



ADR UK Annual Report 2021-22

**Administrative data
is an invaluable
resource for public
good. *We're using it.***

Foreword



from Professor Alison Park, Interim Executive Chair of the Economic and Social Research Council and Senior Responsible Officer for ADR UK

The need for high-quality data to address new and complex challenges continues to grow. With an increasing and ageing population, demands on public services are intensifying at a time when services are still recovering from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In light of the disparities exposed and exacerbated by the pandemic, the need for continued detailed insights based on health, education, income, and many other forms of public sector data is critical. And, of course, we continue to face the challenge of tackling climate change and its widespread consequences.

ADR UK has an increasingly pivotal role to play in helping us understand and respond to these and other pressing issues. By generating timely and vital insights from existing administrative data through secure research, we can inform better policy. As we build the scope of ADR UK's activities and research-ready datasets, we will increase capacity to provide decision makers with timely and high-quality evidence to support society's most vulnerable groups.

Following the success of its 2018–2021 pilot phase, the ADR UK partnership has achieved a huge amount over the last year. In particular, ADR UK has enabled thousands of researchers to securely access de-identified administrative data across the four nations of the UK and has had demonstrable success in engaging effectively with government departments to help meet their research needs. These successes were key to ADR UK securing long-term funding through to 2026 from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

ADR UK represents a significant investment for ESRC and will play a key role in realising many of the council's ambitions, which are set out in our recently published [Strategic Delivery Plan](#). Also published earlier this year, [ESRC's Data Infrastructure Strategy](#) reflects our vision of what social science data infrastructure needs to look like in the future. ADR UK will support this vision as part of a suite of research data infrastructures that help us understand people, organisations and the world around us. ADR UK's remit for training and capacity building will contribute to ESRC's wider aims to support data-driven research in the social sciences.

We are also seeing increasing demand for social science evidence from policymakers across local, regional, devolved and UK government. ADR UK is exceptionally well placed to meet this growing need, bringing government and academia together to answer urgent policy questions and improve lives. By growing and developing our current relationships, we can realise the full potential of administrative data as a resource for public good.

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1. Introduction



from Dr Emma Gordon, Director of ADR UK

Following the successful completion of our pilot phase in 2021, ADR UK has made remarkable progress. The programme has undertaken a wide variety of projects to support our goal of creating good quality evidence to inform government policy across the UK.

ADR UK and ADR Scotland recently co-hosted the International Population Data Linkage Network (IPDLN) Conference in Edinburgh. This conference, which was held in person over three days, focused on using data linkage to inform policy and practice – a theme that aligns strongly to our work. I am proud that ADR UK stewarded this event in 2022, and look forward to continuing to support IPDLN activities moving forward.

UKRI's DARE UK (Data and Analytics Research Environments UK) programme completed its first phase in August 2022 and has secured further funding to October 2023. The [findings and recommendations](#) from an extensive programme of community engagement during Phase 1 were published at the end of August. The long-term aim of this programme is to inform the delivery of a more coordinated national data research infrastructure for the UK. ADR UK has supported DARE UK in a number of ways over the previous year, to ensure learning around coordinating and improving cross-sectoral national data infrastructures can be taken forward.

Our partnership has welcomed the opportunity to [contribute to four consultations in the last year](#), including two stages of the Information Commissioner's Office's consultation on their anonymisation, pseudonymisation and privacy enhancing technologies guidance. We are proud to engage with policymakers in government and share our expertise in administrative data security, in support of a national data landscape that is transparent and trustworthy.

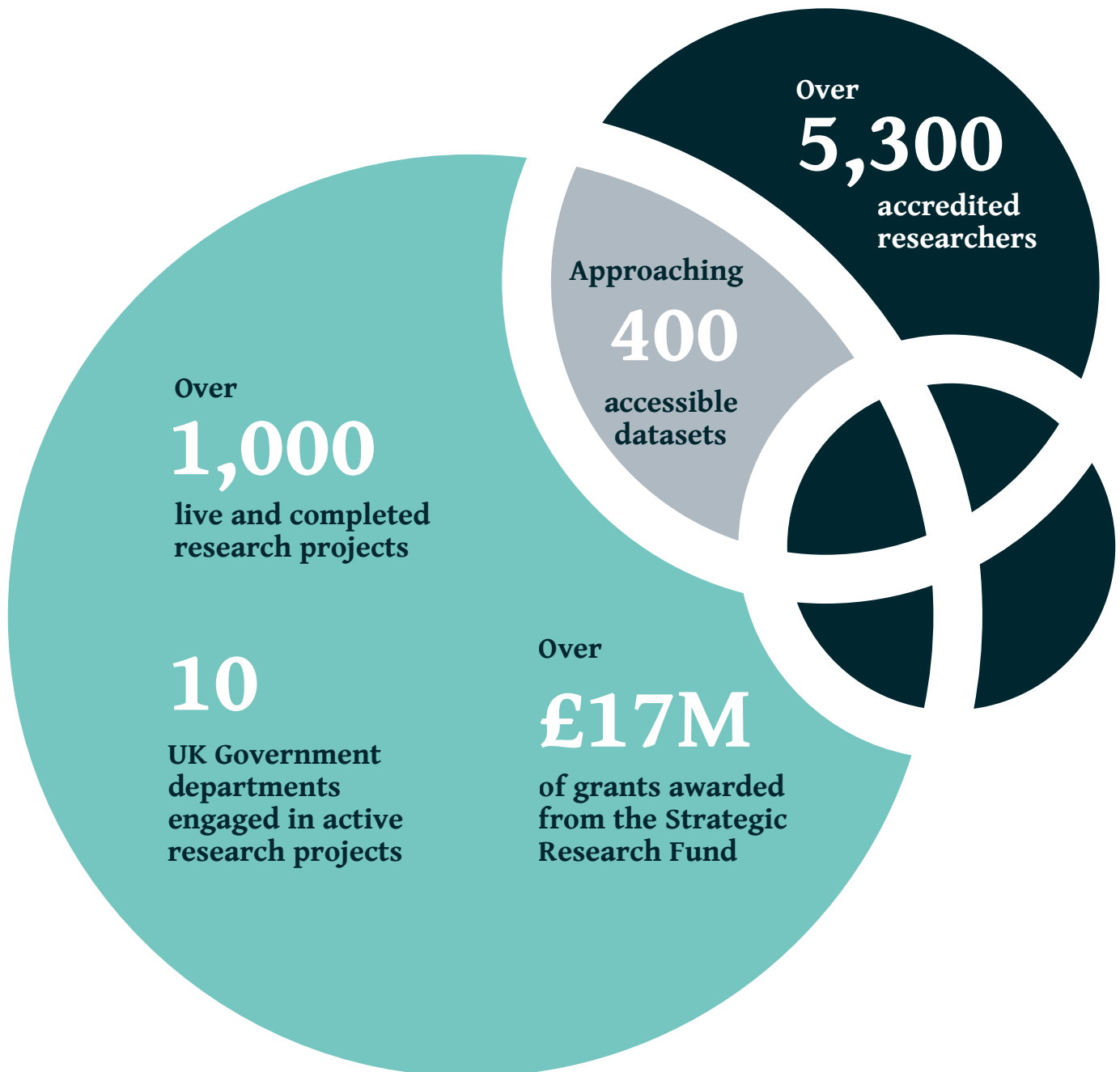
This year, we published our new [Training and Capacity Building Strategy](#), which sets out five routes to engage several important groups of learners, from undergraduates to government advisors. With an investment of £2.3 million over the next four years, we hope this strategy will impact a broad range of institutions, sectors and disciplines.

Following a £90 million reinvestment in our programme, which will support our work for the next five years, our national partnerships have been recommissioned until 2026. Our partnerships provide access to a wealth of administrative data, and contribute to a deeper and more representative understanding of people's needs and experiences across the UK.

During the last year, ADR Wales colleagues in Welsh Government have responded rapidly to an urgent policy request, using linked data analysis to estimate Covid-19 vaccination uptake among teachers and school support staff. ADR NI (Northern Ireland) has launched an online air pollution dashboard that allows the public to search for air pollution levels in their area. ADR Scotland has launched a pilot project to engage with children and young people, allowing us to learn from their perspectives on the use of their data. As our new ADR England programme has matured over the past year, our Fellows have begun to publish exciting outputs and policy-relevant insights from their research. Following the success of these fellowships, we have launched further funding opportunities for the coming year.

This is just a snapshot of developments, with many more case studies described in this annual report. I am proud of what we as a partnership have achieved in our fourth year, and I am excited to see our groundbreaking projects continue to develop and create impact.

2. ADR UK in Numbers



3. Our Mission

Good government policy – policy that solves social and economic problems and improves lives – needs good evidence.

ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK)'s mission is to transform the way researchers access the UK's wealth of public sector data. By joining up the abundance of administrative data already being created by government and public bodies across the UK, and facilitating safe and secure access to this data for approved researchers, ADR UK is creating a sustainable resource that will provide valuable insights into how our society and economy function. This approach is tailored to give decision makers the answers they need to solve important policy questions, driving change that has the potential to improve lives across the UK.

“ Our Vision **”**

“ADR UK’s vision for 2026 is to be the default choice to host linked administrative data from across the entirety of UK and devolved government, making it accessible to a deep pool of trained researchers to generate insights routinely used to inform policy and practice.”

Our Values

Responsible and ethical data use

The data we enable access to is used ethically and responsibly for research projects that can make a positive difference to society. Access to and use of data is strictly controlled and monitored, with projects assessed for:

- ✓ Ethics
- ✓ Feasibility
- ✓ Privacy
- ✓ Public benefit
- ✓ Scientific merit



Relevance

The research we enable must be relevant to society's needs, so our research themes are aligned with the UK's most pressing issues. We review all project proposals to ensure potential for public good.



Independence

Although publicly funded, we emphasise the importance of independent and impartial research. We distribute funds to academics in universities and other institutes throughout the UK.



Impact

Our research makes a difference: it shapes public policies and makes businesses, voluntary bodies and other organisations more effective as well as shaping wider society.



Areas of focus and goals

Trust & sustainability

Commitment and sustainability for administrative data research:

strategic focus on addressing major societal challenges through administrative data research, with support throughout government for releasing data to create a sustainable research resource.



Research for public good

Measurable public good:

demonstrable impact arising from administrative data research that addresses major societal challenges.



Research access & support

Seamless researcher service:

transparent, coordinated, secure and timely access to administrative data and support services for the wider research community.



Available data for research

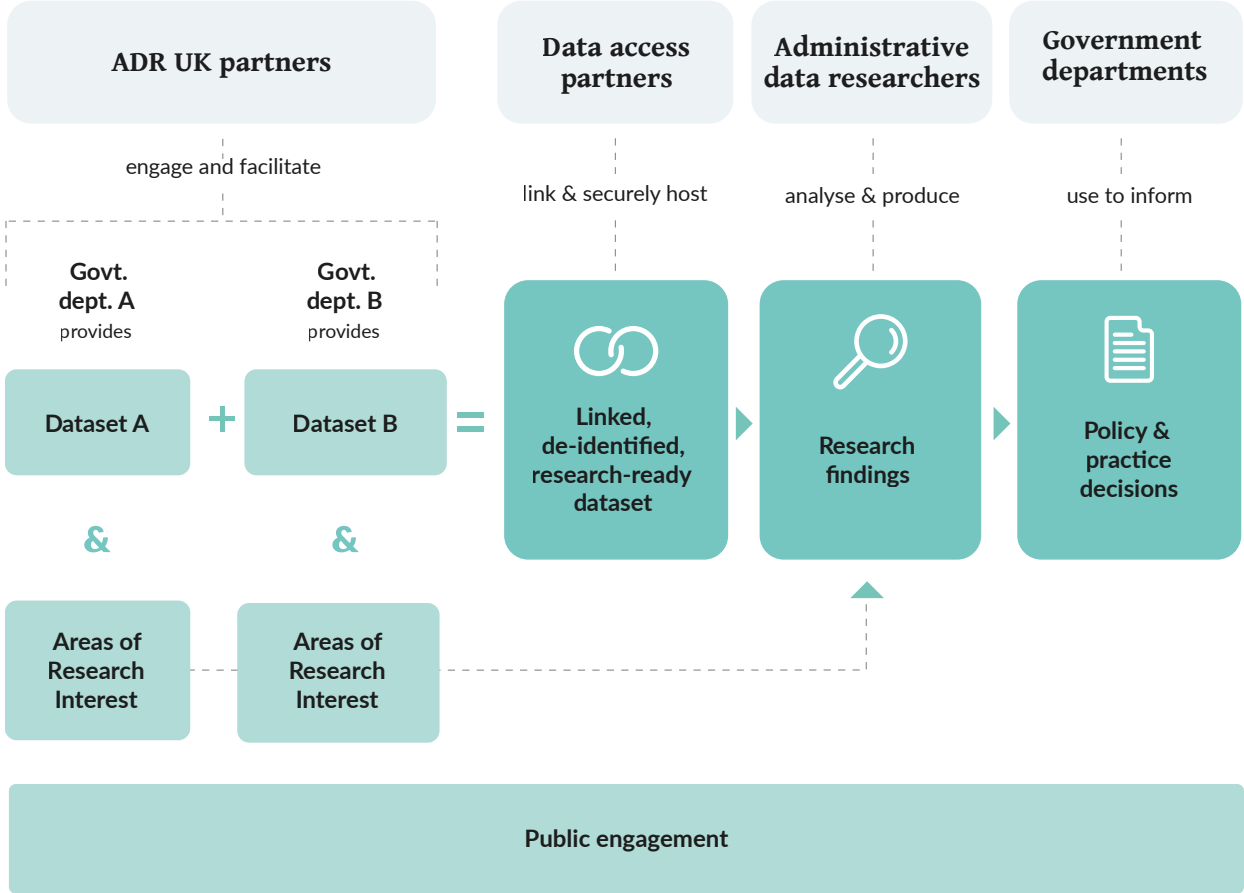
A highly useful long-term research resource:

flow, accessibility and long-term preservation of high quality, research-ready administrative data, designed to address major societal challenges.



The ADR UK process:

How we work with government to generate useful insights



4. Our Impact

As an Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) investment, ADR UK adopts the definition of impact used by ESRC and across UK Research and Innovation as a whole:



“Impact is the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy.”

