



Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) Annual Reports 2010-11

Commissioning, Analysis & Intelligence Team

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LINKs Annual Reports 2010-11

Commissioning, Analysis & Intelligence Team

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Executive Summary

This report brings together information on resources, activity and outcomes from the Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) annual reports of 2010-11. As this was LINKs' third year, comparisons have been made with the previous years' (2008-09 and 2009-10) data.

Data Quality

- This analysis is based on the 146 LINK annual reports received, a list of which is at appendix B
- Around a third of LINKs did not provide details of their finances, membership, activities or their effects. The level of reporting on some items was not as good as last year.

Finances

- Hosts received more money for LINKs in 2010-11 than they did the previous year: an estimated¹ £24.8 million was received from local authorities in 2010-11, £0.4 million more than last year.
- And LINKs and Hosts spent significantly more – using reserves from 2008-09. There was a collective spend of £28.6 million by Hosts and LINKs this year, compared to £24.5 million 2009-10.

Participation

- There was an estimated¹ total of 153,000 participants of LINKs in England in 2010-11. This means that the average number of members within a LINK for 2010-11 was 1,030, most of which were individuals, but included 34,000 groups.
- There were over 10,000 active participants this year, 33% more than last year. We can estimate that on average every one active participant engaged a further 17 participants.

Activity and Outcomes

- Activity has significantly increased again for the second year, though to a greater extent this year in activities focused on impact rather than seeking information. Requests for information grew by 9%, whereas reports and recommendations more than doubled from 2009-10 and the number of these leading to service review or service change more than tripled.
- There was evidence that LINKs have established stronger relationships with health and care decision makers: 81% of 4,200 requests for information made were answered in 20 days compared to 51% last year.

¹ Calculations for estimating a 100% England coverage is shown in Appendix.

Introduction

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) aim to empower people in the community who want to have a say or influence local health and social care services. The functions of LINKs will be carried forward by Local HealthWatch.

This report brings together information on the analysis of the LINKs' annual reports 2010-11. This is the third year of LINKs reporting information and a comparison has been made between the three years, where possible. Annual reports are put together by the LINK using guidance published by the Department of Health.

This report includes information on:

- data quality
- finances
- levels of participation
- activity
- outcomes and benefits
- relationships between variables
- benchmarking figures

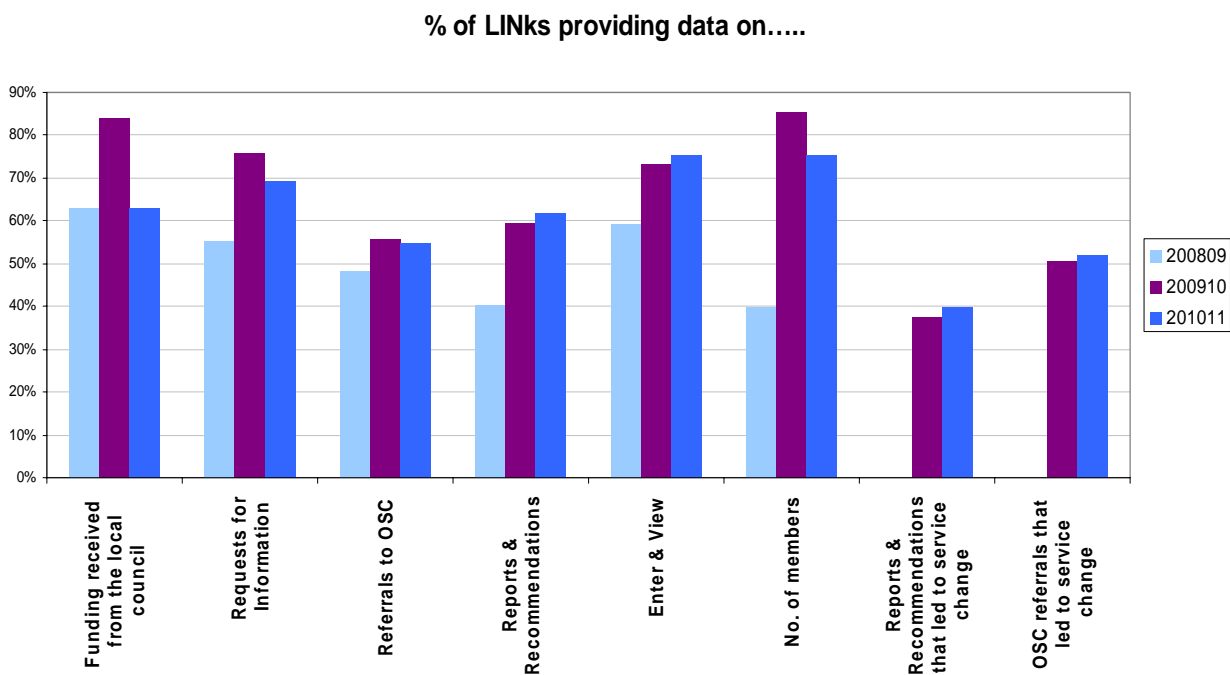
Estimates for 100% England coverage are used in this report. This was worked out by taking the data that we had found in the reports, calculating the percentage of the population where data had not been received and using these numbers to get a 100% England estimate. A worked example of this can be found in the Appendix (a).

