed by an intensive programme until 12 midday.

To see the full programme or to book a workshop, go to: www.bbk.ac.uk/breakfast or contact Tim Byne, at: t.byne@bbk.ac.uk on tel.: 02076 31 6429

Planning Powers to Expand Training Opportunities

The Centre for Learning and Life Chances in Knowledge Economics and Societies ([LLAKES](http://www.llakes.org)) is providing fresh insights into how local authorities can make innovative use of Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act and other planning powers to develop training initiatives that achieve both economic goals and social cohesion. In Greater Manchester, LLAKES researchers are evaluating a new initiative led by Manchester City Council's North Manchester Regeneration Team to secure a much better long-term future for an area that has suffered from a combination of problems in recent years. A key part of the initiative involves building new social housing and a retail strategy to improve the general environment. Planning powers are being used to create an employment plan which requires the housing developer to recruit a certain percentage of construction workers from the local area and to provide apprenticeships for local 16-18 year olds who have been classified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) for at least six months. The initiative, which has both economic and social cohesion goals, involves a range of social partners as well as private sector employers. This project builds on earlier research in Southampton which revealed how the City Council's use of Section 106 led to a major retail company working with third sector organisations to provide pre-employment training to local unemployed people and to the development of a supported recruitment process to increase the chances of disadvantaged individuals gaining jobs in the new store. The findings from the LLAKES programme of research are showing that local authorities can use planning powers to achieve social cohesion goals, while still satisfying the economic goals of both local authorities and businesses.



For more information about the research contact Prof. Lorna Unwin at: l.unwin@ioe.ac.uk, tel.: 020-7612-6341 or Prof. Alison Fuller at: a.fuller@soton.ac.uk, tel.: 02380-598864

For the case study report visit: www.llakes.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/U.-Economic-Regeneration-Social-Cohesion-and-the-Welfare-to-Work-Industry.pdf

Focus on LARCI

Integrated budgets: do they benefit or create problems?

In response to the profound economic and political changes which have occurred in recent times, LARCI has commissioned research on a number of critical strategic questions.



A new LARCI project being led by Trish Haines of Worcestershire County Council is looking at how councils and other local bodies can integrate budgets for the community's benefit. This project begins with a bottom-up 'what works'

approach rather than a top-down statement of 'what should work'. It asks what drives the current interest in integrating budgets, it reviews the costs and benefits of integration, and it tests the evidence about what works.

The discussion paper that has come out of the project was produced by [Inlogov](#) and [Matrix](#) and presents some interesting questions, and challenges some of the conventional wisdom about integrated budgets. This is exactly what a good partnership between academics and practitioners should do. The paper challenges the view that integration, collaboration, or other forms of joint activity will automatically produce economies of scale. Economies of scale make sense if you are making widgets; but even factories accept there is a point at which there are diseconomies of scale.

LARCI researchers suggest another way of looking at the issue. Perhaps the advantage of joining-up comes from a 'collaborative advantage' where each partner can reach an objective more successfully than it could alone. The key to this 'collaborative advantage' lies in a combination of access (to money, expertise, knowledge, connections); risk sharing; opportunities to plan for better outcomes; common learning, and having a forum to tackle "wicked problems."

One surprise from the initial research conducted by the project is the lack of evidence of knowledge about how organisations analyse the costs and benefits of collaboration, and how they decide on the right share of costs and benefits between them. This is an important point to consider because how organisations approach collaboration gives a good indication of how they will share costs and benefits and the fate of the partnership long-term.

The research team suggest we can understand partnership behaviour by thinking about members' self-interest or community interest. A self-interested partner exhibits exploitative behaviour if they aim to maximise their benefit to the cost of their partner. This is a real danger if one partner is larger or more powerful. If each partner is self-interested, there is wasteful behaviour as the partnership creates no benefits. Exploitative and wasteful partnerships do not last in the long-term. Longer-term partnerships are more likely if one partner makes contributions for the benefit of the other and the wider community interest (altruistic behaviour), or if both partners put the community interest first. This synergistic behaviour occurs when both partners work to share contributions and maximise benefits together. The final report is due out early next year.

To view the discussion summary and full report visit: www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/partnership/Larci3/services/themes.htm

LOCAL AUTHORITIES & RESEARCH COUNCILS' INITIATIVE

Encouraging Small Businesses to Engage

Raising levels of innovation is key to the development of every region. A partnership between Luton Borough Council and the University of Bedfordshire, enabled by the LARCI pilot placement scheme, aimed to raise the low level of innovation of SMEs in parts of the East of England. It succeeded in determining which local SME's would most benefit from participation in European R&D programmes, and specific policy actions that need to be adopted by local authorities to encourage active engagement in innovation.

