

Welcome to the Local Futures Network Newsletter. In this month's issue:

Local Futures Barometer

Local Futures Barometers provide a short analysis of topical policy issues, from a geographical perspective. Our latest Barometer looks at the in-flow of migrant workers during 2007, at a local level. Drawing on the NI number registrations as a proxy for migrant workers, it demonstrates the varying impact of the recent waves of immigration, particularly from the EU accession countries [More](#) You can also analyse the relative in-flow of migrant workers in your own area using a demo of our online service, Local Knowledge. [More](#)

New resources for Network members

The 'intelligence' and 'resources' sections of the Local Futures Network site are constantly updated. Some of the latest additions include new policy reports, the latest research and new drivers of change. [More](#)

Local Knowledge on-line

With the end of the financial year fast approaching, could this be a good time to consider taking out a subscription to our Local Knowledge on-line service? As a special introductory offer, will be happy to include our new report writing facility (which will be launched in the Spring). In addition to the wide range of existing applications, this will allow you to prepare automated reports on local conditions, across the full range of themes covered by local knowledge - economic, social, and environmental. [More](#)

Berkshire Strategy for Sustainable Economic Prosperity

Local Futures is working with the six Berkshire unitary authorities to create a *Strategy for Sustainable Economic Prosperity*. The first phase of the project included production of a State of the Sub-region report, which was launched at a major event in January. Attended by members and partners from across Berkshire, the event highlighted the key strategic priorities to be addressed and agreed a programme of work to refine and develop the strategy. This includes futures and scenario development and an extensive proofing exercise with each of the districts. [More](#)

The State of the London Boroughs – Place-shaping Tool-kit

A major report on the State of the London Boroughs has been launched as part of a 'place-shaping tool-kit'. Sponsored by Capital Ambition, the report is accompanied by 33 Borough Profiles, summarising the findings for each of the individual local authorities. The toolkit contains other resources and is designed also to inform work on Sustainable Community Strategies and LAAs, as well as the wider place-shaping agenda. [More](#)

North West Visions

Local Futures is currently working on visions for Sustainable Community Strategies in Warrington and Stockport. The work has involved a comprehensive baseline analysis of local conditions and a programme of workshops involving key partner organisations. Futures and scenario building techniques have been used to help imagine alternative futures and shape compelling and believable visions. The work is also designed to inform Local Area Agreements and other local strategies.

Supporting Local Leadership

Local Futures is working with the Leadership Centre for local government on a regional programme of Place-Shaping seminars. Aimed at local political leaders, the seminars introduce members to the basic concepts of place-shaping and work with them to apply the concepts to their own area.

'Place-Shaping and the Sub National Review'

Local Futures is organising a national conference, in conjunction with the Local Government Association, on 'What Role for the Sub National Review?'. To be held at the LGA's Smith Square conference centre on Tuesday 10th June, the conference will seek to relate the Sub National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration to the broader place-shaping agenda, with the aim of assessing the practical implications for local authorities and local policy makers. [More](#)

'The Geography of Economic Prosperity'

Our Local Futures Network seminar on 5th December 2007 considered the geography of economic prosperity in Britain, and highlighted the key characteristics of economically thriving local areas. Case studies from different parts of the country were set in the context of an overarching analysis of economic prosperity, reflecting the varying challenges faced in different parts of the country. Log in and go to the Network homepage to find presentations and audio recordings of the event. [More](#)

Next Local Futures Network event

In order to avoid a clash with the LGA Sustainable Communities Conference, we have postponed the next LFN seminar scheduled for 12th March. Instead, the event - '*Sustainable Places*' will be held on Wednesday 23rd April 2008. Organised in association with Forum for the Future, we will look at local responses to climate change and assess the extent of local sustainability. [More](#)

For the latest update on our work, go to the [Local Futures Group](#) website and log in with your username and password.

You are receiving this email because you are a Network member. If you wish to unsubscribe, please reply to this email with 'Unsubscribe' in the subject field.