Data quality

Fewer reports had been submitted this year compared to last year (146 compared to 150). A list of reports received is at Appendix B.

Participation numbers and Enter and View visits were the best reported items this year with around 75% of LINKs reporting on these. Figure 1a below compares return rates on different data items with the last two years of data. It is clear that the number of data items returned was lower than last year. Data was not sought or collected on service changes in 2008-09.

Figure 1a: Data completeness



Finances

Funding

The Department of Health distributed £27.0 million to local authorities (LAs) to fund LINKs through the local government formula-based grant, therefore this spend was not ring fenced specifically for LINKs activity.

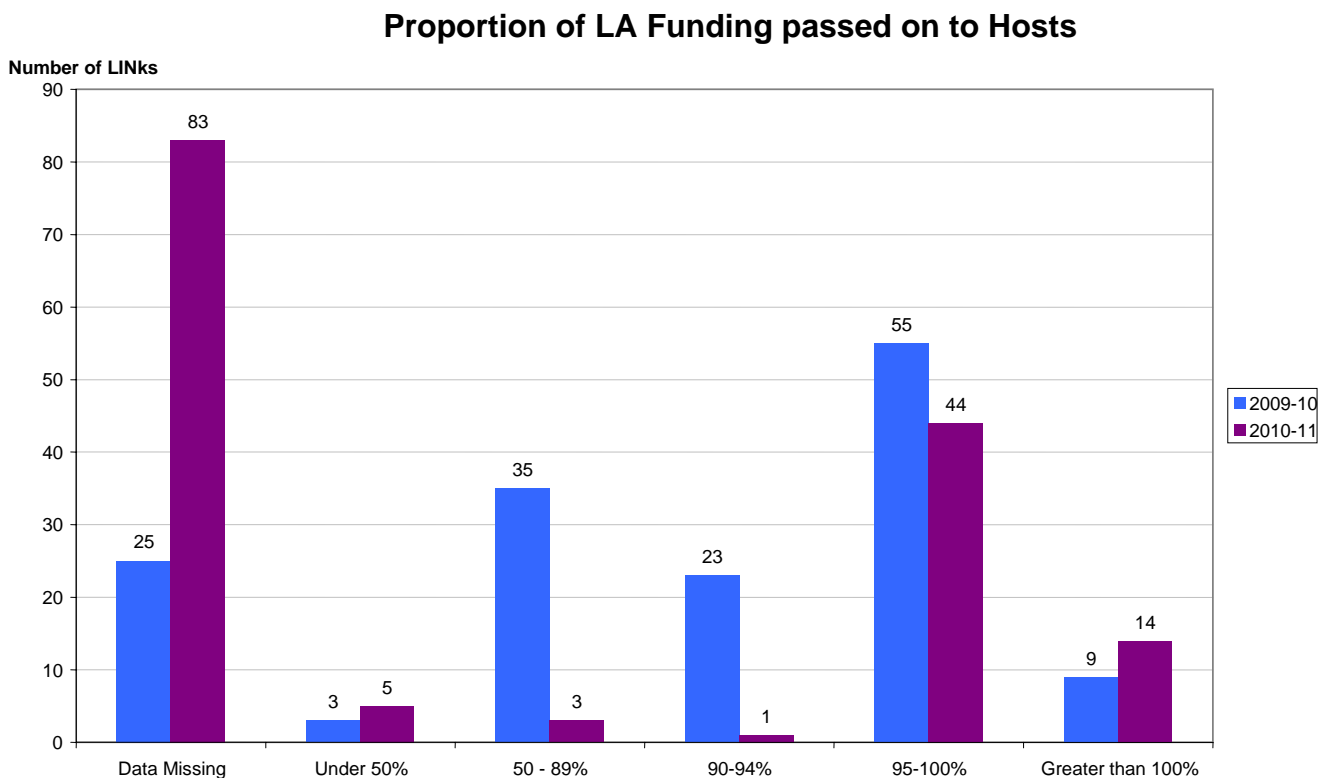
92 LINKs submitted reports that included information on how much funding was received by the Host from the LA (34 fewer than last year).

Hosts received £24.8 million from local authorities in 2010-11, an increase of £0.4 million on the previous year. The total amount spent by Hosts last year was £21.8 million (£18.7 million the previous year), and the total spend by LINKs was £6.8 million (£5.8 million the previous year).