This includes informing changes to government policy and public service provision that lead to better social and economic outcomes for people and communities. This impact can be at any geographic level: from the local, to the national and international. Across ADR UK, our partners have a range of strategies to maximise impact across our ‘Five Ps’: process, policy, practice, people and potential.

Common approaches include:

- partnering with government
- engaging with stakeholders, communities and the public
- making datasets available for further use by accredited researchers
- aligning with national strategies and departmental Areas of Research Interest
- dual publication in formats that are easily digestible and usable by different stakeholders
- the public interest test, with research projects approved by the UK Statistics Authority’s Research Accreditation Panel. This is fundamental to enabling research that has a positive impact on people’s lives.

Case studies demonstrating the impact of ADR UK projects are included in this report.





5. Our Data Services

Data can be accessed by accredited researchers for approved research projects that are in the public interest. ADR UK partners have rigorous safeguards in place to ensure data cannot be accessed by any unauthorised person, or for any reason other than research in the public benefit.

There are several different routes through which researchers can securely access administrative data. The route researchers take depends on what data they want to access, where in the UK they want to access it from, and what existing accreditation they or their institution have for accessing data. Data can be accessed:

- via one of the saferooms managed by our trusted research environments based in each of the four UK nations
- via a secure connection to our trusted research environments from home or work, through [assured organisational connectivity](#)
- via one of the SafePods which provide secure access to data. These are based at academic institutions around the UK.

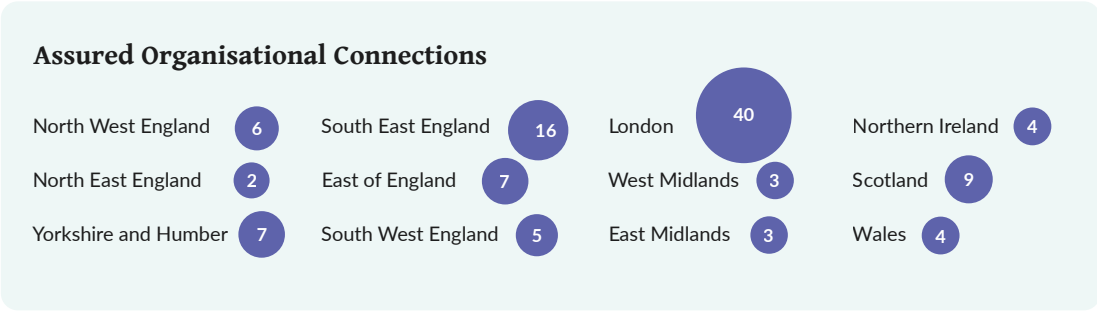
SafePod Network

August 2022 marked the one-year anniversary of the SafePod Network, a world-first service to provide researchers with standardised safe settings (SafePods) for data that requires secure access for research. SafePods are located primarily at universities across the UK.

SafePods provide the necessary security and controls for secure data access. This includes a door control access system, CCTV, a researcher area for data analysis, and a secure IT cupboard. Policies and procedures are in place to manage and operate SafePods.

SafePods are also wheelchair accessible, include a height adjustable desk and large dual monitors. There are now 16 SafePods available for accredited researchers to use across the UK, up from five when the network launched. The [SafePod Network website](#) provides a centralised booking system for SafePods.

ADR UK data access points



6. Key Developments Across the Partnership

ADR UK is made up of four national partnerships – ADR England, ADR Northern Ireland, ADR Scotland, and ADR Wales – as well as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and is coordinated by a UK-wide Strategic Hub. This structure allows each UK nation to have a dedicated trusted research environment and research expertise, focusing in on its national policy needs while also enabling UK-wide research.

Each ADR UK partner works closely with expert researchers from academic institutions and other research bodies, as well as government data holders and policymakers, to support research that fills key evidence gaps and informs policy and practice. This helps to connect academia and government, ensuring that insights from administrative data research can be used to improve society.

This year, ADR UK has advocated for the benefits of administrative data research in new and exciting ways. In hosting the International Population Data Linkage Network (IPDLN) Conference in Edinburgh for 2022, we've taken the opportunity to explore new ideas and share learning and best practice with a global audience.

In partnership with the Office for Statistics Regulation, our UK-wide series of public dialogue workshops has opened productive conversations about how administrative data research can support public good. And we've continued to work with our ADR UK Ambassadors to share the benefits of working with administrative data, expanding our circle to include more academic stakeholders as well as those working in government.

You can read more about all of these initiatives later in the report.

This year also saw our national partnerships in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales recommissioned until 2026. This significant milestone – part of a £90 million UK-wide ADR UK investment from the Economic and Social Research Council – allows us to continue and grow our work to generate insights that improve people's lives, both within the devolved nations and across the UK.

The ADR UK partnership



Data access partner : Office for National Statistics

Data access service : SAFEPOD
SECURE DATA ACCESS

ADR England

ADR England is a portfolio of data linking and research projects which provide policy-relevant insights. This work is delivered by a wide range of partners across academia and government, using data held by UK Government departments and public bodies. ADR England is managed by the ADR UK Strategic Hub, embedded within the Economic and Social Research Council. Data for ADR England projects is accessed by accredited researchers predominantly via the ONS Secure Research Service.

This year, ADR England has commissioned 11 new research-ready data projects, which will be delivered in partnership with the ONS, in addition to managing the existing portfolio. More details are given in the 'Looking forward' chapter. Covering a diverse range of topics, from transport to environment and health, these projects will help us realise the value of administrative data in providing insights that improve lives.

To grow this ability even further, ADR England has begun implementing the Training and Capacity Building strategy, which will develop skills and infrastructure to enable more researchers to use administrative data for public good. More information is available on page 52.

The ADR England portfolio has more linked datasets than ever available for accredited researchers to access and use to derive new insights. To explore and demonstrate the value of these datasets for research, we've launched five funding calls and commissions this year. And to help ensure all of this work is for the public good, ADR England has worked closely with its three community representative panels to provide insight and feedback on our work.



Dr Emma Gordon,
Director of ADR UK:

“ADR England plays a crucial role in delivering our mission, by formalising our model of working with UK Government departments to fully realise the potential of administrative data. In its first year, this portfolio of work has already proved valuable, enabling the linkage of datasets that can provide new insights to inform policy and improve lives. We have funded accredited researchers to securely access and analyse this data, to fill key evidence gaps and show how these datasets can benefit researchers and the public.

“I am looking forward to the continued development of this work in the next year. Working in collaboration with ADR Northern Ireland, ADR Scotland and ADR Wales, ADR England provides new and exciting ways to enable research that improves lives across the UK.”



IMPACT CASE STUDY: Local Data Spaces – supporting local authorities' responses to the Covid-19 pandemic

To enable evidence-informed policy decisions, this research pilot made timely and local data sources and analysis available for local authorities at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Findings from the Local Data Spaces study informed a range of responsive actions, from the delivery of rapid testing in Liverpool to lockdown releases and workplace interventions, as considered by the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE). The study won ONS's Research Excellence Award in 2021 and demonstrated the importance of secure, supported access to local-level administrative data to inform local decision making.

A partnership between the Joint Biosecurity Centre, ADR UK, the Consumer Data Research Centre, the ONS and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG; now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, DLUHC), the study team worked with local authorities to explore social, economic, and demographic trends surrounding Covid-19 at a local level.

Researchers used secure ONS and local authority data to produce analysis-ready data products for local authorities, enabling evidence-based responses from previously inaccessible insights. Liverpool County Council benefited from bespoke analysis that informed the design and evaluation of their mass testing pilot. This included identifying optimal locations for the expansion of new test sites during the pilot.

The study team incorporated data insights into presentations to the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), UK Government and SAGE on lessons learned for shaping the national roll-out of lateral flow testing. This was a significant component of plans that reopened schools and the economy. Study findings on Covid-19 risk by occupation and workplace were also considered by SAGE specifically on lockdown release and workplace interventions.

Enhancing research security with synthetic data

ADR England works closely with the Behavioural Insights Team, an organisation that generates, applies and tests behavioural insights to inform policy and improve public services. Originally based in UK Government, the team has grown to a global social purpose company.

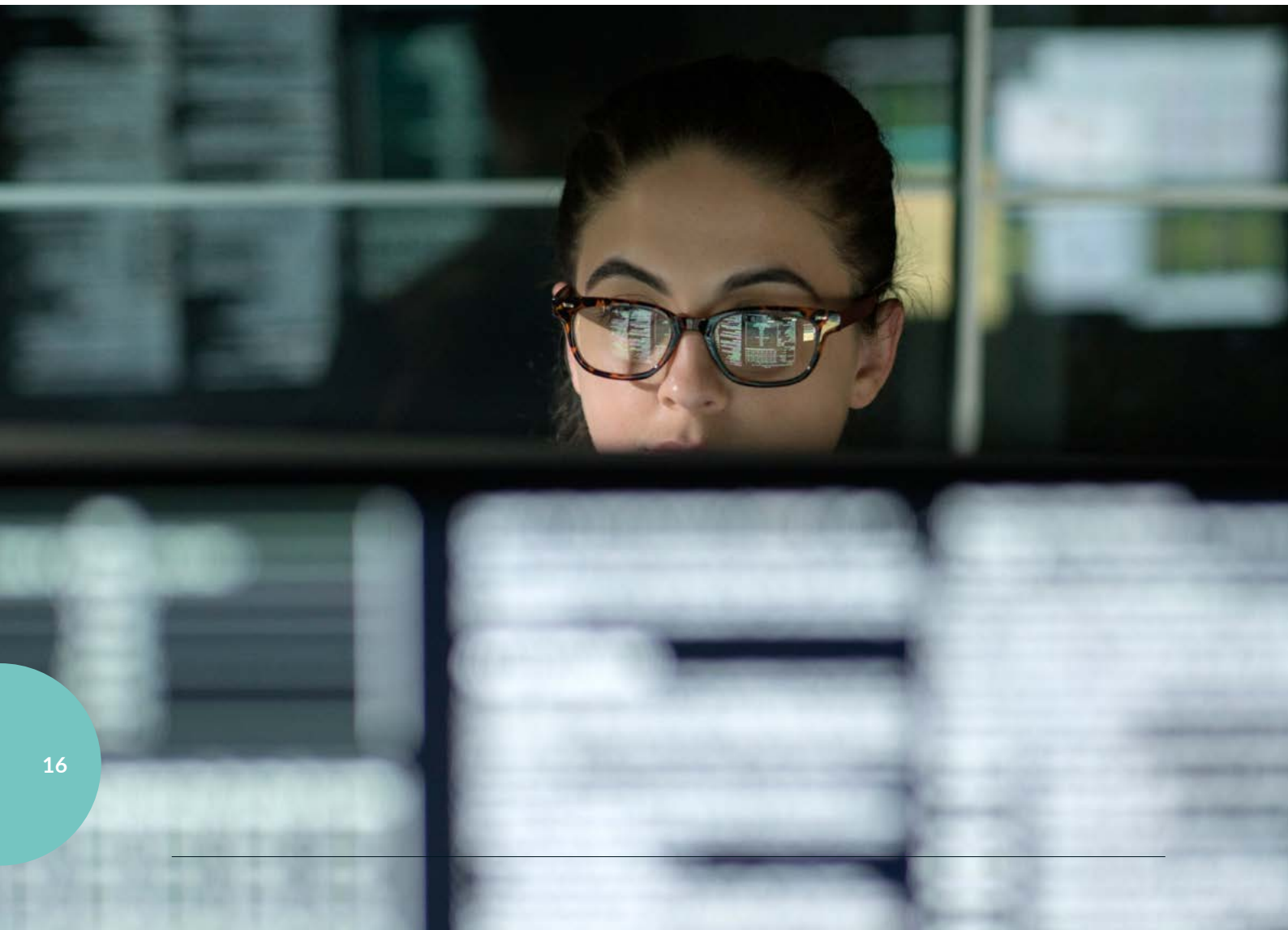
This year, ADR England funded the Behavioural Insights Team to investigate how to help increase the uptake of administrative data research while maintaining data security, through the use of low-fidelity synthetic data.

Low-fidelity synthetic data is a new version of a dataset that is generated at random, but made to follow the structure and some of the patterns of the original dataset. It is extremely

useful in enabling initial analysis of a dataset, training researchers on how to handle challenging datasets, and allowing researchers to write and test their analysis code on low-risk data.

The Behavioural Insights Team delivered a prototype tool showing how to generate low-fidelity synthetic data, alongside a report recommending how ADR UK can best use synthetic data to support researchers in planning projects and testing code. This work will also contribute to our ongoing work to support training and build capacity in the use of administrative data, as synthetic data can be a valuable resource to help researchers develop vital skills.

[Read the user guide](#), [find the tool](#) and [read the full report](#).



ADR Northern Ireland

Administrative Data Research Northern Ireland (ADR NI) is a partnership between the Administrative Data Research Centre Northern Ireland (ADRC NI, comprising Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University), and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), which is an accredited processor under the Digital Economy Act 2017. Together they support the acquisition, linking and analysis of administrative datasets, developing cutting-edge research to improve knowledge, policymaking and public service delivery.

ADR NI research has made a strong impact on the development of scientific knowledge, policy and practice in Northern Ireland this year, placing research outputs and activities at the highest levels of government and throughout departments and arms-length bodies.

This year, ADR NI has continued to work closely with data providers across government departments and has made significant progress on delivering a suite of new research-ready datasets, including the Earnings and Employees Study 2011, Business Data for Research and the Educational Outcomes Linkage.

The re-opening of the NISRA safe setting has enabled work scheduled for the Covid-19 period to resume, and a shift in focus to the exciting portfolio of research for the new investment. Negotiations with new and existing data owners continue, and ADR NI are widening their research agenda to incorporate new data builds. ADR NI look forward to engaging with the Northern Ireland Assembly when it is established to achieve policy impact for societal benefit.

ADR NI researchers have published projects including an examination of mental health in occupations, a first look at the socio-economic characteristics of Covid-19 mortality in Northern Ireland, inequality in educational attainment and links between mental health and variations in Covid-19 vaccine uptake. To maximise impact from these studies, results have been presented to interested groups across government as well as the wider research community, and will help to shape policy going forward.



Siobhan Carey,
ADR NI Co-Director



“Over the course of the last two years, the pandemic has presented challenges for us all, but has also resulted in innovations in our service delivery. This year, we have moved forward with piloting secure remote access to ADR NI data, ensuring improved accessibility and more timely access to important administrative datasets for researchers in Northern Ireland, as well as further afield. We are continuing to build on our suite of research-ready datasets, as well as delivering a policy-relevant research programme that will have a lasting impact.”