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Latest resources for Network members

The members' area of the Local Futures Network site is constantly updated. If you would like to be notified of changes more regularly, please register to receive an [RSS feed](#). We have highlighted some of the new content included in the site below, but if you want to view all new content please log in to www.localfutures.com using your e-mail address and user password.

Our latest content includes additions to the following:

- [Policy](#)
- [Research](#)
- [Strategies](#)
- [Future drivers of change](#)
- [Barometer](#)
- [Events](#)

Policy

In the policy section we have included links to a range of recently published reports, including:

Pro-environmental behaviours framework

Defra has produced a framework for pro-environmental behaviours, summarising the department's understanding of the evidence on consumer behaviour in order to support policy development and implementation for those policymakers and stakeholders interested in supporting greener lifestyles. Amongst other things, it covers a core set of principles and approaches for encouraging more environmentally friendly behaviour.

Major transport schemes evaluation

The DfT has published guidance for English local authorities who are intending to seek funding from the Department for major transport schemes, or who already have a scheme going through the approvals process. The guidance provides the requirements and frameworks to help local authorities evaluate local programmes.

Strong and prosperous communities: Implementation Plan: One Year On

CLG has produced an update of progress across the five workstreams within the Local Government White Paper's Implementation Plan. This includes guidelines for negotiating new LAAs in 17 areas and the launch of a website containing good practice for those facing pressure from EU migrant workers (in partnership with the IDeA).

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Research

New reports included in our research section include:

Economic survey of the United Kingdom

This report by the OECD recognises the UK's strong macroeconomic performance, but also highlights the significant challenges posed by skill levels, labour force participation and social mobility. Notably, the report postulates that one reason for the persistent socioeconomic gaps in educational attainment within the UK may be due to local authorities and schools failing to distribute deprivation funds as intended by central government.

Estimating the scale and impacts of migration at the local level

This report by the LGA provides a synthesis and analysis of available statistics on population dynamics and change. In doing so, the report provides an estimation of immigration at the local level, and assesses the local impact this has on public service delivery with the help of case study research.

Cities Outlook 2008

This Centre for Cities report looks at the recent economic performance of UK cities, and draws upon data to highlight the challenges UK cities are faced with in 2008 and beyond. Slower economic growth, tighter public spending and an uncertain housing market are some of the factors shaping the cities' economic conditions, as well as increasing pressure on local infrastructure.

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Local Strategies

We continue to update our library of local strategies and have recently included:

Lambeth Economic Development Strategy 2007-2010

This strategy is designed to achieve the borough's vision, as set out in its Regeneration Delivery Plan, by enabling job creation, supporting the growth of key sectors and equipping the borough's population with the means to secure jobs needed for strong and healthy communities. As such, the borough aims to be seen as a business location of choice with a global reputation.

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Hyndburn 2008 to 2018

This strategy provides a common vision for all stakeholders within the relatively small district of Hyndburn, which is undergoing significant change through increasing investment, birth rates, and migration levels. The strategy provides a starting point for all other strategic and policymaking activity over the next decade, particularly through the three principles which are to underpin LSP work over this period: sustainable growth, 'narrowing the gap' and assessing impact.

Sedgefield Borough Council's Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012

As part of Sedgefield's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration, the Borough Council has produced a Climate Change Strategy. This details the Council's ambition to make climate change a central theme in future policies, strategies and activities, with a primary aim to achieve a 15 per cent reduction in greenhouse gases emitted via Council activities by 2012.

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Future drivers of change

New drivers of change included in the 'Futures' section of the site include:

Car-dependent lifestyles add to gridlock

The latest available figures show that the road traffic has increased by 13.1 per cent over the past decade. This suggests that we are still reluctant to give up the road travel, despite a recent survey suggesting that 70 per cent of respondents believed emissions from road transport are a cause of climate change.

Strong surveillance culture in the UK

An analysis of countries across the world ranks the UK with one of the strongest 'surveillance cultures' globally. Terrorism, increased immigration, localised government and monitored consumer activity has increased the demand for data-gathering and sharing information within the UK, enabled by improved technology. Balancing these needs with the right to privacy and public trust will be a critical trend to future social cohesion.