Figure 2a below shows the proportion of funding that was passed on to Hosts. Over half of the LINKs did not report on the data needed to perform this calculation. 40 LINKs showed their Host funding to be 95 – 100% of the government published funding.

The graph includes LINKs (14 in total) who reported a Host allocation that was over the amount allocated to them from the Department of Health. Some LINKs had added their carry over from the previous year's money. This is giving a proportion of over 100%.

Figure 2a

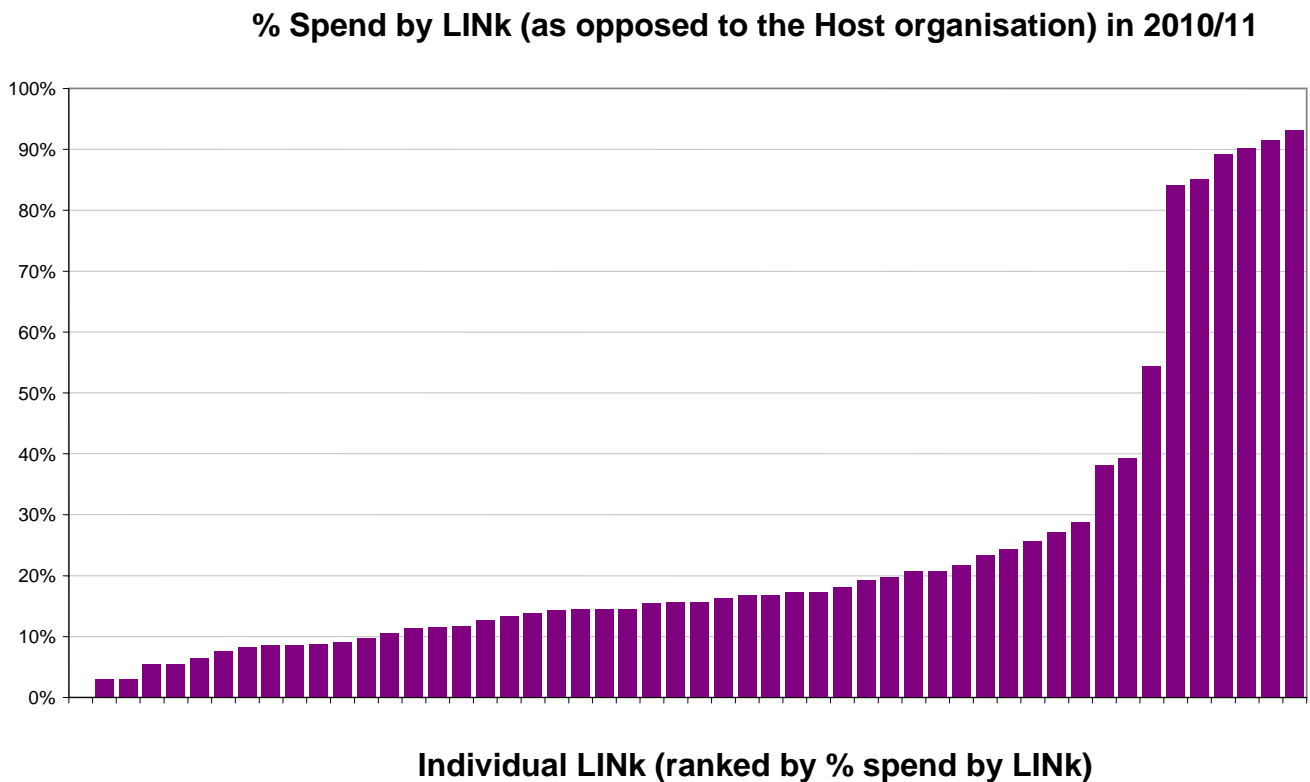


Proportion of spend by LINK

Figure 2b below shows the proportion of spend by the LINK of the total amount allocated to the Host. Similar to last year, there was a wide variation in how much of the total budget a LINK was spending. This could be down to a difference across the country in the way the distinction is made between Host and LINK spend has been reported.

Where annual reports have shown individual details, Host costs typically include salaries, staff expenses, staff training, office costs, IT support costs, management fees and communications.