IMPACT CASE STUDY: Informing support for care experienced young people

Since 2018, ADRC NI has been collaborating with the Northern Irish Department of Health (DoH) on a programme of work surrounding mental ill-health and children known to social services.

Led by Dr Aideen Maguire, this study uses data from Northern Ireland's unique integrated health and social care system which dates back to 1985. Social services data has been linked to primary care, prescription medication, emergency department presentations and mortality data, creating the UK's largest population-wide longitudinal study of children known to social services.

Findings from this study were used to inform the new governmental strategy for care experienced children and young people published in 2021, ["A Life Deserved: "Caring" for Children and young people in Northern Ireland"](#).

The study has also helped the DoH understand the limitations and shortcomings of data with suggestions for improvements and quality. One example was the coverage of the individuals' Health and Care Number (HCN), which is essential for identifying and tracking individuals as well as linking to other health-related datasets. The project team found while HCN coverage was high in all health datasets over the 30-year study period, it was missing for over 10% of children in need records and as many as 20% of children in care records. DoH were provided with a data quality report, and are currently considering potential improvements and mitigations for both historic and current data.

This work also formed the basis of a pilot involvement workshop with care experienced young people, in partnership with Voices of Young People in Care. The young people developed skills in understanding and interpreting data and gained 'hard' research evidence to support their lobbying with elected representatives. Importantly, they have also helped to shape future research, which will be stronger for their participation in it.

Assessing Equality Pay Gaps in Northern Ireland

This year, ADR NI researchers began work on Assessing Equality Pay Gaps in Northern Ireland, the first project to use the newly available Earnings and Employees Study 2011. While gender pay gaps are widely acknowledged, there is little Northern Ireland-based evidence on pay gaps for other equality areas, including disability. This research will fill these important evidence gaps for the first time.

Analysis on the project is at an advanced stage and preliminary results have been presented to the steering group of stakeholders, with publication expected in the coming months. As well as being the pilot project for the Earnings

and Employees Study 2011, this is the first project to trial the use of remote access to ADR NI data through the ONS Secure Research Service. The success of this project will be important in paving the way for other projects to be carried out remotely, ensuring wide access to ADR NI data for accredited researchers.

The results of the project will inform debate on pay gaps in Northern Ireland and will be of wide interest, both within government and beyond, highlighting areas where action may be needed to address knowledge gaps in different government departments.

Air pollution dashboard

In November 2021, the Environmental Research Group at ADRC NI launched their air pollution dashboard, a publicly available interactive tool for visualising and understanding local levels of air pollution and how they change over time. Users can input their postcode and adjust for the year and which pollutant level they are interested in, allowing policymakers and the public to see how air pollution changes over time.

Also in 2021, Dr Neil Rowland of the Environmental Research Group was appointed as Regional Clean Air Champion for Northern Ireland under the UKRI Clean Air Programme, recognising his work on the impact of air pollution on health and wellbeing in Northern Ireland. The role has helped elevate the work of the Environmental Research Group and ADRC NI, and informed strategies for improving air quality as well as raising awareness of its health impacts.



Professor Dermot O'Reilly,
ADR NI Co-Director



“The last year has been a testing and challenging time for us, but we were happy to be able to contribute some research input to the wider pandemic response. Looking forwards, we are excited to be able to reconnect with and extend our research and engagement activities to address wider societal issues in Northern Ireland and the UK.”

ADR Scotland

ADR Scotland combines expertise from Scottish Government's Data for Research Unit and the Scottish Centre for Administrative Data Research (SCADR) to transform how public sector data in Scotland is curated, accessed and explored to deliver novel, evidence-based insights.

Scottish Ministers have restated their commitment to facilitating access to data for research. The pandemic has highlighted the need to better enable cost-effective and timely access to public sector data for research. The response has focused ADR Scotland's collaborative work with data controllers and contributed to further momentum for data sourcing for research. This builds on growing recognition of the benefits of administrative data research and trust in the related infrastructure and information governance.



Alastair McAlpine,
ADR Scotland Co-Director




"We are extremely proud of the work our team has undertaken during the last 12 months, as we continue to support the recovery from the pandemic. As we enter a new investment period, we are excited to continue our programme of work to improve access to public sector data and make it easier for researchers to conduct research. This will lead to policies that improve the lives of the people of Scotland.

"We will continue to build on our strengths. We will bring people together in government and academia to develop our data linkage infrastructure. We will focus on making it simpler for researchers to get access to the data but preserve public trust in the use of the data. By putting the needs of people at the centre of our approach we will strive to show what can be achieved when we work together with a single goal."

This year all partner organisations in Scotland successfully secured Digital Economy Act 2017 accreditation. The sustainability of the new linkage service also continued to be strengthened through the ingest of datasets into our data linkage environment, notably children's data.

ADR Scotland has undertaken a range of research on Covid-19 and submitted it to inquiries. This includes policing the pandemic, which secured extra funding to investigate patterns and potential causes of non-compliance in Scotland – the first example of police-health data linkage using Scottish data. Research on deaths at home during the pandemic raised the profile of this issue and engaged with key stakeholders in health, social and palliative care.

Public engagement is a vital part of ADR Scotland's work. Highlights this year include increasing the size and diversity of the ADR Scotland public panel and delivering a children's engagement pilot in partnership with Children in Scotland. ADR Scotland also continued to build its engagement with a range of government and third sector stakeholders to support policy-relevant research, aligned to Scotland's National Performance Framework and Programme for Government. Collaboration has focused on children and young people, crime and justice, nursing and end of life care, as well as agricultural and geospatial data.



IMPACT CASE STUDY: Improving the utility of data on care-experienced children

As part of ADR Scotland's Children's Lives and Outcomes strand, a programme of work has been undertaken to improve the utility of an important data resource on care-experienced children.

Local authorities store administrative records of children in care on management information systems, and this is routinely shared with Scottish Government. Due to the nature of its collection, some logical contradictions can and do appear in the data. Through collaboration between researchers at SCADR, Scottish Government's Data for Research Unit and Education Analytical Services, a project was established to investigate the quality of the data which impacted on its suitability for certain kinds of analysis.

When creating a longitudinal dataset on care-experienced children, improvements were made using other information contained in the data, and the nature of data inconsistencies was flagged. Conversations with local authorities provided further insight into the data journey and supported this approach. Researchers identified issues which were problematic for the research. Time was then dedicated to resolving these, to create cleaned case histories for children – work which will benefit other researchers.

As a result of this work, the Scottish Government was able to review recommendations to improve the data validation process moving forward, including automating the methodology to create the dataset. The work has led to formats being made more compliant with internationally recognised standards, consistency of codes across years being mapped and explained, and the development of metadata and extensive guidance documents for data users.

Crucially, this work to enhance the quality, completeness and secure access to this data has long-term benefits for research into care-experienced children which is important for researchers, policymakers and practitioners, and ultimately for children and their families.

Exploring the dynamics of the nursing workforce

Using UK-wide Nursing and Midwifery Council data that forms the professional registers, this innovative pilot aims to understand implications of demographic change for the nursing workforce. The nursing workforce is the largest occupational group in the UK with some 700,000 registrants and is facing considerable challenges, from the pandemic to Brexit, which have significant policy implications.

A team in ADR Scotland is working closely with policy colleagues to focus on key issues such as who enters the nursing workforce, how long people remain in the nursing profession, and geographical differences in retention. The longer-term vision is to link data to the latest census which will provide a basis for informed decision-making for the benefit of nurses and wider society.

Much of the work this year has been in establishing relationships and doing the data groundwork with close collaboration between the Nursing and Midwifery Council, the ONS and SCADR researchers. The pilot's development has been informed by a newly established advisory group which involves a range of experts and representatives from government, the third sector and the nursing profession. ADR Scotland looks forward to utilising this valuable data and showcasing what it can reveal to address key issues facing the nursing workforce.

Children's engagement pilot

ADR Scotland collaborated with Children in Scotland to develop a pilot project to engage directly with children and young people about their understanding of administrative data, and how research using this data can be communicated. The pilot involved five interactive, online sessions with a group of children and young people from across Scotland. The workshops culminated in a [report](#) with key recommendations such as: including references to show the data is trustworthy, including links so people can find out more information and finding creative and engaging ways to share results.

The report's findings are helping to shape future practice and embed rights-based approaches across ADR Scotland, as well as informing new training. ADR Scotland will take forward insights from the pilot to develop engagement with children and young people, and to embed children's perspectives in research.



Professor Chris Dibben,
ADR Scotland Co-Director



“We are very much looking forward to building on our current successes, such as our engagement with children pilot, utilising data to support our nursing workforce, and better understanding the benefits of active commuting. We will continue to improve administrative data access and carry out research which responds to Scotland's policy priorities.”

ADR Wales

ADR Wales unites specialists from Swansea University Medical School and the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research and Data (WISERD) at Cardiff University with statisticians, economists and social researchers from the Welsh Government. The cutting-edge data analysis techniques and research excellence developed, along with the world-renowned SAIL Databank – which is an accredited processor under the 2017 Digital Economy Act (DEA) – allow the delivery of robust, secure and informative research. This year ADR Wales’ Trusted Third Party, Digital Health and Care Wales, successfully secured Digital Economy Act 2017 accreditation.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, ADR Wales’ foundations and expertise made them well placed to develop understanding around government research priorities. This year, ADR Wales have built on the lessons learned during this period, further strengthening the relationships made, the improved processes and the common drive to show the impact administrative data research can make.

Over the last year ADR Wales’ portfolio of work has continued to produce real success stories from each of their thematic areas. For example, ADR Wales analysis found children and young people with neurodevelopmental disorder, mental disorder, or self-harm diagnosed and recorded before the age of 24 were much more likely to miss school than their peers. This has informed targeted assessment and early intervention

based on school absence and exclusions data in some schools and is informing the ‘whole school’ approach to emotional and mental wellbeing.

ADR Wales continues to focus on the priority areas outlined in the Programme for Government (2022-2026) in Wales, covering topics like mental health, social care, wellbeing, early years, education, skills and employability and housing and homelessness. In addition, ADR Wales now includes two new areas of focus on the cross-cutting subjects of climate change and social justice.

These new areas, along with investment in a team dedicated to the facilitation of new, pan-UK administrative data projects, enables ADR Wales to deliver truly insightful results that promote the safe and effective use of administrative data to benefit the people of Wales.



Stephanie Howarth,
ADR Wales Co-Director

“This year, ADR Wales has pushed the boundaries, realising where our team can lead, guide and facilitate positive outcomes for others who operate within policy, research and data in Wales and the UK.

“As we look ahead, we will build on this, aligning our future work with government priority areas for a greener, more equitable and prosperous society for the people of Wales.”



Professor David Ford,
ADR Wales Co-Director

“Our progress across all thematic areas has been impressive. Our team has been called upon to aid understanding more than ever before and we continue to make strides, and think and act in a truly progressive way in our efforts to secure data, strengthen our technical infrastructure and assist others to do the same. We look forward to next 12 months as we set out to show again what can be achieved when data is held safely and used responsibly.”

IMPACT CASE STUDY: Supporting policy to deliver early years services in Wales

Flying Start is a Welsh Government flagship early years programme for families with children under four years old living in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Wales.

ADR Wales' analysis helped inform the Welsh Government Programme for Government commitment to continue support for Flying Start and the introduction of a new expanded provision for early years in Wales.

The Flying Start programme provides a range of services to help families with children under four years old in disadvantaged areas of Wales. Help available under the programme includes:

- access to parenting programmes
- an enhanced Health Visiting service
- part-time childcare for two-to-three-year-olds
- support for children to learn to talk and communicate.

ADR Wales linked de-identified Flying Start childcare attendance data with on-entry school assessment for children who received Flying Start childcare. This showed that those with higher Flying Start childcare attendance tended to meet their expected outcomes in all areas of learning more often than those with lower levels of attendance. This difference in outcomes between those with high and low attendance was even greater for children with higher take-up of the childcare.

Situated under ADR Wales' Early Years programme of work, this analysis is one of a number of pieces of work that ADR Wales is carrying out to evaluate flagship Welsh Government programmes.



Socio-economic disadvantage and educational attainment in Wales

ADR Wales researchers have begun groundbreaking work looking at the relationship between socio-economic measures and pupil attainment, linking together for the first time 2011 Census data and education data for Wales.

Until now, researchers using administrative education data in Wales have used children's free school meals status as a measure and proxy for socio-economic disadvantage. Free school meals are available for pupils whose parents or carers apply to the local authority based on certain criteria. Although there are some critiques of using free school meals status, it has been a go-to indicator that a pupil is from a home with a low income.

From September 2022, the Welsh Government will begin to open up free school meals, providing

access to all primary school children regardless of background by 2024, in a move to tackle child poverty and ensure no child goes hungry. Without the use of free school meals as a reliable measure for socio-economic disadvantage, the research team is exploring data in the 2011 Census to see how other measures that capture family circumstances interact with educational attainment.

This work is building on previous research to ask questions such as: do free school meals and other measures perform in the same way to explain attainment? Do these relationships vary or persist across key stages? The team will use the 2011 and 2021 Census data to consider various longitudinal patterns in the education data, focusing on occupation, household composition, parental influence and more.

ADR Wales analysis informs pandemic planning and the transition to life beyond

ADR Wales analysis has demonstrated the effectiveness of data linkage, by informing practices and planning through the pandemic and the transition to life without Covid-19 restrictions. The ADR Wales team delivered vital research intelligence to help policymakers in the Welsh Government's Technical Advisory Group and the UK Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies during the height of the pandemic. They continue to provide insights that explore the impact of the pandemic on our society.

ADR Wales analysis has included a focus on the experiences of people on the shielded list, their household composition, their access to outdoor space and the experiences of those living with them. Other analysis has included sophisticated geospatial modelling, which was used by ministers during televised briefings to visually demonstrate the spread of the virus in Wales.

ADR Wales analysis also linked Covid-19 testing data to homelessness data from health records and found lower Covid-19 rates amongst people experiencing homelessness compared to the general population. These findings suggested that largescale policy changes early in the pandemic – which moved away from communal accommodation in favour of self-contained accommodation – had a positive impact on the homeless population in Wales.

