

**ADR UK**  
*Data-driven change*

# Opening up access to administrative data for research: ESRC's ADR UK programme

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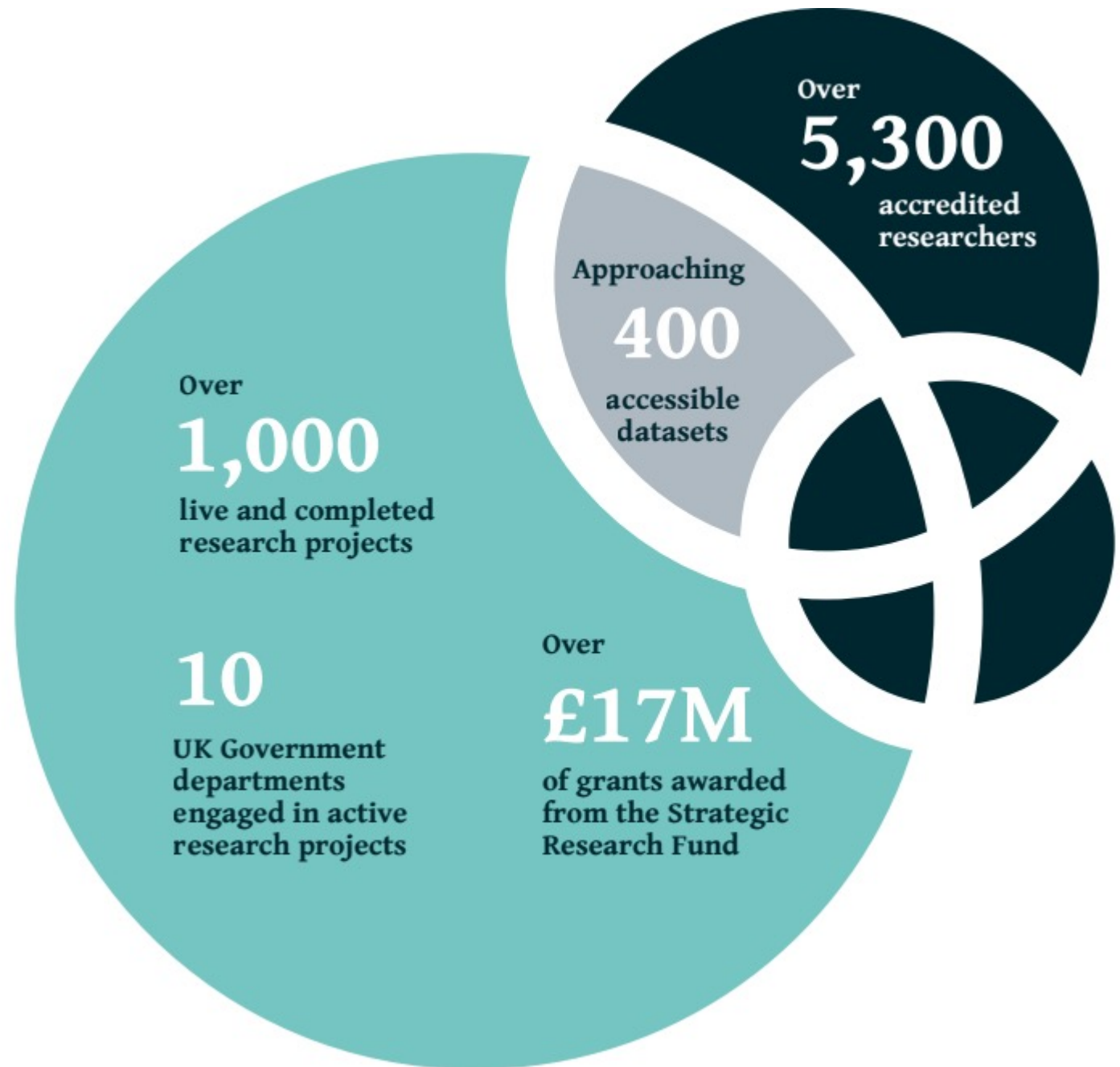


# ADR UK five years on

We are improving the administrative data access landscape in measurable and tangible ways.