Figure 2b: Split of reported spend between LINK and Host



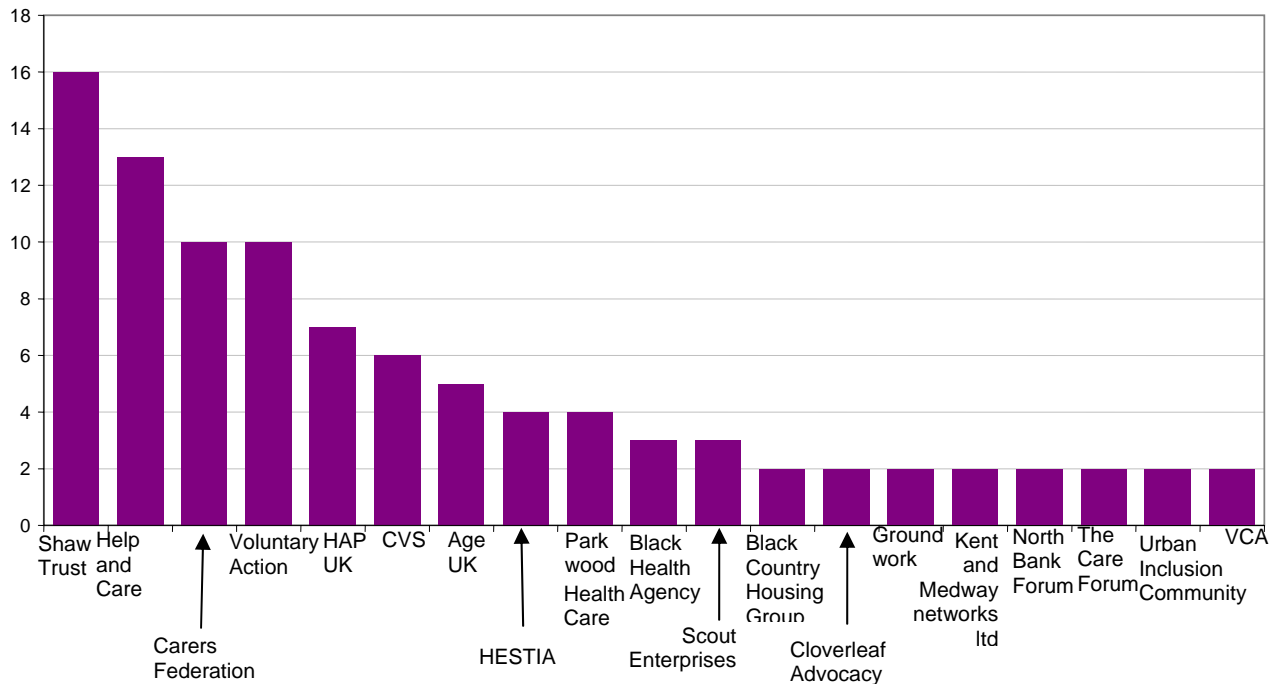
Number of LINKs per Host

There were 46 hosts who only supported a single LINK, but 97 LINKs who were supported by a host who helped more than one LINK.

Figure 2c below shows hosts that provide support to more than one LINK. Hosts such as the Shaw Trust and Help and Care support the highest number of LINKs across the country.

Figure 2c: Number of LINKs per Host

Number of LINKs



Participation

What is a participant?

The reporting of participation this year differed from last year. This year, we define three levels of participation, any of which could be “members” of the LINK.

Informed Participants: are groups or individuals who register their interest in the LINK and receive information, whether general updates and/or thematic interest. This includes those who interact with the website and social networking sites.

Occasional Participants: are informed participants (individuals or groups) who also respond to a particular LINK issue, or attend a workshop or meeting on a specific topic. For example, someone who became involved in a task and finish piece of work around car parking charges at acute hospitals and had no further involvement with the LINK on any other work streams and requested to revert back to receiving the newsletter only. Or someone who requests to receive themed information and comes along to an occasional meeting - 1 -2 times a year.

Active Participants: are groups or individuals who have a high level of participation (i.e. someone who takes part in activity at least once a month), for example by attending introduction to LINK workshops, accessing training to build up skills in representation and/or visiting services, becoming involved in the core group/sub group activities, or representing the LINK externally.

Within each of these levels, people with a social care interest are those with experience of using social care services or a specific interest in social care. They may have an interest in health care too.

Group participants are people who are acting as a representative for one or more organisation(s) or interest group(s). Individual participants are those who are not acting in this way. Individual participants plus group participants should equal the total.

Total Participants

There was an estimated total of 153,000 participants of LINKs this year. With the changes to the definitions [that we applied to gather more accurate information], it is difficult to compare with the previous year.