ADR Wales' analysis of Covid-19 transmission in schools, and most recently of the vaccination status of the school workforce, informed policy by helping to identify areas of potential concern and enabling targeted intervention strategies. Through ADR Wales' work on the vaccination of the schools workforce, they demonstrated how data linkage techniques using existing data could be used to deliver this understanding, rather than creating a new survey.

Office for National Statistics

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) plays a crucial role in sourcing, linking, and curating public sector data for ADR UK, ensuring that data is accessed by researchers safely and securely. With the support of ADR UK funding, the ONS continues to expand, improve and increase the range of administrative data available in the ONS Secure Research Service – the organisation’s facility for providing secure access to de-identified public sector data for research, as an accredited processor under the Digital Economy Act 2017. The ONS Secure Research Service is the trusted research environment for ADR England.

ONS has made a significant contribution to the success of ADR UK this year, with progress made in a range of areas. All elements of the ONS service have continued to grow, from training new researchers and processing project applications to ensuring that outputs from completed analysis are non-disclosive. In collaboration with ADR UK, ONS have also developed a new Metadata Catalogue, which now includes variable level descriptions, to help researchers discover datasets in the ONS Secure Research Service.

The ONS has built on the successes achieved in recent years by making more data available in the ONS Secure Research Service. 21 new datasets have been added in the past year, including new datasets from the Ministry of Justice’s Data First programme and others that are relevant to Covid-19 analysis. A particular highlight was seeing the Growing Up in England (GUIE) dataset in the ONS Secure Research Service. This was one of ADR UK’s major investments during the pilot funding period and it is fantastic to now be processing project applications that will make use of the newly linked data. Another priority this year was supporting ADR NI partner NISRA in enabling remote access to their datasets.



**Bill South – Acting Deputy
Director, Research Services
and Data Access division, ONS**



“ONS has continued to build on the successes achieved during the pilot phase of ADR UK funding, most notably by increasing the number of datasets available in the ONS Secure Research Service and expanding the range of government departments and other organisations providing their data. We’ve been delighted to see some of the initial flagship data linkage projects at the heart of the ADR UK vision come to fruition and are now looking forward to progressing a new round of Research-Ready Data projects, including those linking to 2021 Census data.”

IMPACT CASE STUDY: Involving the public with an analysis of daily, weekly, and yearly cycles of births using linked data

Researchers from City, University of London and UCL have successfully demonstrated the acceptability of using health records for research, by providing key insights to help improve the planning of staffing in NHS maternity services. The project involved linking together three health datasets to conduct novel analyses of births and their outcomes by time of day, and day of the week.

The project also involved discussions with maternity service users about the creation of a new linked dataset, the City Birth Cohort. By linking data research and lived experiences, the findings of this project have unlocked opportunities for other researchers who have already begun to use the new data.

Key findings

The researchers linked 95% of maternity hospital episode statistics' delivery records to birth records for the birth of only one child during a single delivery, and 93% for records of the birth of two or more children during the same delivery.

Cross-sectional analyses of all births in England and in Wales showed a regular weekly cycle.

- Numbers of daily births increased from Mondays to Fridays, while weekends and public holidays had the lowest numbers of births.
- Births peaked between 9.00am and 12.00pm, with elective caesarean births concentrated on weekday mornings.
- Participants broadly accepted the use of administrative health data to further research, with contributions to research dissemination improving the accessibility of research findings to users.

This research was made possible by bringing together birth registration and notification data from 2005 to 2014 with maternity hospital episode statistics delivery and birth records. By using the ONS Secure Research Service, the researchers were able to create linked birth cohorts for England and Wales.

This research project won the Linked Administrative Data Award at the ONS Research Excellence Awards 2021 and Best Oral Presentation at the International Normal Labour and Birth Research Conference 2020.

The project team is now exploring with the ONS and ADR UK how to open up access to this dataset so it can be shared with other researchers.



ONS Secure Research Service Metadata Catalogue

The new [ONS Secure Research Service Metadata Catalogue](#) launched in February 2022, changing the way researchers learn about the available data.

Previously the ONS Secure Research Service published an Excel data catalogue listing basic metadata for their datasets, however, a need was identified to improve discoverability, better standardise, and communicate the content of the datasets.

In partnership with MetadataWorks who are supplying the platform, the ONS has made 122 datasets available, and are working with data controllers to add detailed data dictionaries to all (54 are available so far). The ONS are also working on the implementation of digital object identifiers (DOIs) via the catalogue to allow citation – this will be rolled out in the coming months.

As a result of the new catalogue, the metadata is more comprehensive and better reflects the datasets in the ONS Secure Research Service. It has increased discoverability – users can now search by name, theme, keyword or accessibility. Fundamentally, the catalogue allows researchers to assess if the dataset will meet their research needs, before becoming an accredited researcher or submitting a project application.

These benefits are reflected in the numbers of people using the site, with an average of 250 users a month since February.

Research Capability 2021 - Celebrating and Building Excellence

This event took place in London on 13 October 2021 and was supported by ADR UK, UK Statistics Authority, Office for Statistics Regulation, and facilitators from different government departments.

Workshops provided lively discussions on the levelling-up agenda, pathways through education and the experience of children in care, and research ideas to evidence impact.


Sir David Spiegelhalter and Alison Pritchard were keynote speakers and Sir Ian Diamond presented the highlight of the event – the [ONS Research Excellence Awards](#) – which included the inaugural [ONS Linked Administrative Data](#) award presented to City, University of London for their research on birth cycles.

Additionally, ADR UK-funded researchers from UCL, the University of Leeds and the University of Liverpool won the Research Excellence Project Award 2021 for their work on the [Local Data Spaces](#) pilot project (described in more detail on page 15), which supported local authorities' responses to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Research Capability 2021

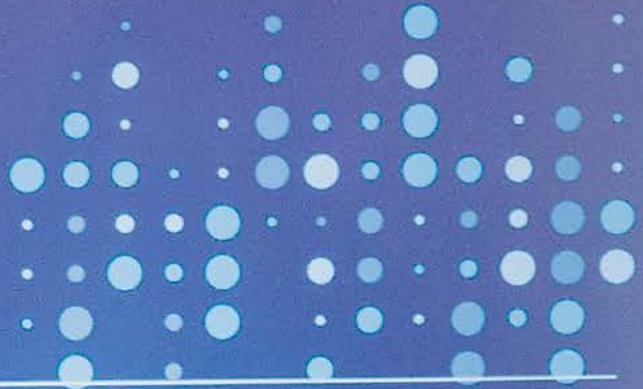
Celebrating and building excellence

 ResearchCapability2021
ONSRC2021

 #ResearchCapability21

13 October 2021

 Office for National Statistics



7. International Population Data Linkage Network 2022 Conference

The International Population Data Linkage Network (IPDLN) 2022 Conference, held in September 2022 in Edinburgh, brought together experts and researchers in the field of population data science from around the world. This year's conference was led by ADR UK, as Director Emma Gordon and ADR Scotland's Chris Dibben hold the co-directorship of IPDLN for 2021/22.

More than 500 delegates spent the three-day conference engaged in networking, presenting their research, and sharing their methodologies with one another. The conference was a huge success and marked a return to in-person events, after the 2020 event had to be shifted to a virtual format due to Covid-19. 551 attendees from 18 countries shared their work, on topics including research using real-world data, public engagement and involvement in population data research, multi-sector data linkage initiatives, and the ethical, legal, and social implications of population data usage.

In addition, the pre-conference workshops led by ADR UK, on topics including synthetic data and impact through engagement and partnerships, were well-received. Participants discussed the applications of synthetic data across different countries and frameworks, and the potential of stakeholder engagement to increase the impact of administrative data research.

Keynote speakers included:

- **Dr Mauricio Barreto**, Fiocruz and the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil
- **Professor Stefan Bender**, Deutsche Bundesbank and the University of Mannheim, Germany
- **Professor Linnet Taylor**, the Tilburg Institute for Law, Technology, and Society, the Netherlands
- **Hans-Erik G Aronson**, DARE UK programme, Health Data Research UK
- **Rachel Plachcinski**, University of Oxford, UK.

The ethos of the IPDLN is to foster international connections in the field of population data linkage research, and so the speakers represented a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

The issues, solutions and methodologies showcased highlight the importance of sharing research with our colleagues and peers around the world, to find effective solutions to the key questions our post-pandemic societies are grappling with.

Emma Gordon and Chris Dibben will both remain part of the IPDLN Executive Committee for the next two years. Professors Amy O'Hara from Georgetown University, Abel Kho from Northwestern University, and Dennis Culhane from the University of Pennsylvania, will take over the IPDLN directorship for 2023/24 and lead on the delivery of the 2024 Conference.



**Professor Chris Dibben,
ADR Scotland Co-Director**



“It was fantastic to host this year’s IPDLN in Edinburgh and to be back in person connecting with colleagues from across the world. Inspiring keynotes explored issues as diverse as highly automated, state of the art data access systems, data justice and how to fully engage with the public. It was great also to meet with international colleagues and hear about the wide-ranging data linkage research and approaches in different parts of the world.”



**Professor Linnet Taylor,
the Tilburg Institute for Law,
Technology, and Society**

“The IPDLN conference was well organised, illuminating and very diverse. People were very open to new ideas, and it was a marvellous week.”

8. New and Emerging Datasets

Data First:

Harnessing the potential of linked administrative data for the justice system

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Data First programme is maximising the value of data generated when people interact with the justice system and enhancing data-sharing with other government departments. Since 2019, Data First has shared eight research-ready datasets, created new data linkages, and worked alongside partners to facilitate unique opportunities for research that can impact policy.

In 2022, new de-identified datasets covering people's interactions with probation services and cases progressing through the family courts have been made available via the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Secure Research Service. A new partnership with the SAIL (Secure Anonymised Information Linkage) Databank is expanding access routes to Data First datasets and linkages to other sources. The publicly available data-linking package, Splink, has joined up datasets from across the criminal courts, prisons and probation services.

MoJ has published its first analysis using Data First data: on returning defendants in the criminal courts; and on education, children's social care and offending. ADR UK-funded Fellowships using linked courts data have also begun publishing important policy-relevant findings, with topics including ethnic disparities and organised crime. Five ADR UK-funded Research Fellows are currently using the MoJ-Department for Education (DfE) linked dataset to understand links between social care, educational outcomes, and offending.

A successful proposal to extend Data First until summer 2025 will bring more data sources into scope and provide new insights into experiences of the justice system.

Data First family court dataset

The MoJ Data First family court dataset covers cases progressing through the family court in England and Wales from 2011 to January 2021. It includes individual divorce and Family Law Act, adoption, private and public law cases.

The dataset is available for accredited researchers to apply to access through the ONS Secure Research Service and the SAIL Databank. It offers the opportunity to better understand the families who experience the family courts, the transitions between different case types and patterns associated with repeat use of the family court system.

Data First probation dataset

The MoJ Data First probation dataset provides data on people under the supervision of the probation service in England and Wales from 2014 to 2020.

The dataset contains information on users' characteristics and offence, pre-sentence reports, sentence requirements, licence conditions and post-sentence supervision. This dataset enables researchers to explore the journeys and outcomes of people subject to probation services.

Ministry of Justice Data First linking dataset

The MoJ Data First linking dataset can be used to join up administrative records about people from across justice services. The dataset links together data from:

- [magistrates' courts](#)
- [Crown Court](#)
- [prisons](#)
- [probation](#)
- and will include civil and family courts in 2022.

The linking dataset creates the potential for longitudinal analysis on end-to-end user journeys across the system, providing new policy insights on what works to reduce reoffending and improve justice outcomes.



Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection

ADR Wales, in partnership with ADR England, ADR NI and ADR Scotland, are currently laying the foundations of the Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection (AD|ARC) – a research-ready dataset that links data on farms, farmers or farm household members. The collection will expand and update to meet current and emerging stakeholder need, beginning with core datasets that will be available in ADR UK partnerships' trusted research environments by March 2023 for England, Wales and Northern Ireland with Scotland to follow in mid-2023.

Agriculture in the UK is dominated by family farms, a structure that links people with business activities in a particular landscape. The multi-dimensional characteristics displayed by farm households makes them a key group for the delivery of national food security, the provision of environmental public goods and rural social cohesion in the UK. Research themes already identified for analysis include the demographic, health, education and economic characteristics of

farm households associated with different types and sizes of farm businesses.

AD|ARC consists of a core data collection across the UK linking the EU Farm Structure Survey, Rural Payments data, Inter Departmental Business Register, Census of Population and Access to Service indicators for the baseline year 2010/11. The core AD|ARC dataset is being linked to the health and education data where it will be available in each trusted research environment.

AD|ARC data is being collated, quality assured and stored for Wales in SAIL Databank, for England in the ONS Secure Research Service, for Scotland by Scottish Government with partners and for Northern Ireland by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The project team has already completed most of the research-ready dataset for Wales with outputs in development, and work is ongoing in England. Linkages are underway in Northern Ireland and Scotland.



Growing Up in England

The Growing Up in England dataset links English children's education data with 2011 Census data. Wave 1 and Wave 2 of this de-identified dataset are now available to all accredited researchers in the ONS Secure Research Service:

- Wave 1 contains longitudinal education data from the Department for Education (DfE) spanning 2001/02 - 2014/15 linked to data from the 2011 Census.
- Wave 2 adds vulnerability data from five datasets, including the English School Census, absences, exclusions, children in need and children looked after datasets.

Growing Up in England is a linked dataset created in partnership with the ONS, the DfE and ADR England.

In 2022, the [Growing Up in England \(GUIE\) dataset](#) was made available for accredited researchers to apply to use in the ONS Secure Research Service. The dataset can be used to better understand how factors such as household circumstances and geography shape educational outcomes for

children in England. This can in turn inform public policy that benefits disadvantaged children and young people and supports social mobility.

GUIE Wave 1 was released to all accredited researchers in January 2022. GUIE Wave 2, which joins vulnerability measures to the original linked dataset, was made available to all accredited researchers in March 2022. A record duplication flag was also created to address duplication in the All Education Dataset for England – one of the datasets that makes up GUIE. GUIE itself is comprised of multiple education datasets from the DfE, as well as 2011 Census data from the ONS, to create the overall GUIE data. This is why GUIE has multiple waves, as the dataset has been added to over time to create a more cohesive offering. Along with the dataset, associated publications are available in the ONS Secure Research Service, including a guide to using the dataset.