Petrol costs rising

The rise in oil prices has emphasised the dependence on the global energy market in the UK (as in other countries). High energy prices have a knock-on effect on wealth and consumer spending; together with an uncertain economic climate and stalling house prices, these trends – strengthened by a globalised economy – will be important factors shaping future social and economic conditions.

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Barometer: Migrant workers

Our latest Barometer looks at the local in-flow of migrant workers, as measured by registrations of NI numbers (by place of residence), producing a crude geographical pattern of economic migration during 2007 within the UK.

While migrant workers have long been major contributors to the UK economy, they have received increasing attention over recent months. According to current figures, one in eight (12.5 per cent) of the working age population is born overseas (Home Office, October 2007). The most recent wave of immigrants from the EU accession countries – primarily the A8 group¹ – has re-ignited the debate over the wider impact of economic immigration in the UK. Specifically, the *local* impact of new migrants has been raised, with services coming under mounting pressure, exacerbated by insufficient planning to accommodate newcomers.

A spatial breakdown of new migrant workers promotes a better understanding of the true nature of their impact within the UK. The data reveals that the wider spread of migrant workers beyond the major urban centres of Great Britain, although London and other city-regions still receive the highest numbers. The data provides a starting point from which the relationship between the local economy, communities and destinations for migrant workers can be better understood, enabling improved projections of local service needs.

¹ Czech Republic, Republic of Estonia, Republic of Hungary, Republic of Latvia, Republic of Lithuania, Republic of Poland, Slovak Republic and Republic of Slovenia

Download the report [here](#) (PDF doc, opens in same page), complete with brief case studies and a data annex of data tables, maps, is available for Network members.

If you are interested in accessing similar spatial data on the latest economic, social and environmental indicators, see our [Local Knowledge](#) platform of statistics and applications for data analysis.

Events

'The Geography of Economic Prosperity' 5th December 2007

This seminar analysed the geography of economic prosperity across Britain, in the context of the Government's *Sub-National Review of Economic Prosperity and Regeneration*. John Fisher (Director, Local Futures Group) analysed the geography of economic prosperity in Britain, highlighting the key factors that contribute to a thriving economic places. The speakers outlined the Government's agenda for the Sub-National Review, with case studies demonstrating the practical implications of implementing the Sub-National Review.

[Miles Beale \(Cities and Regions Team, CLG\)](#) clarified the policy context of sub-national economic development, and emphasised the Government's intentions to broaden development goals to include regeneration and neighbourhood renewal. The context also highlighted the Government's particular interest in sub-regional partnerships and strengthening local authorities' capacity to lead in taking the agenda forward.

[John Fisher \(Director, Local Futures Group\)](#) drew on the latest Local Futures *State of the Nation* research to assess the performance of Britain's sub-regional economies. The data used highlighted the challenges faced across the country in creating economic prosperity at the local level, and prompted the discussion of some basic typologies of place by economic prosperity.

[John Banks \(Deputy Head, Economic Development, Durham CC/County Durham Economic Partnership\)](#) described the practical experience of Durham in trying to engage with the economic development agenda, shaped by a close and positive relationship with its RDA. The post-industrial journey has resulted in significant challenges for fostering local economic prosperity; targeted policy and funding at all spatial levels was raised as necessary to address these challenges and adapt to future change.

[John Rees-Evans \(Head of Economic Development, Hampshire CC\)](#) underlined the importance of clarifying the definition of sub-national spatial levels such as 'sub-regions' and 'regions', whose functional boundaries do not necessary match their administrative boundaries. Hampshire's thriving economy and prime location masks significant obstacles to shared and sustainable economic prosperity. The South Hampshire 'process' for addressing these issues, and the potential for the future, were discussed.

Copies of all speaker presentations are available online, on the Local Futures Network homepage.

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In true Local Futures fashion we will be examine the geography of sustainability, using a new local sustainability index. Importantly, we will be discussing the challenges involved in connecting environmental sustainability issues to the wider place-shaping agenda.

To reserve your place, contact kate.fisher@localfutures.com

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