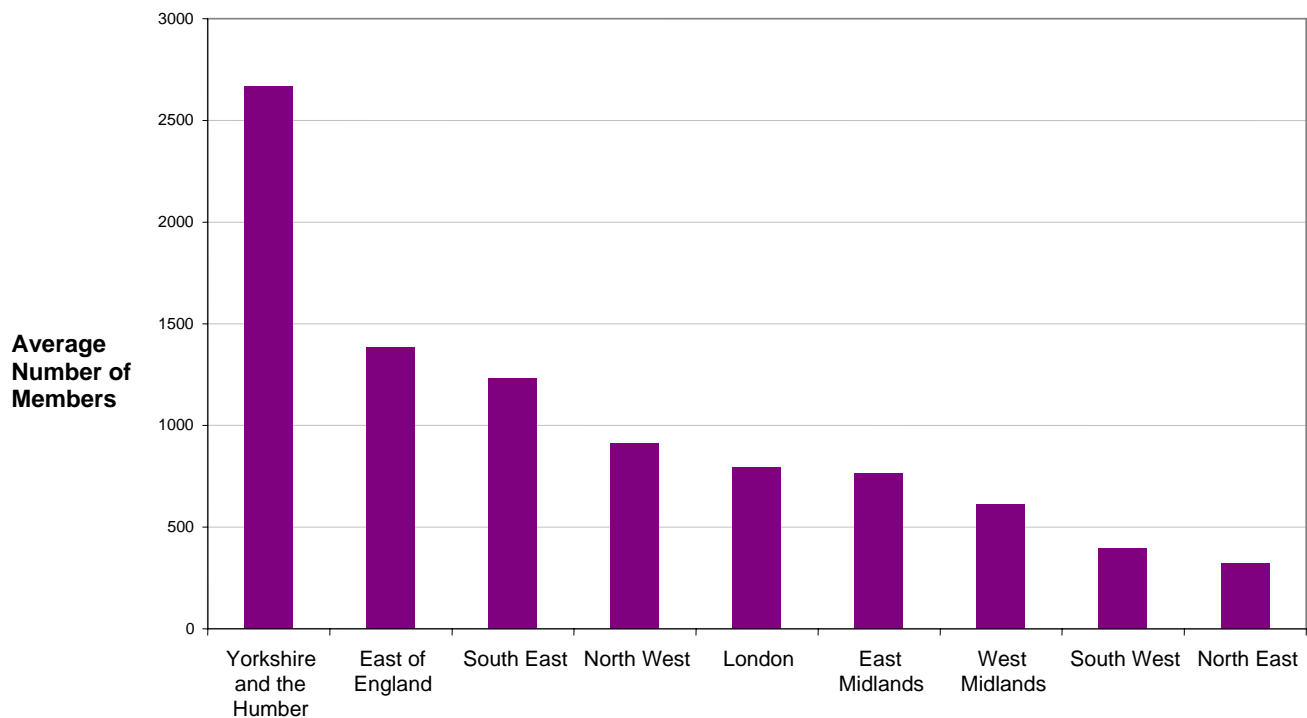
In 2010-11, 78% participants were individuals and 22% of participants represented groups.

Average number of participants

The average LINK has 1,000 participants (individuals and groups). The average number of members within each region is shown in Figure 3a. The highest number is in the Yorkshire and Humber region with an average of almost 2,700 members per LINK.

Participation in a LINK can be an indicator of how successful a LINK is. One of the aims of LINKs is to involve and get interest from as many people in the community as possible, especially from seldom heard groups. A third of LINKs (51) provided some data on participation from different seldom heard groups – twice the level of last year.

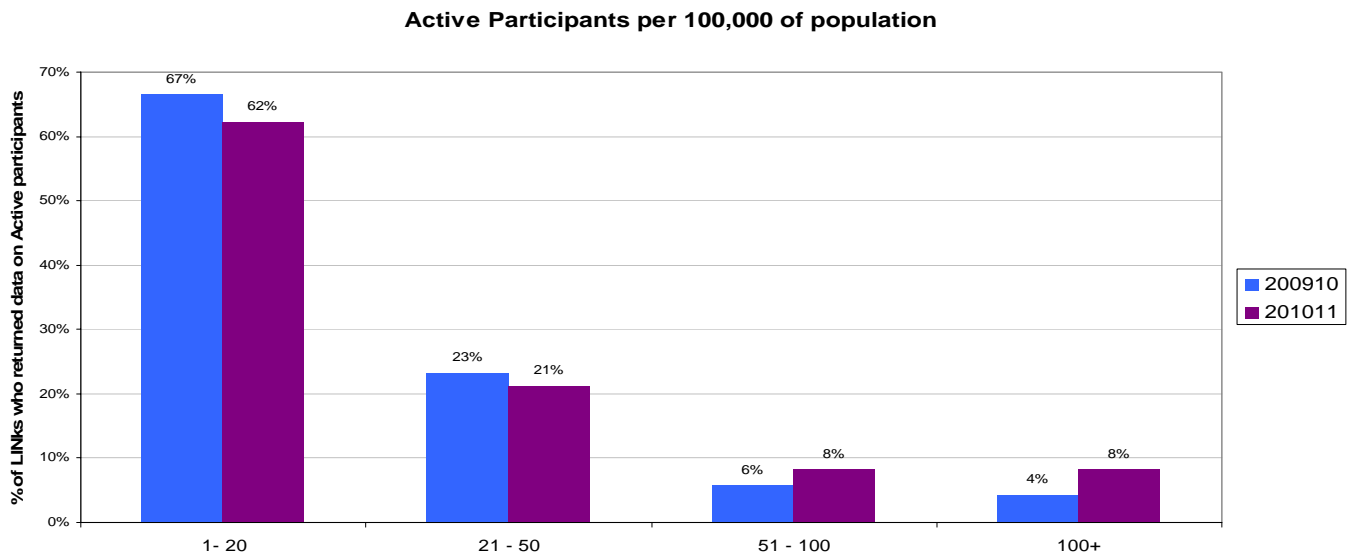
Figure 3a: Average number of members of a LINK, 2010-11



