

January 2011

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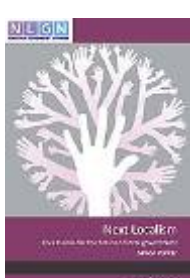
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It's been a big week for NLGN. Our annual conference, last week was a big success - with speeches from Eric Pickles and Caroline Flint. We launched Next Localism - a new report on the future for councils. And we announced our plans for a major commission on localism over the next year. If you'd like to get involved, drop me a line.

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

### Next Localism: Five trends for the future of local government



Last week saw the launch of NLGN's *'Next Localism'* report. The paper sets out a vision for more sustainable local public services beyond the current financial settlement and the aims of the government's Localism Bill.

The report explores how a new relationship between State and Citizen could make a reality of the freedoms needed to fulfil local government's ambition, shape the future of local democracy and 'lock in' localism into the wider public service reform agenda.

The vision will act as a precursor to our Commission on Next Localism which will be launched in the coming months and will look to develop a consensus among local government of how a new, sustainable vision of localism can be reached. We are looking for as many contributions from local government members as possible, to contribute or for more information please do [get in touch](#).



Newly published today is our *'Communities in Charge'* pamphlet calling for councils to be given new powers to charge for local services. The report, follows Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg's demands for new freedoms for local government to raise money from a wide range of new charges.

Councils should be freed from Whitehall restrictions to introduce charges for services such as parking, planning and licensing, to vary charges based on usage and to means-test on users' ability to pay.

### Networks Activity and Events Update

The New Year has given all network partners some time to digest the Localism Bill and the financial settlement, but there is a third part of the Government's policy still to come: the public services White Paper due in the coming months. Perhaps more than the Bill and the settlement, the White Paper will affect all partners delivering local services be they public, private or third sector, and NLGN is interested in getting your thoughts in first. As the events programme for 2011 builds, the White Paper will feature more and more so let us know what you think it should try and achieve.

Best wishes,  
 James Kirkland, Corporate Networks Manager [jkirkland@nlgn.org.uk](mailto:jkirkland@nlgn.org.uk)

#### Annual Conference—Thank You



Thank you to all who attended this year's NLGN Annual Conference. We were joined by Secretary of State, Eric Pickles and his Labour Shadow, Caroline Flint, both of whom discussed the Localism Bill, local government finance and the future relationship between Whitehall and local councils. You can read a review of the event [here](#), as well as watching highlights from conference speeches [here](#).

#### Shared Services Launch

*The Future of Shared Services* will launch on March 1st. We have had an excellent response to the event, to which we have invited The Rt. Hon. Francis Maude MP, Minister for the Cabinet office to address our audience.

#### The Future of Audit

We will be holding two seminars for our partners in February relating to our current research project on *'The Future of Audit'*. The seminars in Birmingham and London will look at how current reforms, including the Localism Bill and the abolition of the Audit Commission will affect local government's ability to conduct appropriate self-audit. Spaces are available at the Birmingham event (2 February).

#### Big Society Research Seminars

Our Big Society research programme will host two research seminars in the coming weeks. The first, in Liverpool on 16 February is open to all our partners. Details of the research programme are below.

For more information on any of the above events or to reserve a place, please contact [rsvp](#).

### Research Programme

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

In [Influencing the Demand for Public Services](#) 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 positive social norms and changes behaviour for the better.

[The Next Generation of Shared Services](#) questions existing assumptions about what shared services are and what they do. NLGN will research a new generation of models for sharing and how these can be sourced, procured and implemented.

NLGN research in [Unleashing the Big Society](#) will explore practical approaches to analyse the new methods of financing, support, commissioning and accountability which will underpin and drive this ambitious societal transformation forward.

It is important that any new audit framework that replaces the Audit Commission provides confidence in financial management and probity at the local level. NLGN's [New Audit Agenda](#) research will host a series of discussions and draw on expert input to develop a new audit system.

[Capital Futures](#) This research 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.

[Green Growth](#) examines Government schemes for subsidising small-scale renewable energy generation. In addition to the direct revenue provided by the schemes, we will also examine how Councils can maximise the benefit of their investment in renewables by providing jobs and economic growth in the low-carbon industries that will supply the technologies for such schemes.

### Upcoming Events

What? LGC & NLGN Joint Conference: New Era, New Local Government Workforce  
 When? Wednesday 23rd February  
 Where? Central London, TBC  
[Book Your Place Now](#)



What? Shared Services Research Launch Event  
 When? Tuesday 1st March  
 Where? Central London, TBC  
[Book Your Place Now \(Places are limited\)](#)

### 'In The News' and Articles

Annual Conference 2011 was well covered in national press, with citations in the [Guardian](#), [Mail](#) and [Telegraph](#) as well as across sectoral media.

NLGN's analysis has been at the forefront of efforts to deconstruct the Localism Bill. Articles by our staff featured in [Conservative Home](#), [Public Service](#) & [Local Government Chronicle](#) among others.

Our Director Simon Parker gave evidence to the CLG Select Committee this month, [offering our views to the Committee](#) on the Localism Bill.

We were also pleased to see our research feature in the work of another think tank, [the IPPR](#).