Concentrating on the area of eHealth, Dr. Elly Philpott, the LARCI Placement Fellow, contacted twenty six local companies to encourage their participation in EU schemes and to invite them to a seminar to find out more about the potential.

Dr. Philpott said: *"Six key markets are being targeted for European Union (EU) support. These are: eHealth, Protective textiles, Sustainable Construction, Recycling, Bio-based products and Renewable energies. SMEs can benefit from these funding opportunities and from lessons learnt from previous projects. This project has allowed us to share knowledge with local councils and to provide SMEs with useful information on EU opportunities."*

Work has included the distribution of handbooks and a University of Bedfordshire seminar on 'accessing funding' held in October 2010. Seminar materials were also distributed via Council networks, the University e-zine and Gibson Index.

Ward Hills of Pneumacare said; *"We have found them {the seminar materials} a good indicator to FP7 information which my project manager is reviewing."*

Mal Hussain of Luton Borough Council said; *"Working together in this way allows us to share knowledge and make best use of our combined resources to support local businesses."*

The LARCI pilot placement scheme provided an opportunity for academics and local authorities to work together to help tackle a particular issue or question. Placements were for up to one month over a six month period.

For further information about this placement contact: Dr. Elly Philpott at: elly.philpott@beds.ac.uk

Engaging with Scottish Local Authorities (ESLA)



ESLA is funded by the [Scottish Funding Council](#), [ESRC](#) and [LARCI](#) to respond to the knowledge needs of local government, and to promote knowledge exchange between Scottish universities and local authorities. There were five pilot projects each involving a university/local authority partnership. University staff doing placements within local authorities found it opened up a new world of issues, contacts and opportunities. Local authority placements with universities have involved practitioners in designing small initiatives that make a difference. Seminars and workshops were well attended and successful in engaging people who are otherwise not engaged. Tangible outputs such as briefings, reviews and on-line resources are much appreciated and help to enthuse a wide range of practitioners. The pilots are now drawing to a close and project leaders will be seeking further funding to continue with the progress made.

To find out more, including profiles of individual projects, visit the ESLA website at: www.st-andrews.ac.uk/engage/

Focus on Local Government

YouChoose: a participatory budgeting tool

The Local Government Group has launched an online tool called YouChoose. It is a budget simulator that lets members of the public see exactly how councils spend their money, and invites them to suggest areas where council budget cuts should fall, where efficiencies might be made and where income might be generated.



The tool was originally developed by the London Borough of Redbridge to engage its citizens in the difficult decisions that arise from budget reductions. In partnership with the Local Government Group and YouGov, YouChoose is now freely available to all Local Government Association member councils in England and Wales. With this, they too have a tool to help them engage their citizens in decisions about how they spend their revenue budgets and help their citizens understand the tough choices the council faces.

To find out more about this tried and tested tool visit: <http://list.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/t/67868/4133996/9784/0>

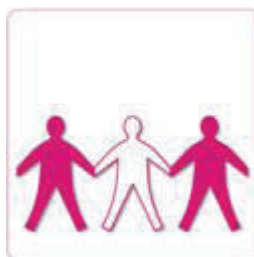
Not Another Consultation!

New guidance document, 'Not another consultation! Making engagement informal and fun', is linked to the Government's proposals on 'Big Society'. It emphasises the central role that local government plays in tackling health inequalities and improving health through enhanced local democratic legitimacy and engagement with the public.

This guide has been written by Local Government (LG) Improvement and Development (formerly the IDeA)'s Healthy Communities team, following a successful project with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and NHS West Kent. They ran an informal engagement event to promote health improvement in the West Kent area.

The partnership mixed accessible engagement with activities like Indian head massage, face painting, 'smoothie bikes' and jewellery making. Health information stalls covered issues including smoking and sexual health. The group was thus able to run a lively and positive engagement event that broke the boundaries of formal consultation and moved away from box ticking. If you would like to find out how to plan, run and evaluate this kind of informal engagement event, then this guidance will help.

To download a copy of the full report go to: www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/23677408



Focus on Research Councils

Research for our Future

Recent research has shown that public investment in research has a direct impact on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and this is crucial to driving UK growth in these economically fragile times. As the number of academics and higher education institutions engaging with business and industry rises, further

investment is attracted to the UK. From a recent RCUK report '*Research for our Future: UK business success through public investment*' the evidence is overwhelming that it is the quality of UK research that attracts business and industry to conduct Research & Development in partnership with UK-based researchers.

Written by leading economist Romesh Vaitilingam, this new report presents the case for UK research and why it is so vital for our future prosperity. It includes submissions from leading business and industry and examines why they choose to work in partnership with British researchers.