Active Participants

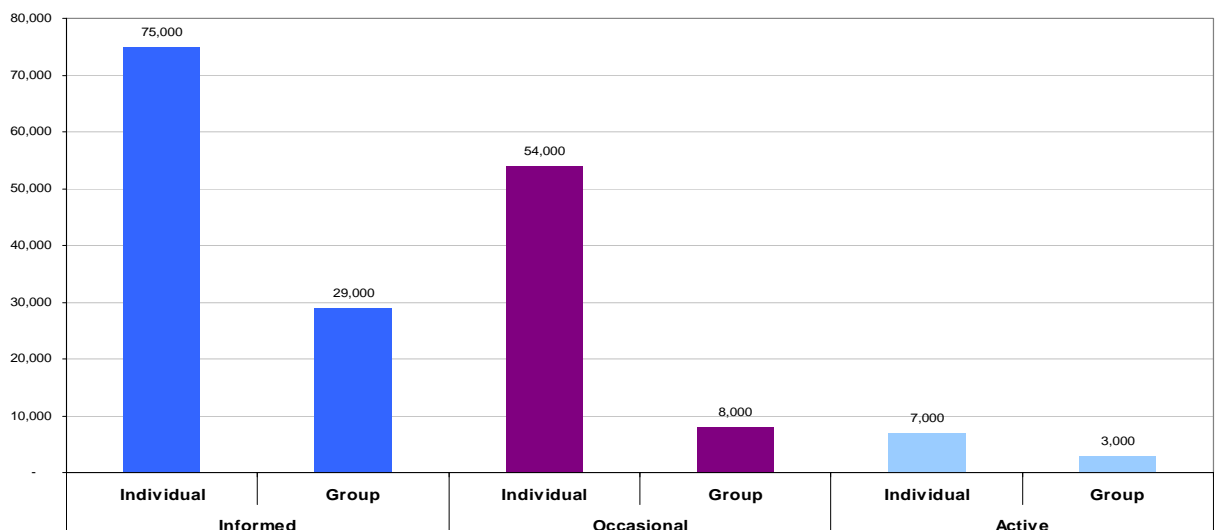
There were over 10,000 active participants this year, 33% more than last year.

Figure 3b below shows that active participation has increased with 37% of LINKs having 21 or more active participants per 100,000 of the population.



Active participants were able to engage with a lot more people this year. Figure 3c below shows the split between individuals and groups within the participant types. On average, every active participant was able to engage a further 17 participants.

Figure 3c



Under represented groups

There was a lot more data in the reports on engagement with under-represented groups as 35% of LINKs included data on this compared to 17% last year.

Social Care

81,000 participants linked to social care this year, 53% of total participants (34% of total last year).