A Research Fellowship call that includes the GUIE dataset is expected to launch in autumn 2022. The next steps for GUIE will include GUIE Wave 3, which involves adding linkable Higher Education Statistics Agency data to the existing dataset. Backdated GUIE Wave 2 vulnerability data from 2001/02 - 2009/10 will also be added.

Shaping and testing the GUIE dataset: Roma, Gypsy and Traveller children and young people case study

More evidence is needed to understand the relationship between childhood circumstances and experiences of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller children and their educational participation and progression. [This project](#) is exploring the potential of the GUIE dataset to fill this evidence gap.

The objectives of this work include to:

1. shape and develop the dataset to maximise its potential for analysis of children and young adults from the the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities
2. demonstrate the value of the dataset in building evidence of this group
3. test the dataset and evaluate its quality for carrying out research on marginalised groups, who are generally poorly represented in surveys.

During summer 2022, working with the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Friends, Families and Travellers, the project leads conducted engagement workshops with children and young people from Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities and their families. This engagement will inform the development of a suite of outputs, such as an animated video and digital cartoon, to support public understanding of the findings.



Homelessness Data England

The [Homelessness Data England](#) project aims to create a linked dataset of information about homelessness in England, to improve understanding of its causes and impacts.

Funded by ADR UK, Homelessness Data England is a collaboration with the ONS and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). The project involves linking Homelessness Case Level Information Collections (H-CLIC) data:

- over time, to create a longitudinal dataset
- between local authorities across England
- to other administrative datasets.

H-CLIC data records local authorities' actions under the 2017 Homelessness Reduction Act. This data includes all cases in which a homelessness application has been made and any legal duty of care accepted.

This year, the project team made the first set of H-CLIC data available for accredited researchers on the ONS Secure Research Service. This is the first time that linked administrative data on homelessness has been made available for public good research. It represents an unprecedented opportunity to improve understanding of people's experiences of homelessness in England.

The data shows the number of households in England who approached a local authority and were assessed as being owed a duty, to either prevent or relieve their homelessness in 2019 – 2020, as well as:

- their circumstances and demographics, including reasons for homelessness, ethnicity of the main applicant, household type, and support needs
- their outcomes at each stage
- how households progress through the homelessness system.

Users of the dataset can filter the data based on different characteristics, in order to see how homelessness outcomes compare across groups.

The project aims to fill vital evidence gaps to help researchers and policymakers to assess the impact of public services used by people experiencing homelessness. By linking local authority data from across the UK, the project will enable better understanding of interventions over time and as people travel across the country.

The next steps for the project include adding data from other sources to create a longitudinal dataset to allow researchers to look at cases of repeat homelessness. The project will continue to engage with local authorities to encourage data sharing that will enable analysis of homelessness on a case-level basis, to assess movement across local authorities and to add in data held by other government departments.

Wage and Employment Dynamics

The Wage and Employment Dynamics (WED) project is a collaboration between the University of the West of England (UWE), UCL, City, University of London, University of Reading, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research and the ONS, which is linking data to provide important new insights into the dynamics of earnings and employment in Britain.

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) is a critical source of information collected by the ONS on the earnings of employees in the UK. As well as forming the basis for a range of ONS labour market statistics, ASHE is used to inform policymaking and evaluation across a range of UK Government bodies, in areas such as the National Minimum or Living Wage and pension provision.

ASHE does have some limitations, and the Wage and Employment Dynamics project is helping to improve the labour market evidence base by enhancing the ASHE core dataset and by linking it to other administrative sources.

Over the past year, the team have completed phase 1 of the project, which has involved enhancing the core ASHE dataset and creating the new ASHE- 2011 Census linked dataset. They have also begun working on phase 2 (linking Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC), Self-Assessment and Pay As You Earn datasets to ASHE) and secured funding from ADR UK for phase 3 (linking the Migrant Workers Scan Survey).

Enriched ASHE code

The WED team have enriched the core ASHE dataset by adding new variables such as minimum wage rates and longitudinal job link, and carrying out methodological reviews on the data and sampling. They have also created new weights which account for attrition and selection effects. Access to the code will enable research into the dynamics of wage and employment issues, from labour market entry, through job mobility and career progression to retirement.

Research questions the enriched core ASHE looks to answer include:

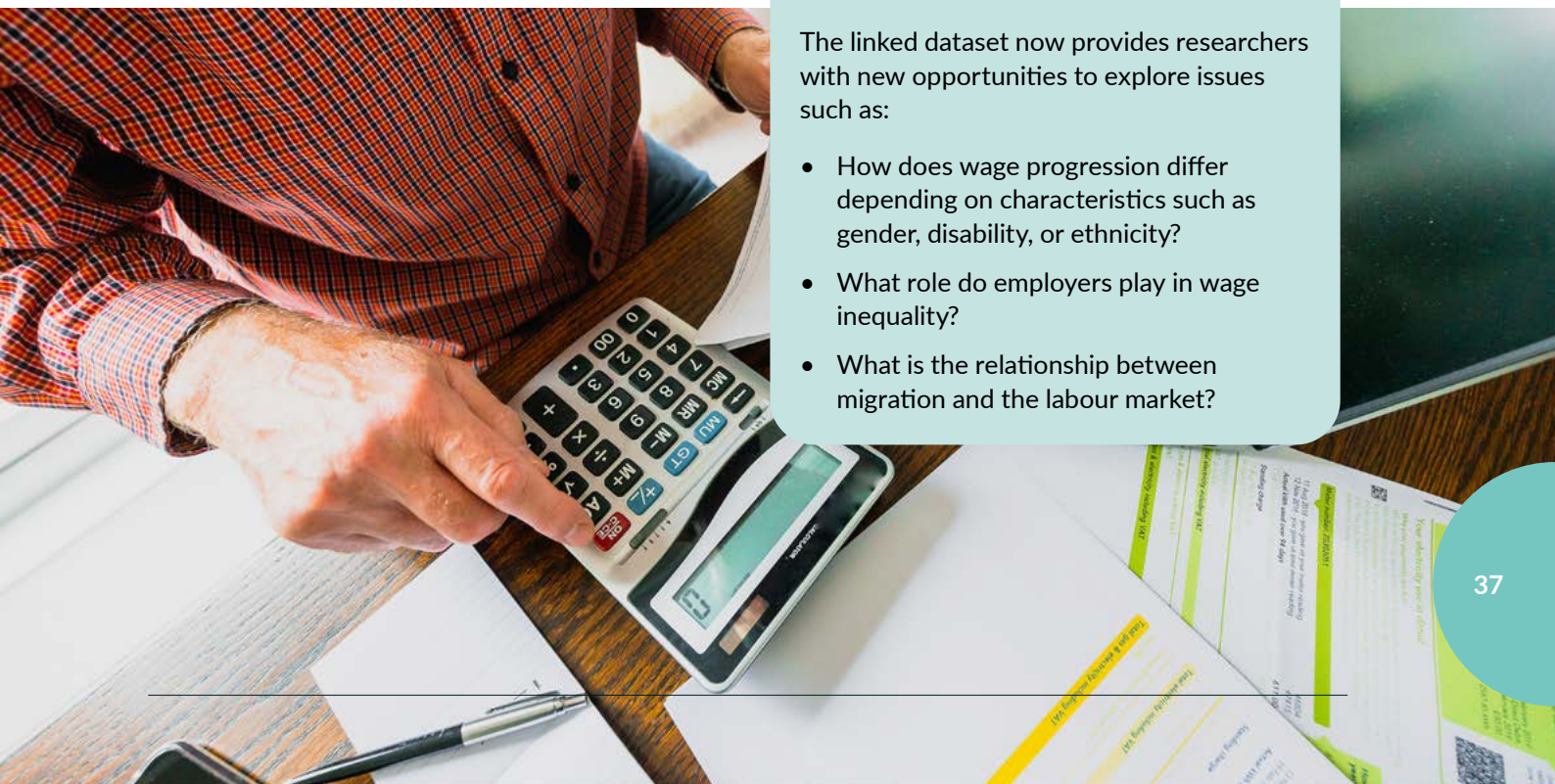
- How do people's earnings progress through their career?
- Who does and does not progress out of low pay employment?

ASHE – Census 2011

Linking 2011 Census to the core ASHE dataset adds demographic, household and basic education and migration information. This will enable researchers to understand the dynamics of intersectional pay gaps and how demographic factors have informed labour market transitions.

The linked dataset now provides researchers with new opportunities to explore issues such as:

- How does wage progression differ depending on characteristics such as gender, disability, or ethnicity?
- What role do employers play in wage inequality?
- What is the relationship between migration and the labour market?



What Works for Children's Social Care

What Works for Children's Social Care (WWCSC) is a charity that seeks to provide evidence and research into children's social care with the overarching goal of improving outcomes for families and children alike. WWCSC were commissioned by the DfE to work collaboratively with the CASCADE children's social care research centre at Cardiff University. The charity brings together and reviews evidence within the children's social care sector, identifying evidence gaps and collecting evidence from interventions implemented on children and adults. The WWCSC archive is a growing resource that can provide robust evidence to practitioners and policy makers working in children's social care.

The first four WWCSC datasets were ingested and made available in the ONS Secure Research Service to all accredited researchers in spring 2022. These datasets form part of the WWCSC Happier, Healthier Professionals data resource designed to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions on social workers and Ministry of Defence staff.

Researchers can access data from the Happier, Healthier Professionals interventions that enable investigations into topics such as how receiving messages of gratitude and support can impact wellbeing, or how gender and ethnicity cues impact recruitment selection in social care.

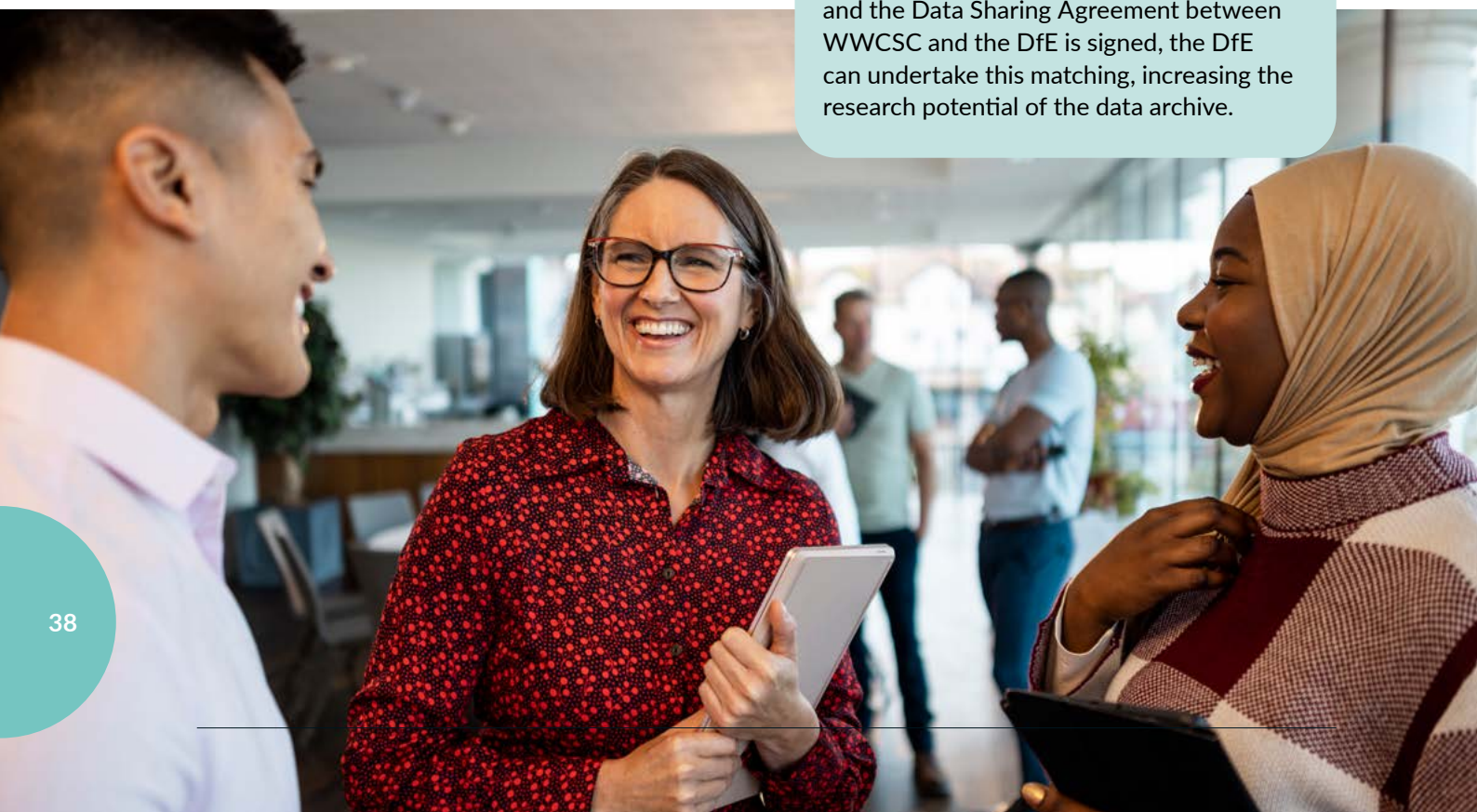
The WWCSC charity data is accessed under the lawful basis of the UK GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and the Data Protection Act 2018, not under the legal gateway of the Digital Economy Act 2017. As such, the WWCSC project application approval process deviates from the traditional application journey via the UK Statistics Authority.

What's next?

In the year ahead, WWCSC plans to ingest more anonymised adult data and additionally ingest anonymised children's data into the ONS Secure Research Service. Over the past few months, WWCSC have held conversations with the ONS and the DfE around enabling matching between data from WWCSC and data held by the DfE, such as the National Pupil Database, to enable research into how targeted social care interventions can improve educational outcomes for children.

To make WWCSC data linkable, the DfE will match WWCSC unique record identifiers to an anonymised version of the DfE Pupil Matching Reference, creating a WWCSC-DfE lookup file.

On the condition that the process is agreed and the Data Sharing Agreement between WWCSC and the DfE is signed, the DfE can undertake this matching, increasing the research potential of the data archive.





Employees and Earnings Study 2011

In November, ADR NI made the Employees and Earnings Study 2011 available to accredited researchers in NISRA's trusted research environment, for research in the public interest. This dataset links together information from the [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings \(ASHE\) 2011](#) with data from the Census of Population and Housing 2011, and Capital Value data from the Land and Property Services.

