

**April 2011**

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*It's the start of a new financial year and the cuts are starting to bite. The good news is that councils and their partners are generally proving remarkably resilient - expect some really interesting innovation in the next 12 months. At NLGN, we'll be contributing to the debate with a new wave of research projects on social care commissioning, capital finance, the future of universal services and the shape of local government after the cuts.*

Best wishes,  
Simon Parker, Director [sparker@nlgn.org.uk](mailto:sparker@nlgn.org.uk)

### The Commission on Next Localism

Over the coming months NLGN will launch a major *Commission on Next Localism*. It will develop the ideas and propositions that will define the new localist era.

NLGN will look explore how a new relationship between State and Citizen could make a reality of the freedoms needed to fulfil local government's ambition, shape local democracy and 'lock in' localism into wider public service reform. Our aim is to encourage real-time learning between local authorities and other local partners.

For more information, [please contact us](#).



### Show Me the Money



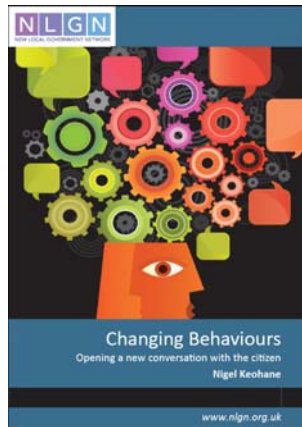
'Show Me the Money' is [NLGN's latest report](#) and outlines a vision for the future of audit in local government. With the abolition of the Audit Commission, government must be sure that its replacement model not only increases accountability, but bolsters market competition and engages citizens in the process. NLGN's new report presents a model for audit in which the Audit Commission Practice acts as a mutual in the market to keep costs low and and spur market plurality. Individual citizens should form part of new independent auditor appointment committees and be given the right to appeal if they feel audit is either ineffective or not independent.

Read the [press release](#) on our website. Members can access the full report by logging into the Members section.

### Changing Behaviours: Report Launch

On Wednesday 20th April NLGN will launch its latest report, '[Changing Behaviours: Opening a new conversation with the citizen](#)'.

To date, much of the discussion of service reduction and budget cuts in local government has been focused on supply-side measures—sharing services, cutting front-line service provision—this new report turns the current debate on its head and asks what measures councils can take to influence the behaviour of citizens and modify demand for their services. Illustrated through case studies, 'Changing Behaviours' demonstrates the cost savings and social benefits that accrue from such measures.



### Networks Activity and Events Update

*Good things continue to happen at NLGN as our Commission on Next Localism gathers pace. We are beginning work on designing 'tomorrow's councils' and understanding the role and responsibilities of future citizens and will be looking for partners who want to work with us on developing radical ideas for public service reform. The last month has also seen the launch of two key projects, Shared Necessities and Show me the Money. Our lead researchers are now taking their work on tour with a series of policy roadshows. If you are interested in taking part in research for our Commission or in hosting a Shared Services roadshow, please get in touch.*

Best wishes,  
Charlotte Rose, Networks Co-ordinator, [crose@nlgn.org.uk](mailto:crose@nlgn.org.uk)

#### The Future of Audit Report Launch

At the start of April we launched our latest report—a model for the future of local government audit. We were joined by a number of excellent speakers from local councils and the Centre for Public Scrutiny. The launch event proved a timely intervention as Minister Grant Shapps announced a CLG review into the Future of Local Government Audit and gave evidence on the subject to the Department's Select Committee.

#### Shared Services Roadshow

Following the excellent response to our recent report on the scope for efficiency and service improvement through implementing shared services models across councils, our researchers have been visiting councils in the local area to explain the findings of our research and explain how councils can implement practical changes to services through shared service provision methods. If you are interested in attending one of the roadshow events or would like to discuss the possibility of our researchers joining you in your council, [please contact us](#).

#### 'Unleashing the Big Society' Research Launch — with Nick Hurd MP, Minister for Civil Society

On May 19th, NLGN will launch a new report, outlining a new '[Big Society Service Settlement](#)'. So far, much of the debate surrounding the Big Society has focused on the politics of the project without sufficient regard for practical implementation of a public service settlement with engagement and co-production at its heart.

NLGN's report will be the first to take a pro-active look at the implications for local councils, and how they can expect to design a new 'Big Society' service model with citizen engagement, co-production and cross-sector partnerships at its core. Please [email us](#) for details of the launch.

#### Chief Executives' Dinner—7th June

The latest in our series of dinners for council Chief Executives will focus on emerging trends in developing information technologies. The dinner in Westminster will allow attendees to share their experiences of using improved and more innovative technologies to improve the quality and efficiency of service delivery. For more information [please email us](#).

#### 'A Zero Waste Economy' - 9th June

This partner briefing, hosted by Lord Henley, who has led government's review into council waste management will outline to attendees the key tenets of the review and what it will mean for local government's policies in this area. To attend, [please contact us](#).

### Research Programme

NLGN has a number of full research projects underway. For further information, or to contribute to the research [please contact us](#).

In [Changing Behaviours: Opening a new conversation with the citizen](#) we look at how government can work with society to control and limit the scale of demand for public services, and to design a system that builds on citizens' motivations and values to shift behaviour for the better. The report will be published this **Wednesday, 20th April**.

NLGN's research [Unleashing the Big Society](#) analyses new practical methods of financing, support, commissioning and accountability which will underpin and drive this ambitious societal transformation forward.

[Capital Futures](#) will establish a routemap for the development of new capital raising mechanisms and will identify the vehicles necessary to bring these options into being. The research will be assisted by an expert taskforce of key finance professionals to help drive the agenda forwards and ensure the relevancy, rigour and practical applicability of the recommendations.

[Future Commissioning in Social Care](#) will analyse what social care commissioning will look like in a complex and changing political and economic context. Our research will draw on the best and most innovative emerging commissioning practices from across the country.

As part of our *Commission on Next Localism*, we will be starting research into [Councils of the Future](#) and asking what local government bodies will look like in the coming years. What services should they provide? What should they commission? How best can they engage with citizens?

### Upcoming Events

**What?** 'Unleashing the Big Society' Launch (with Nick Hurd MP, and ACEVO Head of Policy)

**When?** Thursday 19th May

**Where?** Westminster (Venue TBC)

[Book Your Place Now \(Places are limited\)](#)

**What?** CfPS Annual Event: Accountability, transparency and commissioning

**When?** Thursday 2nd June

**Where?** Novotel London West

[Book Your Place Now](#)

**What?** LGC&NLGN Conference: Involvement in Public Sector Mutuals

**When?** Tuesday 14th June

**Where?** Greater London House, London

[Book Your Place Now](#)

*We will shortly be publicising our fringe activities at the LGA annual conference and party conferences*

### 'In The News' and Articles

Again a great month for NLGN's media profile. Our set-piece event this month was our report launch, which received positive coverage across relevant [sectoral media](#) as well as [key trades](#) publications and [the Guardian](#).

In advance of the LGC's announcement of their 'LGC 50', NLGN put forward its own list of those individuals whose [innovation and skill](#) are making a mark on local government.

A number of articles written by NLGN staff were published this month, including in [Public Finance](#), [Accountancy Age](#), [Total Politics](#) and [the MJ](#).