LINKs Activity

Types of Activity

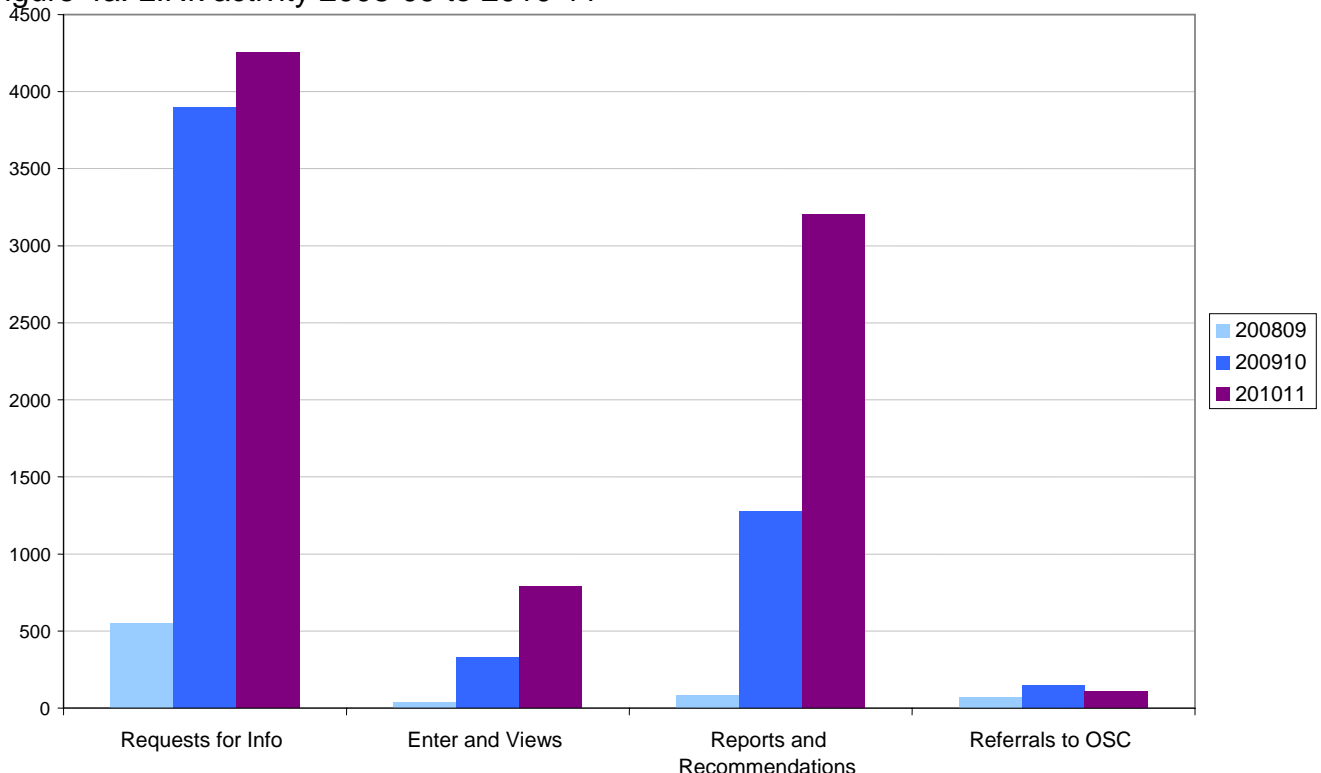
The various activities of LINKs can be defined as the following:-

- Requests for Information
 - Request information from health and social care commissioners about their services and expect a response.
- Reports and Recommendations
 - Issue reports or make recommendations about a service and expect a response from commissioners.
- Enter and View
 - Visit certain services and view the care provided.
- Referrals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)
 - Refer matters to the local council's health overview and scrutiny committee.

The activity of LINKs has significantly increased for the second year running (see figure 4a). There were three times the number of enter and views this year compared to last, and reports and recommendations more than doubled.

81% of the requests for information were answered within 20 days.

Figure 4a. LINK activity 2008-09 to 2010-11



Social Care

There is evidence that LINKs are becoming more focused on social care, though this remains the minority of enter and view visits and reports and recommendations.

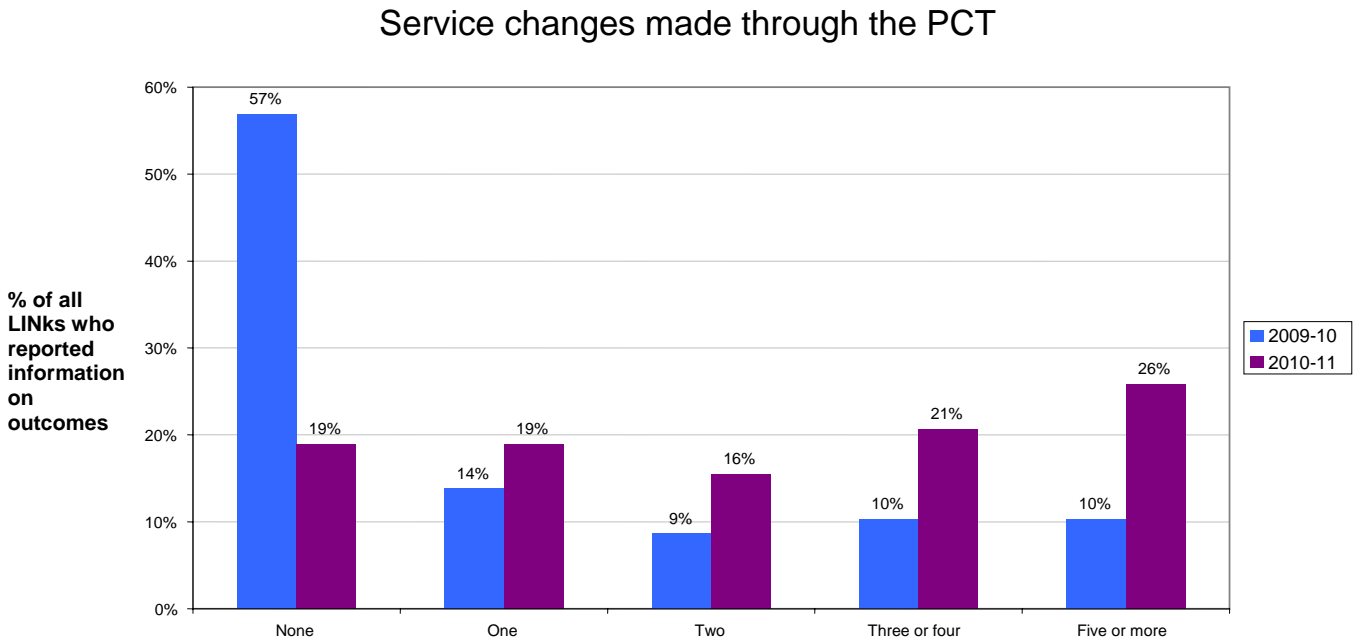
29% of Enter and View visits related to social care (20% last year)

