

# Café Scientifique Headingley

Monday 10th June 2024

## Balancing people's data confidentiality with research utility

By: Paul Norman



<https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2017/07/13/>

**Outline:** It is common in research to use information about individuals linked to the type of place in which they live. In health settings, this can clarify differences in cancer survival, service provider performance, etc. Focusing on formally collected data (rather than commercial / Big Data), the researcher's ideal is for the most detailed information on people's attributes and where they live as there is likely then to be more potential for the research (not because they are nose-y or divisive!). The general public might reasonably be sceptical about too much detail being available! The organisation collecting, collating and disseminating the data sits in the middle making a compromise between differing viewpoints. A tension exists between making data available which protects confidentiality of individuals while containing sufficiently detailed geographic information to underpin the utility of research.

We test how much difference it makes to research findings by deliberately moving people's location away (from a little bit to quite a lot) from their residential postcode. The original location gives the 'right' result but at 'some' distance away, the result may become 'wrong'.

**Speaker:** *Paul Norman is a population and health geographer who applies demographic and GIS methods to the analysis of area and individual data. He has spent many hours harmonising geographies to the same areal units over time so that time trends can be identified and so that longitudinal individual records can be linked for life course studies. He often gets involved in medical studies in which health records are similarly linked to areas but in these cases may not be able to pronounce the medical condition of interest.*

**Venue:** The New Headingley Club, 56 St Michaels Road, LS6 3BG

**Time:** Room opens 7:30pm, Talk begins promptly at 7:45pm

**Entry:** Donation please for room hire and expenses: £4 at the door



Café Scientifique Headingley <http://cafesci.hdtleeds.org.uk/> is a programme run under the auspices of the Headingley Development Trust [www.headingleydevelopmenttrust.org.uk](http://www.headingleydevelopmenttrust.org.uk)