ASHE is comprised of around 1% of all employees in Northern Ireland who were covered by Pay As You Earn schemes in 2011. The survey includes data on hourly, weekly and annual earnings by

gender, work patterns, industry and occupation, including public versus private sector pay comparisons.

It is hoped that research using the Employees and Earnings Study 2011 will help to inform an evidence-base for public policy. It has the potential to identify factors influencing differences in median pay for specific groups in society who are acknowledged as being disadvantaged in terms of the labour market, including differences in pay related to gender, religion, disability and migration status.

Business Data for Research

In 2022, ADR NI made the Business Data for Research Northern Ireland database available for accredited researchers. Business Data for Research utilises NISRA de-identified trade and economic data for monitoring, evaluation and research purposes, exploiting data linkage both longitudinally and cross-source. Business Data for Research includes two surveys from 2014 to 2020, the Northern Ireland Annual Business Inquiry and the Business Register and Employment Survey.

This suite of data has scope to provide insight on a range of policy areas, including economic recovery, EU Exit and the Northern Ireland Protocol, and the impact of Covid-19 on the Northern Irish economy and exports.

In May 2022, a funding opportunity invited researchers to apply to use Business Data for Research and the separate EES 2011, which includes NISRA de-identified earnings data, geographic and demographic variables, for policy-relevant research.

Understanding children's outcomes – linkage-ready datasets

ADR Scotland is seeking to maximise the use of existing administrative and survey data to understand children's lives, and to undertake research regarding the rights and wellbeing of children.

In keeping with Scotland's [policy ambitions](#) to create the conditions for children to grow up loved, safe and respected in order that they realise their full potential, work has been focused on developing a library of linkage-ready datasets in this area. These datasets include:

- Pupil Census
- Attendance and absence
- Exclusions
- School leaver destinations and attainment
- National Qualifications
- Looked after children
- Child protection data.

This year, work focused on preparing and ingesting two new datasets into the ADR linkage infrastructure within the Scottish National Safe Haven – one on looked after children, and the other on school leaver destinations and attainment. Two additional datasets are in progress covering national qualifications delivered by the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and Child Protection data. Work is underway to prepare these datasets for ingestion, with the aim to publish these in autumn 2022. Detailed metadata has also been published on these datasets on the Research Data Scotland website.

ADR Scotland facilitated collaboration across multiple stakeholders to enrich the dataset on looked after children, and to build understanding of the content. Researchers worked closely with the Data for Research Unit, policymakers in the Scottish Government and other academics to understand the context of social work and children's social care. This collaboration resulted in the production of the [Infants Born into Care report](#) and events encouraging UK collaboration. A project was also run to clarify and resolve logical contradictions in the dataset, with long-term improvements recommended for the data validation process and ensuring formats were made compliant with internationally recognised standards.

Collectively, this data will allow researchers to paint a picture of academic achievement, health, economic activity and wellbeing for children and young people in Scotland. Decision makers can then be better informed on how best to meet Scotland's ambitions for children.



9. Public Engagement

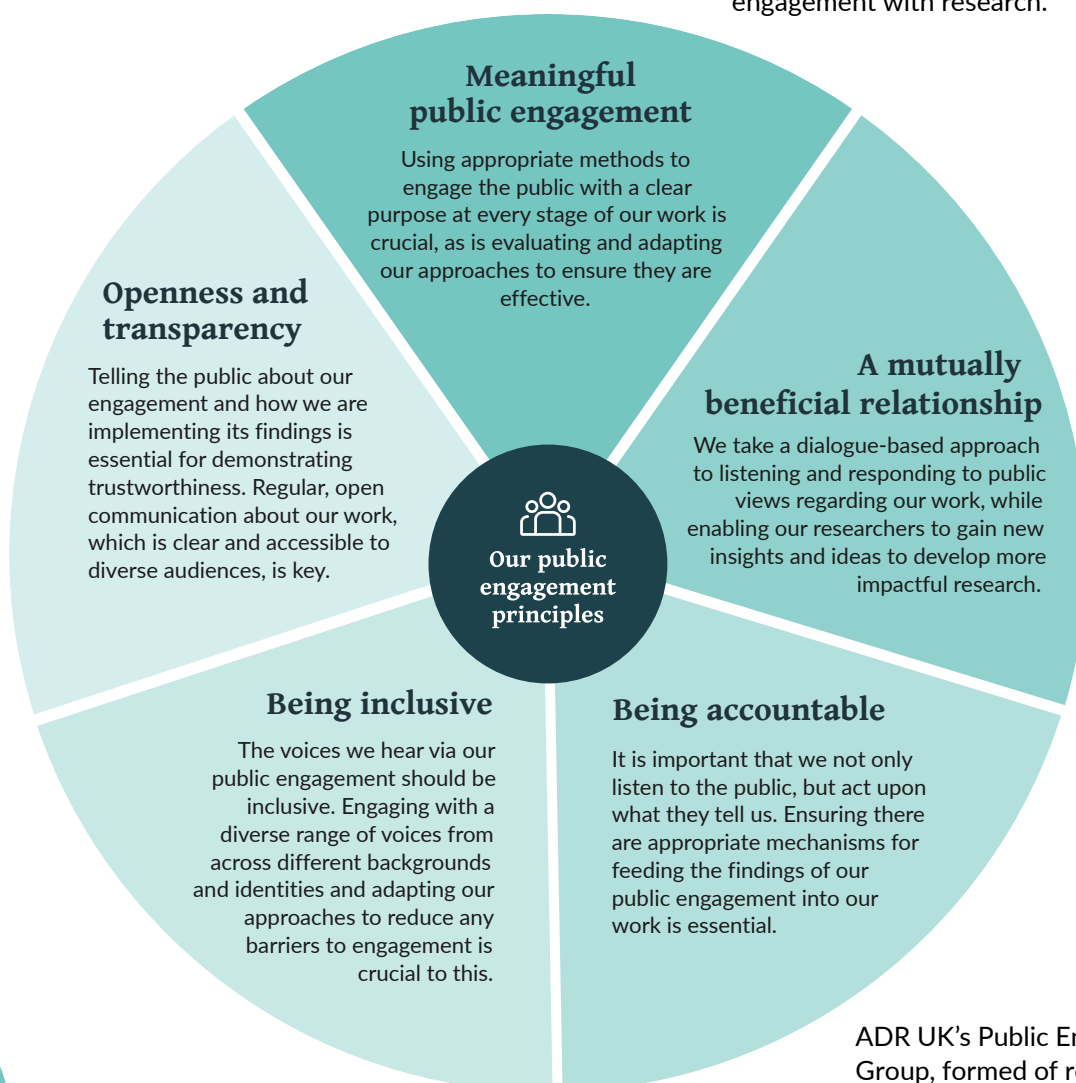
ADR UK is dedicated to ensuring people's data is used in a way that reflects the public's views and has public support, as outlined in the [ADR UK Public Engagement Strategy, 2021 - 2026](#).

We define our public engagement as a **purposeful set of activities designed to promote an ongoing dialogue with the public about administrative data research, driven by active listening and responding**. This enables us to enrich understanding for everyone and maximise the impact of research, ensuring activities are meaningful and mutually beneficial.

Our vision for public engagement

ADR UK's mission is to harness the potential of administrative data for research in the public interest. Administrative data is public data: we therefore have a duty to engage the public in how and why their data is used at every stage of our work, ensure our work **demonstrates trustworthiness**. Understanding the public's needs, interests and concerns in relation to the use of their data, and shaping research to address these, is also essential for **maximising the public benefit** of administrative data research.

Our public engagement is underpinned by five core principles, ensuring that our activities are ethical, designed for impact, and aligned to our values and those of the wider discipline of public engagement with research.



ADR UK's Public Engagement Steering Group, formed of representatives from across our UK-wide partnership, meets regularly to share good practice and coordinate public engagement activities.

Our public engagement activities

Over the past year, across the partnership ADR UK has undertaken a number of different activities to include the public in our work:

Public panels

Public panels have provided a platform for members of the public to offer valuable feedback about our work. In November, a series of workshops took place to establish the Northern Ireland Public Data Panel, which was developed in partnership with the Belfast City Council's City Innovation Team and funded by the Northern Ireland Trusted Research Environment, through Health Data Research UK's Data and Connectivity workstream. The NIPDP will feed into a range of topics for ADR NI research as well as questions of data and innovation across Northern Ireland.

ADR Scotland's public panel expanded its membership this year, covering a diverse range of research, engagement, and information governance projects around administrative data.

The [Consumer Panel](#) for data linkage in Wales provides a public view on the social acceptability of population data research and developments. Over the past year, the panel has been involved in discussions on new administrative data linkages, information accessibility on the updated SAIL website, training for staff, and an array of research projects.

Engagement with the third sector

The third sector are both consumers and drivers of administrative data research and, over the last year, engagement with the sector has allowed ADR UK to understand the research needs of specific communities and sub-sectors of society.

This year ADRC NI partnered with Voices of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) to develop and deliver a [pilot workshop with 11 care experienced young people](#) on how their data is used for research to improve their lives, and to support their involvement in developing future research priorities.

ADR Scotland continues to engage with a variety of third sector organisations across key policy areas such as the Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care, Child Poverty Action Group and the Violence Reduction Unit. As key members of ADR Scotland's project advisory groups, they bring strong sectoral expertise and community perspectives.

Third sector engagement has featured heavily in ADR Wales' newer projects, including the Administrative Data | Agricultural Research Collection (AD|ARC) and the EU Settled Status project. Input and guidance from third sector representatives have driven the direction of these projects, with significant representation a staple of the project stakeholder meetings.

In the last year, ADR England has strengthened engagement with its community representative panels. The [Data First User Representation Panel](#) has continued to facilitate engagement with representatives from organisations working with or for people with experience of the justice system. The [Children & Young People Representative Panel](#) has provided opportunities for researchers using children and young people's data for England to engage with third sector and other representatives.

Finally, the [Wage & Employment Dynamics Public Engagement Strategy Group](#) has brought together representatives from organisations that support people in the workforce, from employment charities to trade unions, to help the project team better understand the interests of all parties involved in the workforce in Britain.

ADR UK – Office for Statistics Regulation public dialogue

Public dialogue is key to understanding the views of the wider public on the use of administrative data for research more broadly. Earlier this year, ADR UK partnered with the [Office for Statistics Regulation](#) and commissioned [Kohlrabi Consulting](#) to conduct a UK-wide public dialogue to better understand public perceptions of ‘public good’ use of data for research and statistics.

In June 2022, 68 members of the public took part in a series of UK-wide deliberative workshops, with analysis of 24 hours of conversation. While a consensus was not always reached by participants, the evidence has been synthesised into five broad themes. Many of these findings feed into one another; together they provide

guidance on points to consider when fulfilling data and statistics use as public good.

Feedback from the majority of participants brought forth five core findings which ADR UK and the Office for Statistics Regulation will consider, alongside other evidence, to inform how their work can maximise the benefits associated with data for research and statistics.

The project was supported by a Project Advisory Group of 11 expert stakeholders to inform on project ethics, policy implications and methodology, and the ADR UK Public Engagement Steering Group.

The dialogue produced five core findings:

- 1. Members of the public should be involved in making decisions about whether public good is being served:** Participants felt that members of the general public should be involved in the interpretation of the public good, as they did not think a concept and responsibility such as this should be politicised or decided on behalf of the public.
- 2. Research and statistics should aim to address a real-world need, whether that concerns an issue that may impact future generations or one impacting a small number of people:** According to participants, the public good use of data for research or statistics should be assessed by need, rather the number of people who would benefit.
- 3. To serve the public good, there should be proactive, clear, and accessible public-facing communication about the use of data and statistics (to better communicate how evidence can inform decision-making):** Participants stated that in order for data for research and statistics to serve the public good, organisations who collect, use, or produce data for research and statistics have a duty to communicate their work in an accessible way with members of the public.
- 4. Public good means data collected for research and statistics should minimise harm:** Many participants felt a personal responsibility that data about them should not contribute to something harmful.
- 5. Universal application of best practice safeguarding principles to ensure secure access to data should help people feel confident to disclose data:** participants suggested that more data collected by public services should be made available in order to shape policy and decision-making that centres on people’s needs, ensuring that this is done in a responsible way.

[The full report is available on the ADR UK website.](#)



10. ADR UK Research Fellowships

Between September 2021 and September 2022, ADR UK has launched four Research Fellowship funding opportunities, supporting researchers to use ADR UK flagship data. We have also supported the joint HM Treasury/Cabinet Office Evaluation Task Force with the academic delivery route for the [Evaluation Accelerator Fund](#).

Approximately £1 million was made available for research using the Grading and Admissions Data for England (GRADE), the Ministry of Justice Data First probation and criminal justice system linked dataset and the Data First family court - Cafcass linked data. ADR UK also launched a research funding opportunity using the Northern Ireland Business Data for Research dataset. In addition, ADR UK supported Evaluation Fellowships focused on quasi-experimental methods to evaluate the effectiveness of different interventions in the justice system, using data released through the Data First programme.

Eight Research Fellows also began on their research projects this during this period:

- Five are using the Ministry of Justice – Department for Education linked dataset to answer questions about how people’s experiences across the education and criminal justice systems interact.
- Two have been seconded to the No. 10 Downing Street Data Science Unit.
- One is using the GRADE data to test for modification in A-level assessment driven by the Covid-19 pandemic.

These Fellows joined a cohort of four active Fellows using the magistrates’ and Crown Court linked dataset, taking the active Fellowship cohort for this year to 12. This is set to grow to at least 20 in the next year across the partnership.

The magistrates’ and Crown Court Fellows, who started work prior to September 2021, successfully applied for impact and development top-up funding this year. This funding is supporting an exciting range of outputs and engagement activities including animations, data comics, stakeholder engagement events and training offerings for the wider research community.

ADR UK has hosted and supported events for this cohort, such as presentation of their findings to our User Representation Panel, which consists of third sector organisations representing users of the criminal justice system. Both this cohort and the Ministry of Justice – Department for Education Fellows have also participated in knowledge exchange with colleagues and stakeholders at a wide range of events and conferences, across the UK and internationally. Through these events, we are working to encourage uptake of research findings and sustainable growth of the research community.