33% of reports and recommendations related to social care (30% last year)

Outcomes

Just under 1,000 reports and recommendations lead to a service change, 31% of the total number of reports submitted by LINKs to the relevant health and social care service. 50% of the 108 OSC referrals led to a service change. 47% of LINKs reported that they made 3 or more service changes through their PCT.

Fig 5a: Number of service changes inspired by LINKs, 2009-10 and 2010-11



Profile of typical LINK

Figure 5a shows the average figures within a LINK. A LINK can use this table to compare themselves against other LINKs.

	Number per 100,000 people	England average [median] ¹	Highest 25% ⁵	England Total (100% coverage)
Number of Members	292	1,030	1,014	152,775
Number of active members	20	80	82	10,418
Requests for Info	8	26	27	4,255
Enter and View visits	2	6	9	982
Reports and Recommendations	6	20	16	3,200
Referrals to OSC	0.2	0	1	108
Reports/recommendations leading to service review	3	11	6	1,678
Reports/recommendations or OSC referrals leading to service change	2	3	5	997

¹ of the LINKs supplying data for these items

Appendix A

Worked example of calculating a 100% England Average.

Looking at the membership data item, 110 LINKs reported on this figure giving a total number of members as 113,275. The LINKs that missed out this data item cover areas containing 13.5 million people (25.9% of the total population of England using mid-2010 population estimates from the ONS). To get the 100% England figure, you can't simply add 25.9% to 113,275 as the relation is not reflexive (i.e. adding 10% to 10 will equal 11, but taking 10% from 11 does not equal 10). Instead, you find the number 'x' so that $x - 25.9\% = 113,275$

Appendix B

LINKs whose annual reports were submitted in time to be included in the analysis for this publication

Barking & Dagenham	Haringey	Richmond
Barnsley	Harrow	Rochdale
Bath & NE Somerset	Hartlepool	Rotherham
Bedford	Herefordshire	Rutland
Bedfordshire	Hertfordshire	Sandwell
Bexley	Hillingdon	Sefton
Birmingham	Hounslow	Sheffield
Blackburn with Darwen	Hull	Shropshire
Blackpool	Isles of Scilly	Slough
Bolton	Isle of Wight	Solihull
Bournemouth	Islington	Somerset
Bracknell Forest	Kensington and Chelsea	Southampton
Bradford	Kent	South Gloucestershire
Brent	Kingston	South Tyneside
Brighton and Hove	Kirklees	Southwark
Bristol	Knowsley	Staffordshire
Bromley	Lambeth	St Helens
Buckinghamshire	Lancashire	Stockport
Bury	Leeds	Stockton-on-Tees
Calderdale	Leicester	Stoke on Trent
Cambridgeshire	Leicestershire	Suffolk
Camden	Lewisham	Sutton
Cheshire East	Lincolnshire	Sunderland
Cheshire West	Liverpool	Surrey
City of London	Merton	Swindon
Cornwall	Redbridge	Tameside
County Durham	Luton	Telford and Wrekin
Coventry	Manchester	Thurrock
Croydon	Medway	Torbay
Cumbria	Middlesbrough	Tower Hamlets
Darlington	Milton Keynes	Trafford
Derby	Newham	Wakefield
Derbyshire	Newcastle Upon Tyne	Walsall
Devon	Norfolk	Waltham Forest
Doncaster	North East Lincolnshire	Wandsworth
Dorset	North Lincolnshire	Warrington
Dudley	North Somerset	Warwickshire
Ealing	North Tyneside	Westminster
East Riding of Yorkshire	North Yorkshire	West Berkshire
East Sussex	Northumberland	West Sussex
Enfield	Nottinghamshire	Wigan Borough
Essex and Southend on sea	Oldham	Wiltshire
Gateshead	Oxfordshire	Windsor Ascot and Maidenhead
Gloucestershire	Peterborough	Wirral
Greenwich	Plymouth	Wokingham
Hackney	Poole	Wolverhampton
Halton	Portsmouth	Worcestershire
Hammersmith and Fulham	Reading	York
Hampshire	Redcar and Cleveland	