For a copy of the report go to: www.rcuk.ac.uk/cmsweb/downloads/rcuk/publications/researchforourfuture.pdf

SQUEASE™ wins RCUK Business Plan Competition

SQUEASE™ will revolutionise the way people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are helped to deal with anxiety and has recently won first prize in the prestigious RCUK Business Plan Competition 2010. The team led by Sheraz Arif from Design London, received £25,000 towards accelerating their business to develop a range of clothing products that apply deep pressure to the wearer creating a calming effect. The range of products is initially aimed at teenagers and young people with ASD and is designed to offer discreet relief whilst on the move.

David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science said: "I am delighted that SQUEASE Ltd has won first prize in the RCUK Business Plan Competition 2010. The UK has a long history of innovative and creative research and development, and this competition is an excellent way of encouraging researchers to expand their work, consider commercial opportunities and ultimately contribute to the UK economy. Initiatives such as this are important in demonstrating the value of UK research to business and industry around the world."



For more information about all the other entries to the 2010 RCUK Business Plan Competition visit: www.rcuk.ac.uk/cmsweb/downloads/rcuk/innovation/bpc/BPCFINAL.pdf

English Life under the Normans

A new Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded study of early medieval manuscripts written in the English language has revealed that the Normans, who conquered England in 1066, were not the destructive force of popular belief, sweeping away everything that had gone before.

The new study shows English people living under Norman rule continued to write, read and preach in the English language as they had done under the Anglo-Saxon kings in earlier centuries, in the new social and political climate.

Men or women trained to write down texts would probably have worked in English, Latin and Anglo-Norman with equal ease. Monks and nuns across England would be used to reading a range of languages, and drawing on traditional English texts to think about new theological ideas.

For further information view: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News/Latest/Pages/Earlymedievalmanuscripts.aspx> or contact Dr. Orietta Da Rold at: odr1@le.ac.uk, tel.: 0116 252 2778

Britain in 2011

The ESRC's annual newsstand magazine *Britain in 2011* showcases the diversity of ESRC-funded research and is a mix of research news, academic opinion pieces and informed journalistic writing, offering a concise analysis of topical issues concerning Britain today.

Copies are widely available in WHSmiths Travel and High Street shops, Waitrose, Waterstones and Marks & Spencer, and direct orders can be made by calling: 01242 283103 or emailing: esrcorders@ravensworth.co.uk



ESRC Evidence Briefings

The first two in a new series of ESRC evidence briefings are now available for download. Forthcoming topics will include: Housing, Small Business, Regulation and Enterprise.

Foreign Ownership and Consequences for British Business

This evidence briefing is aimed at those concerned with business sector regulation and guidelines for foreign ownership. The research indicates targeted policy measures to optimise economic growth and innovation benefits from foreign-owned businesses.

Further details and a downloadable version of the briefing can be found at: www.rcuk.ac.uk/cmsweb/downloads/rcuk/innovation/larci/EvidenceBriefing1.pdf



Rebalancing Britain's Public Finances

This evidence briefing is aimed at those concerned with balancing economic growth between social groups and regions, and building an internationally competitive skills base. It summarises the main findings of the National Equality Panel's 2010 report, *An Anatomy of Economic Inequality*. The research indicates where interventions could have long lasting effects on people's life chances and increase equality.

Further details and a downloadable version of the briefing can be found at:

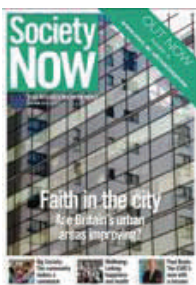
www.rcuk.ac.uk/cmsweb/downloads/rcuk/innovation/larci/EvidenceBriefing2.pdf



Society Now

The ESRC's regular magazine *Society Now* brings the latest and most topical social science research to key opinion formers in business, government and the voluntary sector. *Society Now* is published three times a year and highlights research currently being undertaken by the UK's leading social scientists and demonstrates how social science research can contribute to better policymaking and, ultimately, a better society.

To view a copy visit: www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/Images/SN08.1_tcm6-37461.pdf



Events

Sustainable Development Conference 2011 23rd February 2011, London

The carbon emissions targets of 2020 are fast approaching; it is vital that growth continues to be sustainable, communities are engaged and waste is reduced. Public services can take a bold and creative approach to meeting environmental challenges. This conference aims to promote the efficient use of resources and explore how sustainable initiatives can not only improve our quality of life but also deliver cost savings.

For further event information and to register please visit: www.publicserviceevents.co.uk/event/overview.asp?ID=169

International Patients Summit 23rd – 24th February 2011, Edinburgh

This two-day conference will seek to showcase good practice across all areas of person-centred healthcare. Comprising 4 plenary sessions and 4 workshop sessions, the overarching theme will be entitled "treating patients as partners".