11. ADR UK Ambassadors

ADR UK Ambassadors are people working in government and academia, who are committed to increasing and improving the use of administrative data for research to inform policy and practice. This year, ADR UK has expanded the Ambassadors network to include more representatives from the academic sector. Here, two of these Ambassadors share their reflections on the programme:

**Professor Andromachi Tseloni,
Academic Lead, Data First programme**

What excites you about the potential of administrative data research in the UK?

The wealth of information which is held within administrative data systems in the UK offers immense potential for building evidence to address both theoretical knowledge and policy gaps, ultimately providing insights for appropriately adjusted initiatives to improve lives, empower people, and enrich UK society. However, administrative data has not been collected with the above in mind – far from it. So, ADR UK’s mission is vital.

What role does ADR UK play in fulfilling this potential?

One aspect of the ADR UK model that I am most passionate about is **accountability**. Through its independent stream of funding to approved trusted research environments, ADR UK supports transparency, dialogue and collaboration across stakeholders at each stage of the data journey. This includes data sharing agreements, projects approval criteria, and appropriate dissemination of findings, in order to expand the wealth and quality of evidence for the public good.

What do you hope to achieve or focus on as an ADR UK Ambassador?

I would very much like to work towards raising awareness among academic researchers, policy analysts and government policy teams about the wealth of information held in administrative data which can be used to fill important gaps in knowledge and inform policy. I’ll support work to expand the skills and change the mindset of social sciences researchers and analysts to rely routinely on administrative data, and to promote wide use of administrative data in an ethical, responsible and transparent manner.

**Professor Karen Broadhurst, Co-Director,
Lancaster Data Science Institute**

What excites you about the potential of administrative data research in the UK?

The value of research using administrative data is that we can address pressing questions about public services at a far greater pace and scale than would otherwise be possible. As a specialist in the field of family justice, I’ve witnessed first-hand the transformative impact of this research, particularly where data can be linked across different parts of our justice system. Evidence-informed policy solutions are within easier reach, given the wealth of data now available for safe, ethical use.

What role does ADR UK play in fulfilling this potential?

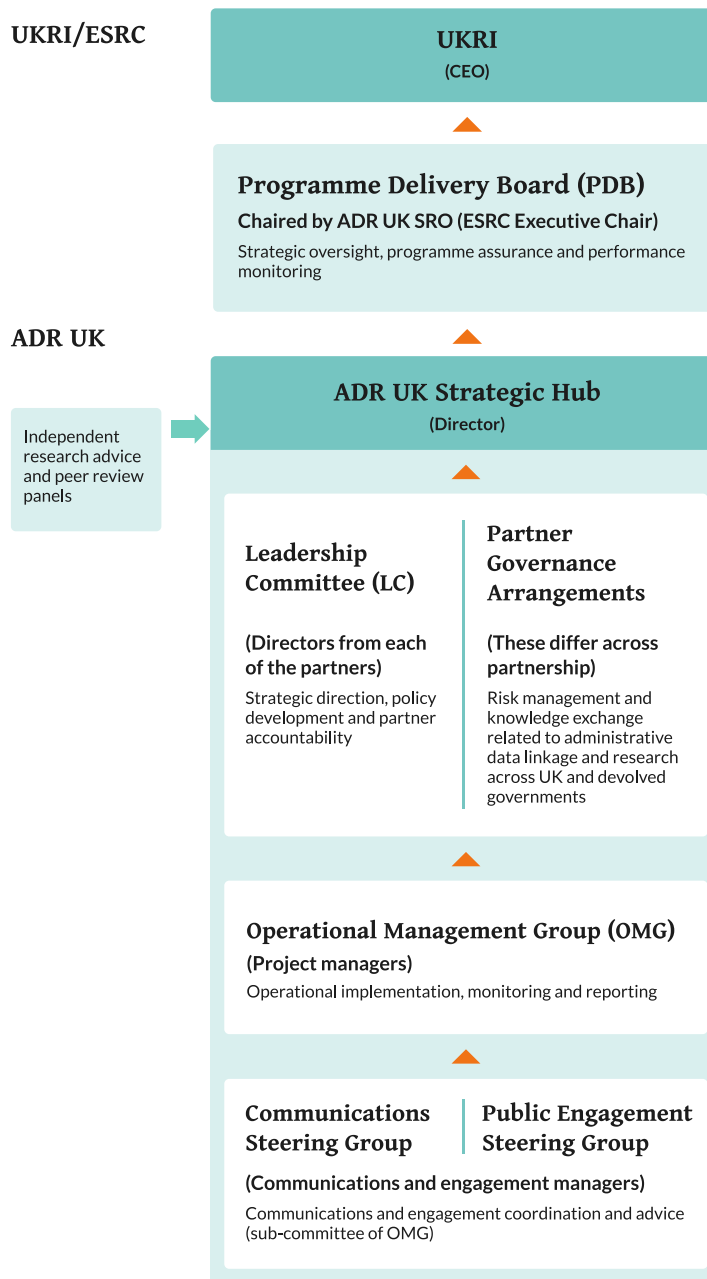
The work of ADR UK has been transformative in developing the infrastructure for safe and ethical use of routine data research and analyses. ADR UK’s impact is felt across the UK, resulting in evidence-informed policy solutions. As Chair of a number of the ADR UK fellowship funding panels, it has also been really pleasing to see ADR UK’s investment in the careers of a new generation of fellows who are embracing the opportunities provided by our wealth of national data assets.

What do you hope to achieve or focus on as an ADR UK Ambassador?

The work completed through the Data First programme so far has revolutionised access to justice data, including cross-sector linked data. Independent research also fosters public confidence in our justice systems, by demonstrating an openness to learning and challenge. Robust, publicly accessible research can bring balance to what are often heated debates about the operation of justice.

12. Governance and Funding

ADR UK's governance structures have been designed to be robust, flexible and responsive, to help ensure we are on track to meet our objectives and to guide good practice across the partnership.



Performance management, scrutiny and assurance

ADR UK has clear and specific targets, as well as a Performance Management Framework (PMF), that allow us to accurately and fairly assess progress across the partnership. The PMF provides assurance about the outcomes of the investment as a whole, and is based on a 'maturity model' approach. A maturity model is a way of considering performance against an agreed set of graded indicators where targets can be set for each ADR UK objective. Achieving or exceeding target levels of maturity becomes a measure of success for the programme.

The PMF is built around five levels of performance for 11 core objectives. Alongside the PMF, programme assurance comes in the form of monitoring and evaluation indicators and other obligations outlined in grant agreements, and shared management documents.

Funding

The ADR UK programme began as a pilot investment in summer 2018. In 2021 the programme secured long-term funding from the Economic Social Research Council (ESRC) approved by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and HM Treasury to continue until March 2026.

After securing funding to continue the ADR UK programme to March 2026, the ESRC carried out a recommissioning exercise for its core delivery partners: ADR NI, ADR Scotland, ADR Wales and the Office for National Statistics. This process required partners to submit funding applications that detailed what they had delivered in the 2018-2021 period, as well as outlining their plans for the 2022-2026 period.

This was followed by an interview with a panel made up of ESRC representatives and members of the research community with expertise of working with administrative data. The panel was able to scrutinise funding applications and ask delivery partners to explain their vision and priorities, and also provide justification for their requested resources.

Following the panel interviews, recommendations were provided to the ESRC regarding grant allocations, and to partners to address as part of the development and submission of their final funding applications.

The recommissioning phase has concluded, and we are looking forward to continuing to collaborate with our core partners over the next four years.

13. Achievements and Milestones

SEPTEMBER 2021 – SEPTEMBER 2022

- ADR Scotland Public Panel membership is expanded, providing greater feedback on research projects and broader issues regarding Scotland's data landscape.

- Full Digital Economy Act 2017 accreditation is achieved for ADR Scotland's data partners.

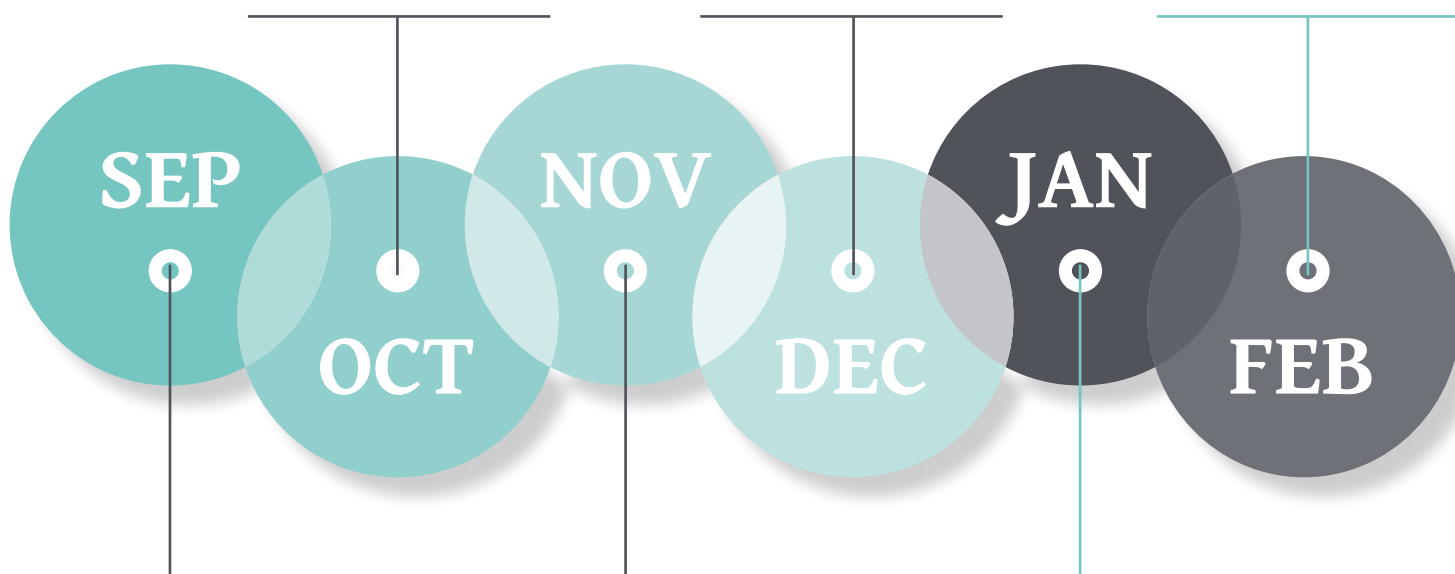
- In collaboration with key partners, Research Capability 2021 demonstrates the importance of using administrative data to inform public policy.

- A report is published by the Behavioural Insights Team on accelerating public policy research with synthetic data.

- The ONS Secure Research Service Metadata Catalogue is launched, making information about administrative datasets more findable and accessible.

- Data First adds probation data to enable linkage with magistrates' court, Crown Court and prison datasets.

- A roundtable event on defining 'What is research-ready data' is held with over 50 stakeholders.



- ADR UK secures £90 million funding to transform researchers' access to UK public sector data.

- Linked data analysis of school staff vaccination uptake is published and shared with the Minister for Education and Welsh Language.

- ADR NI launches the Earnings and Employees Study 2011 dataset: this data aims to identify factors influencing differences in median pay.

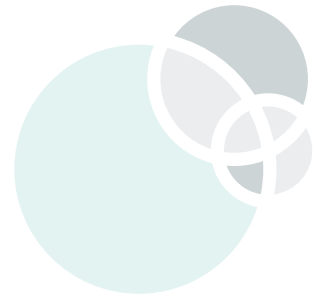
- ADR NI delivers a successful pilot of the Northern Ireland Public Data Panel, which will be established in autumn 2022.

- The ONS-ADR UK joint implementation group is established to deliver the ADR England strategy.

- Digital Health and Care Wales, the trusted third party used by ADR Wales and partner SAIL Databank, gains DEA accreditation.

- ADR NI pilots remote access to certain datasets through the ONS Secure Research Service for the first time, opening new opportunities for researchers.

- A paper on linking education and hospital data in England is published in the International Journal of Population Data Science.



- ADR NI announces an upcoming funding opportunity for research utilising the NI Business Data for Research database, using de-identified trade and economic data.

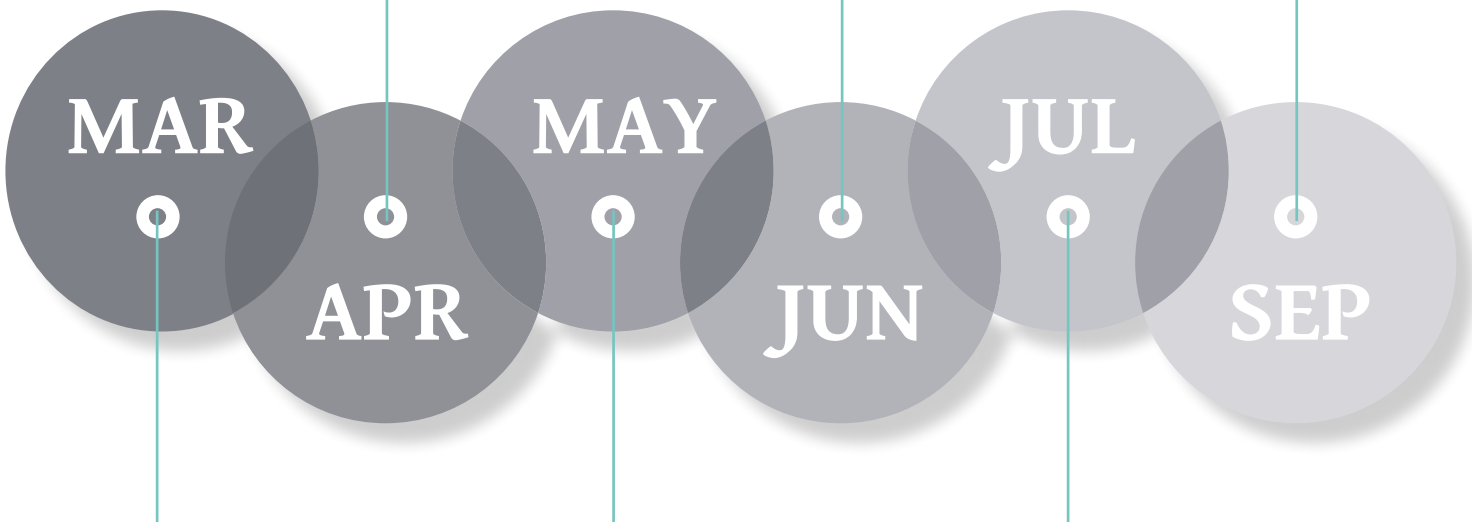
- ADR England, ADR NI, ADR Scotland and ADR Wales start working in line with newly-published strategies up to 2026.

