



From Information to Intelligence 7th October 2004 – A Conference *Sponsored by the Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO) partnership*

Our thanks goes out to all those who joined us at our recent conference - we have since been overwhelmed by the positive feedback received. Attendance at such events, and the ongoing support this encourages, is vital in ensuring that the LRO continues to evolve and develop to meet all of our needs.

Event Feedback

Organised to raise awareness of the Lincolnshire Research Observatory (LRO), and to engage partners in research and capacity building activities, this event saw representatives from a wide range of local and regional agencies come together to discuss key issues relating to the move from data storage to analysis and intelligence.

A third of delegates surveyed at the conference felt that their organisations rely upon information provided by others, and almost half thought that the LRO provided networking opportunities to support this. During the course of the day, the opportunity to consult with such a broad collection of organisations was of great benefit, not least the morning discussion groups, which were a great success and provided an opportunity to discuss key issues and obstacles to the creation of intelligence from data and information. The thoughts of each group were illustrated in tabloid style headlines, and attendees proved very inventive with their ideas!

The theme of water and sea proved popular with groups, who felt that searching for information and statistics could sometimes be like ‘fishing in a sea of data’ or a ‘Bermuda triangle’ of information. A number of delegates reflected on the increasing importance of projections in addition to current and historical data, using ‘Mystic Mandy!’ to represent the LRO website as a tool for forecasting and future planning. The LRO was also described as ‘Lincolnshire’s best kept secret’ with reference to the importance of ‘raising awareness’ of the LRO in order to support local research and analysis. This theme was continued by the description of a ‘hidden Lincolnshire’ where, in some cases, valuable data and expertise remains ‘behind closed doors’ and it was felt that there was a need to unlock this.

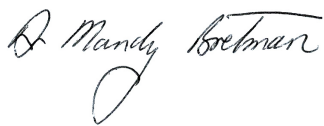
A number of these issues were addressed in subsequent presentations, which included the demonstration of latest developments to the LRO website, designed to support the gathering and analysis of key local data. Our new **toolkits** area houses a number of these developments including the recently launched **forecasting and benchmarking assistant**, providing interactive access to results from the 2004 Lincolnshire and Rutland skills forecasting model, as well as our latest local employer survey. In addition to this, the LRO **research and**

consultation calendar provides users with the opportunity to promote and disseminate research activities and outputs, share best practice methods and identify opportunities for joint working. We continue to encourage feedback on these latest developments in order to measure their value and identify opportunities for further enhancements. We were also provided with a glimpse of possible future developments, through the presentation of interactive monitoring packages currently being developed with a range of partners. These ICT solutions to data presentation and analysis offer an innovative and sustainable approach to creating intelligence.

Plans are already underway to measure the value of the LRO website through a survey of all users and visitors, which will support the feedback provided by delegates at the conference. Further planned developments to the site already include enhancements to search facilities as well as additional interactive toolkits to support the use of data from a range of local, regional and national sources.

The key to developing further tools for intelligence will be engaging partners in making use of the LRO website, providing feedback on their experiences and prioritising requirements in terms of supporting research and analysis. The importance of continuing to share data, intelligence and networking opportunities is clear and we hope that partners will remain committed to the LRO in order to achieve this.

Many Thanks



Dr. Mandy Bretman
Director of Public Health – East Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust
Chair of the LRO Partnership

Further Information

We welcome any enquiries or feedback you may have following this event:

- To comment on the conference including any of the issues or activities discussed;
- To find out more about becoming involved in the LRO within your organisation;
- To provide feedback on future activities that you feel the LRO partnership should be aware of or involved in;

Please contact LRO@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Visit the Lincolnshire Research Observatory at www.research-lincs.org.uk