For further event information and to register please visit: www.mackayhannah.com/upcoming-conferences/international-patients/

Redesigning Local Services 23rd March 2011, London

The government wants to re-design how our public services are run to make them more cost-effective. Decentralisation of powers means that local authorities must engage with communities, social enterprise and the private sector more effectively. The Chancellor has asked councils to question whether non-essential services can be provided by a third party, thus helping to sustain services but reduce costs.

This event will look carefully at governance, management, design and the implications of a radical change in how local services are delivered. With a programme of excellent speakers, including case studies from innovative councils, this is an essential event for all local authorities.

For further event information and to register please visit: www.publicserviceevents.co.uk/event/overview.asp?ID=173

Big Society 2011 31st March 2011, London

This Empowering Communities, Encouraging Social Action and Opening Up Public Services event will offer delegates the opportunity to understand the role of the voluntary and community groups, charities, social enterprises and other stakeholders in building a stronger civil society that promotes social action and delivers public service reform.

For further event information and to register please visit: www.insidegovernment.co.uk/economic_dev/big-society-2011

Knowledge Exchange in Public Health Conference 11th-12th April 2011, Durham

The aim of the conference is to bring together those working in health, local authority, voluntary organisations and academics from across the public, health and wellbeing community to share learning about the latest thinking in knowledge exchange, translational research, the co-creation of knowledge, partnership and collaborative working.

For further event information and to register please visit: www.fuse.ac.uk/group.php?gid=213

Useful links

Research Councils' Bulletins

Each of the Research Councils' produces e-bulletins summarising research outputs, consultations and other information of interest to stakeholders. To register visit:

- AHRC:** www.ahrc.ac.uk/News/Pages
- BBSRC:** www.bbsrc.ac.uk/media/news_email.html
- EPSRC:** <http://fd.epsrc.ac.uk/EmailAlert/>
- ESRC:** www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/index_press.aspx
- MRC:** www.mrc.ac.uk/Newspublications/subscribe
- NERC:** www.nerc.ac.uk/news/rss/
- RCUK:** www.rcuk.ac.uk/news/bulletin/default.htm
- STFC:** www.so.stfc.ac.uk/media/distlist.aspx

Research Councils' Searchable Databases

- AHRC:** www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundedResearch/Pages/default.aspx
- BBSRC:** www.bbsrc.ac.uk/science/grants/
- EPSRC:** www.epsrc.ac.uk/
- ESRC:** www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/research/
- MRC:** www.mrc.ac.uk/ResearchPortfolio/index.htm
- NERC:** <http://gotw.nerc.ac.uk/>
- STFC:** www.scitech.ac.uk/SciProg/home.aspx

Research Councils' Future Programmes and Opportunities

- AHRC:** www.ahrc.ac.uk/FundingOpportunities/Pages/default.aspx
- BBSRC:** www.bbsrc.ac.uk/funding/opportunities/index.html
- EPSRC:** www.epsrc.ac.uk/ResearchFunding/Opportunities/FutureCalls.htm
- ESRC:** www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfocentre/opportunities/forthcoming_opportunities/index.asp
- NERC:** www.nerc.ac.uk/funding
- STFC:** www.scitech.ac.uk/Grants/ResGr/FundOpp/FundOpp.aspx

Your Ideas

LARCI Newsletter

If you have any other thoughts, comments or suggestions for our newsletter we would like to hear from you.

- Which sections do you read?
- Which do you find useful?
- Which have you used?
- Have you made contacts through the newsletter or followed up on any of the items?

We need your input so that we can deliver information you use. If you have a great photo you would like to see on the front cover then please contact: larci@rcuk.ac.uk

Next Issue

The next issue of the LARCI newsletter will be published in April 2011

We welcome any articles and items of interest for inclusion to be sent to:

Larci@rcuk.ac.uk

Copy Deadline
15th March 2011

JOIN LARCI

To receive the LARCI Newsletter and regular e-bulletin updates, please register at:

www.larci.org.uk



LOCAL AUTHORITIES &
RESEARCH COUNCILS' INITIATIVE

Bringing **WORLD-CLASS RESEARCH**
to **LOCAL ISSUES**

The Local Authorities & Research Councils' Initiative (LARCI) was established in 1997 to bring local authorities and the Research Councils into closer partnership. LARCI aims to facilitate communication between the Research Councils and local authorities at a strategic and operational level, leading to better informed research, policy and practice.

LARCI operates through an Operational Group comprising representatives of the following Research Councils, local and central government: Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC); Audit Commission; Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC); Communities and Local Government (CLG); Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC); Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC); Local Authorities Research + Intelligence Association (LARIA); Local Government Group (LGG); Medical Research Council (MRC); Natural Environment Research Council (NERC); Society of Local Authority Chief Executives and Senior Managers (SOLACE) and Research Councils UK (RCUK).

www.larci.org.uk



LOCAL AUTHORITIES &
RESEARCH COUNCILS' INITIATIVE