- ADR Scotland releases a report on a children's engagement pilot project in partnership with Children in Scotland.

- ADR UK and ADR Scotland co-direct the International Population Data Linkage (IPDLN) Conference in Edinburgh.

- ADR UK launches a funding call for Doctoral Training Partnerships to bid for 20 PhDs.

- ADR UK and the Office for Statistics Regulation jointly publish findings from the UK-wide public dialogue.



- The AD|ARC (Administrative Data Agricultural Research Collection) project is extended for a one-year period (2022 - 2023).

- Growing up in England Wave 2, with additional vulnerability data, is made available to all accredited researchers.

- The Data First family court - Cafcass linked dataset is made available in the SAIL Databank to accredited researchers.

- ADR Wales wins the Swansea University 'Outstanding impact on health and wellbeing' award for its 'One Wales' Covid-19 Response work.

- ADR NI successfully pilots an involvement workshop with care experienced young people on data research into their health and wellbeing.

- Datasets and metadata for looked after children, absence, exclusions and school leaver destinations in Scotland are made available to researchers.

- ADR UK confirms the successful projects from the Research-Ready Data Fund, following a robust assessment exercise supported by the ONS.

- ADR England publishes two Home Office-commissioned reports on the feasibility of using the MoJ-DfE linked dataset to evaluate early interventions for violent crime.

14. Looking forward

This year, we've continued to grow in activity and ambition. By 2026, we want to be the default choice to host linked administrative data from across the UK and devolved government, making it accessible for trained researchers to generate insights that inform better policy and practice. We're working across our partnership to build that vision and fulfil the potential of administrative data research as a force for public good.

Training and Capacity Building

ADR UK's [Training and Capacity Building Strategy](#) will form a core element of our future work. We want to improve the skills of researchers across the UK, to enable them to securely access and use administrative data for research in the public interest.

ADR UK will deliver this strategy in four key ways:

1. Funding PhDs through supervisor-led competitions
2. Providing dataset-specific resources
3. Providing generic resources to support use of linked administrative data
4. Signposting other resources for using linked administrative data.

Resources to support the use of our innovative linked datasets will include explainer videos, training courses and synthetic data. We'll develop an ADR UK federated data catalogue to make our growing bank of datasets more user-friendly for accredited researchers by drawing content from existing data catalogues developed by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), SAIL Databank and others. We'll also build communities of practice around administrative data research, where insights and expertise can be shared.

Through these ambitious plans, we can realise the full potential of administrative data in serving the public's needs.

Following the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)'s reinvestment in our partnership, we [published strategies](#) for each of our four national partnerships – ADR England, ADR Northern Ireland, ADR Scotland and ADR Wales – that will take us through to 2026. These strategies reflect the goals of our programme in each nation, showing how we will continue to work towards transforming the way researchers can access the UK's wealth of public sector data.

In the year ahead, we'll work together with our partners to deliver on these strategies and make sure administrative data works for researchers across the UK.



Emma Gordon,
Director of ADR UK

“ADR UK is paving the way towards an exciting future, in which research using linked administrative data becomes an increasingly important resource for filling key evidence gaps. Through delivery of our strategies across our national partnerships, we will ensure that relationships flourish between academia and government to facilitate research that leads to real social progress. And by developing training and capacity for administrative data research across the UK, we will open more opportunities than ever for researchers to answer vital questions and improve lives using public sector data.”

ADR England

In the coming year, ADR England will focus on the development of new research-ready data projects confirmed for funding as part of our portfolio, in collaboration with the ONS. These investments will span a variety of pressing research priorities, from the impact of living environments on health to the dynamics of employment and migration.

These projects will be delivered by a wide range of academic and government partners across the UK. They include both expansions of our existing projects and brand-new investments for ADR England.

ADR England is announcing projects as their grant agreements are put in place. At the time of writing, the projects announced as joining the ADR England portfolio will enable the use of linked administrative data to generate insights on the following topics:

- Links between living environments and children's health and education
- Sustainable transport, using administrative vehicle data
- Linking local authority and healthcare data on children and young people in London
- Dynamics in private pension saving
- Development and enhancement of the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset, which links education data to employment, benefits and earnings data.

We have also announced further funding for the following existing ADR England projects:

- **Data First**, which provides insight into experiences across the justice system in England and Wales.
- **Education and Child Health Insights from Linked Data (ECHILD)**, which links health, education and social care data for children in England.
- **Wage and Employment Dynamics**, which provides insight into the dynamics of earnings and employment in Britain.

The commissioning of these projects was achieved with robust support from ONS every step of the way. Following an initial expression of interest, ONS reviewed invited bids to ensure technical feasibility. This involved assessing the governance approach, source data, linkage plan and resource requirement of each of the proposals invited to make a full application. These were then scrutinised by an Independent Expert Panel for overall fundability.

Recommendations by the Independent Expert Panel informed the Portfolio Prioritisation Panel, which was the final stage of the funding decision-making process. Discussions at this final stage also included cross-ESRC advice, ONS resourcing and technical feasibility considerations.

[ADR England's 2021 - 2026 Strategy](#) sets out how we will work with our partners across our portfolio of data linkage and research projects to deliver impact over this investment period.

ADR NI

The next two years will be both a challenging and an exciting time for the ADR NI team. The partnership will be expanding their research to include new and important policy-relevant areas such as homelessness, justice, and the world of work and income, both in Northern Ireland and from Whitehall sources. The opportunity to incorporate data from the 2021 Census is also set to enrich most other administrative data and contribute important policy-relevant insights.

Plans are in place to commence a number of policy-relevant research projects, developed in line with priorities identified by departments and other stakeholders. This will include a project examining updated data on suicide deaths in Northern Ireland, following the recent Coroner's Review, as well as deaths due to alcohol and drugs. ADR NI will also be focusing on rapid analysis projects using newly available and upcoming datasets, such as the Earnings and

Employees Study 2011 and the Business Data for Research database.

ADR NI has continued to forge strong relationships with data owners across government. Over the next year, as well as continuing to build and enhance these relationships they will push forward with a number of new linked datasets, including the Educational Outcomes Linkage, which will be made available to researchers in autumn 2022. To facilitate broad usage of their themed datasets by researchers, ADR NI will be expanding the provision of remote access to data through the ONS Secure Research Service.

ADR NI's 2022 – 2026 Strategy focuses on delivering high quality and impactful evidence that supports policy and practice in Northern Ireland, and more widely, across the UK.

ADR Scotland

In this investment phase, the ADR Scotland team is committed to delivering research in key policy areas identified in Scotland's National Outcomes. The partnership is excited to build momentum across a range of initiatives, infrastructure work and research programmes, and to develop tools and platforms to improve the types of administrative data research they can do. This includes developing data for intergenerational analyses through the Scottish Historical Population Platform, as well as geospatial data that builds upon initial scoping work and develops geospatial tools in the Scottish Safe Haven.

ADR Scotland will continue to expand its data sourcing programme, using existing datasets to curate high value linked data assets. Further datasets will be ingested as part of the 'children's lives and outcomes' research programme and initial research findings will be shared in creative and engaging ways, as informed by their recent public engagement pilot.

Over the next year, ADR Scotland will further develop understanding of policy needs through continued engagement with a range of data owners, to identify datasets that they can bring under a portfolio programme. Key areas of focus

include homelessness and substance use. They will also work with partners in justice, including the Scottish Drugs Related Death Taskforce and Scotland's Violence Reduction Unit, to develop new areas of research to help inform policy and public health strategy.

Researcher capacity will remain a priority, as ADR Scotland continues to deliver a programme of skills training and to raise awareness of administrative data research. ADR Scotland looks forward to research findings from new data including on labour market transitions and progression for disadvantaged groups, using data from the 2001 Census linked to UK benefits data from the Department for Work and Pensions and income data from HM Revenue and Customs. (The dataset in the rest of the UK was formerly known as the Race Disparity Audit data collection).

ADR Scotland's 2022 – 2026 Strategy highlights their goals to enhance the administrative data landscape in Scotland by improving data quality and access, building capacity and creating more sustainable data assets. This will collectively enable research to benefit the Scottish population and address major policy and social challenges.

ADR Wales

The year ahead for ADR Wales will focus on building relationships, acquiring further key data assets and demonstrating how data driven analysis can aid policy decision-making.

The ADR Wales programme of work is large, complex and ambitious. ADR Wales' projects have been carefully constructed to deliver against the Welsh Government's Programme for Government, answering a direct policy need steered by academics and researchers aware of the research value of data available in that area. This formula will be demonstrated again in new work focusing on equalities, where the role and value of data use is recognised and specifically mentioned in the Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.

ADR Wales will continue with their data acquisition efforts, and the team looks forward to the arrival in the coming months of 2021 Census into the SAIL Databank. This exciting and hugely informative acquisition will play a significant role in the work undertaken by the ADR Wales team, helping to understand so much about the population and in particular protected characteristics which, until now, have been difficult to study.

The ADR Wales team looks forward to even more collaborative opportunities through the ADR UK partnership in the coming year. They will further develop relationships and partnerships with the social care sector, and work closely with the Welsh Local Government Association and local authorities in Wales to acquire new data and inform local government decision making.

Plans include building on current work alongside governments and departments, working again with the Ministry of Justice on the exciting Better Outcomes through Linked Data (BOLD) programme. This government data-linking programme seeks to improve the connectedness of government data in England and Wales and will benefit from dedicated roles within the Welsh Government and the SAIL Databank.

ADR Wales' 2022 - 2026 Strategy recognises the team's expertise, builds on existing relationships and imparts lessons learned to best support policy and practice in Wales and across the UK.

Office for National Statistics

Following ADR England's recent announcements regarding the successful applicants for the Research-Ready Data Fund, the ONS and ADR UK have started kick-off meetings with project leads. The ONS teams are firming up their plans for supporting these exciting projects that showcase the very best of what ADR UK offers: access to valuable linked administrative data for the public good. As part of the wider activities on research-ready data, the ONS is exploring areas such as synthetic data, code sharing, and what supporting documentation is required to get the very best out of these assets.

The ONS is looking forward to working with our partners on the development of an ADR UK federated data catalogue, a resource which will bring together information for users on the datasets from existing data catalogues. This will build on the foundations of the ONS Secure Research Service Metadata Catalogue. The new ADR UK federated data catalogue will transform how researchers find and access information about administrative datasets held across the ADR UK trusted research environments.

The ONS Secure Research Service has been providing secure access to de-identified, unpublished data for accredited researchers for over 15 years, and it is one of the largest trusted research environments in the UK. The ONS is now leading on the delivery of an Integrated Data Service in collaboration with partners across government. The Integrated Data Service will build on the foundation provided by the ONS Secure Research Service but will represent a significantly enhanced service.

The Integrated Data Service will utilise state of the art cloud-based infrastructure and technologies that are not available in the existing ONS Secure Research Service. It will be more scalable and offer improved processing power. The Integrated Data Service will provide more streamlined arrangements to give quicker access to data. It will transform the ways in which data owners are able to share data assets and lead to an increased range of integrated datasets that are built, linked and maintained for richer analysis.

On 11 October 2022, the ONS will host the next in-person Research Capability event in London, meeting colleagues from across government and researchers using the ONS Secure Research Service. The ONS will collaborate with ADR UK to showcase and celebrate the outstanding and innovative research taking place, with a highlight being the announcement of the ONS Research Excellence Award winners.

The ONS team looks forward to a busy year ahead, working across the ADR UK partnership to deliver administrative data for the public good.



15. Our Vision for 2026

ADR UK: Summer 2021 to Summer 2026 Service Design Framework

Vision	ADR UK's vision for 2026 is to be the default choice to host linked administrative data from across the entirety of UK and devolved government, making it accessible to a deep pool of trained researchers to generate insights routinely used to inform policy and practice.			
Aims	Trust & sustainability	Research for public good	Research access & support	Available data for research
Outcomes	Commitment and sustainability for administrative data research: Strategic focus on addressing major societal challenges through administrative data research, with support throughout government for releasing data to create a sustainable research resource.	Measurable public good: Demonstrable impact arising from administrative data research that addresses major societal challenges.	Seamless researcher service: Transparent, coordinated, secure and timely access to administrative data and support services for the wider research community.	A highly useful long-term research resource: Flow, accessibility and long-term preservation of high-quality, research-ready administrative data, designed to address major societal challenges.
Objectives	A coordinated partnership: A focal point and leadership to help align academic and government capabilities and values to answer important societal questions through administrative data research.	Impact for data owners: Recognition from data owners that administrative data research has delivered significant benefit to government departments.	Extended and improved UK-wide accessibility: Significant and geographically spread increase in secure physical and remote access to our complete research-ready data catalogue, with effective and coordinated support.	Building better national core researcher data: Government committed to sharing data using the ADR UK model, with new datasets developed to address their strategic research priorities.
	A sustainable research resource for the future: Evidence created to inform investment in and lay foundations for a sustainable mainstream research resource, complementing other UKRI infrastructure.	Bodies of knowledge: Innovative and impactful research using administrative data builds and contributes to bodies of knowledge that address major societal challenges.	More widespread access to more data for more researchers: A larger and broader range of researchers securely accessing administrative data more easily, more often and more quickly, both individually and collaboratively, via clear access routes.	High-quality research data: Existing and new data are ethically and legally compliant, and prepared, enhanced and preserved for research purposes.
	Trustworthy programme of work: ADR UK is viewed as a trustworthy programme of work, championing open engagement, with the public broadly supportive of the shift towards retaining and preserving de-identified datasets for research and innovation that address societal challenges.	Greater impact from existing data and research: More innovative and impactful research from existing data holdings and more impact from existing research.	UK economic and social researchers have the skills and tools to conduct world-class administrative data research for public benefit: Training pathways are promoted and enhanced to support researchers in using the new linked data assets that ADR UK makes available both directly and in partnership with others. ADR UK is not only recognised as an enabler of research that improves public policy but also as bolstering the platforms and futures of researchers and maintaining and nurturing the talent pipeline.	



Economic
and Social
Research Council

ADR UK (Administrative Data Research UK) is a partnership transforming the way researchers access the UK's wealth of public sector data, to enable better informed policy decisions that improve people's lives.

To find out more, visit adruk.org

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