Link to latest annual report:

[ADR UK Annual Report 2021-22](#)



# The ADR UK partnership

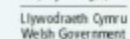
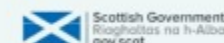


## ADR England

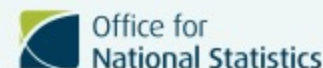
- Commissioned and managed by ADR UK Strategic Hub in collaboration with the ONS
- Geographical focus varies depending on the data owner; research insights may have wider relevance for policy and practice
- A portfolio of novel data linkage projects and research fellowships



Data linking and research projects delivered by academic and government partners.



Data access partner :

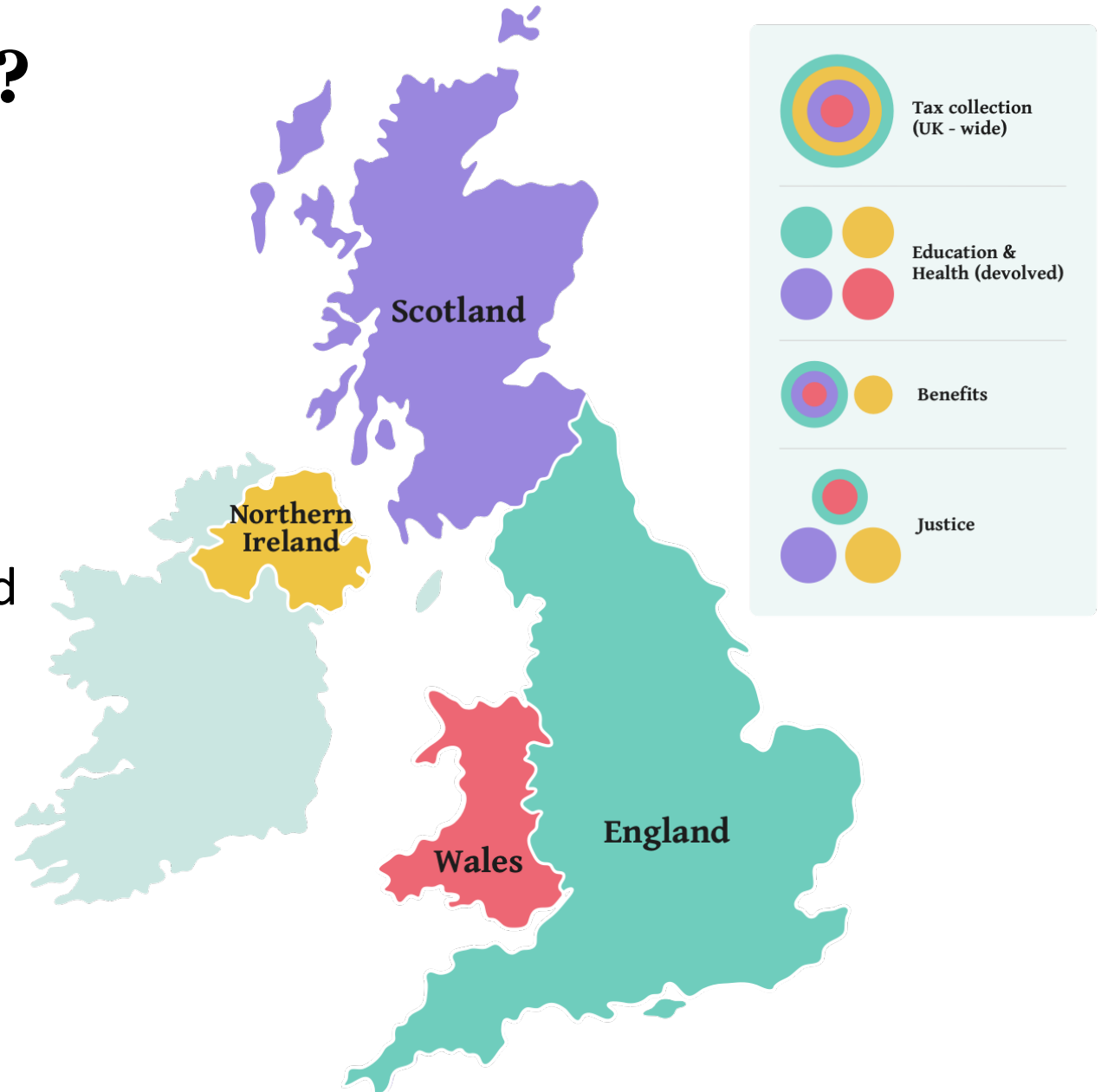


Data access service :



# Why were we formed?

Complexities of gaining access to administrative data across the UK meant previous attempts to realise the research potential of this data only worked in the devolved administrations (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland).



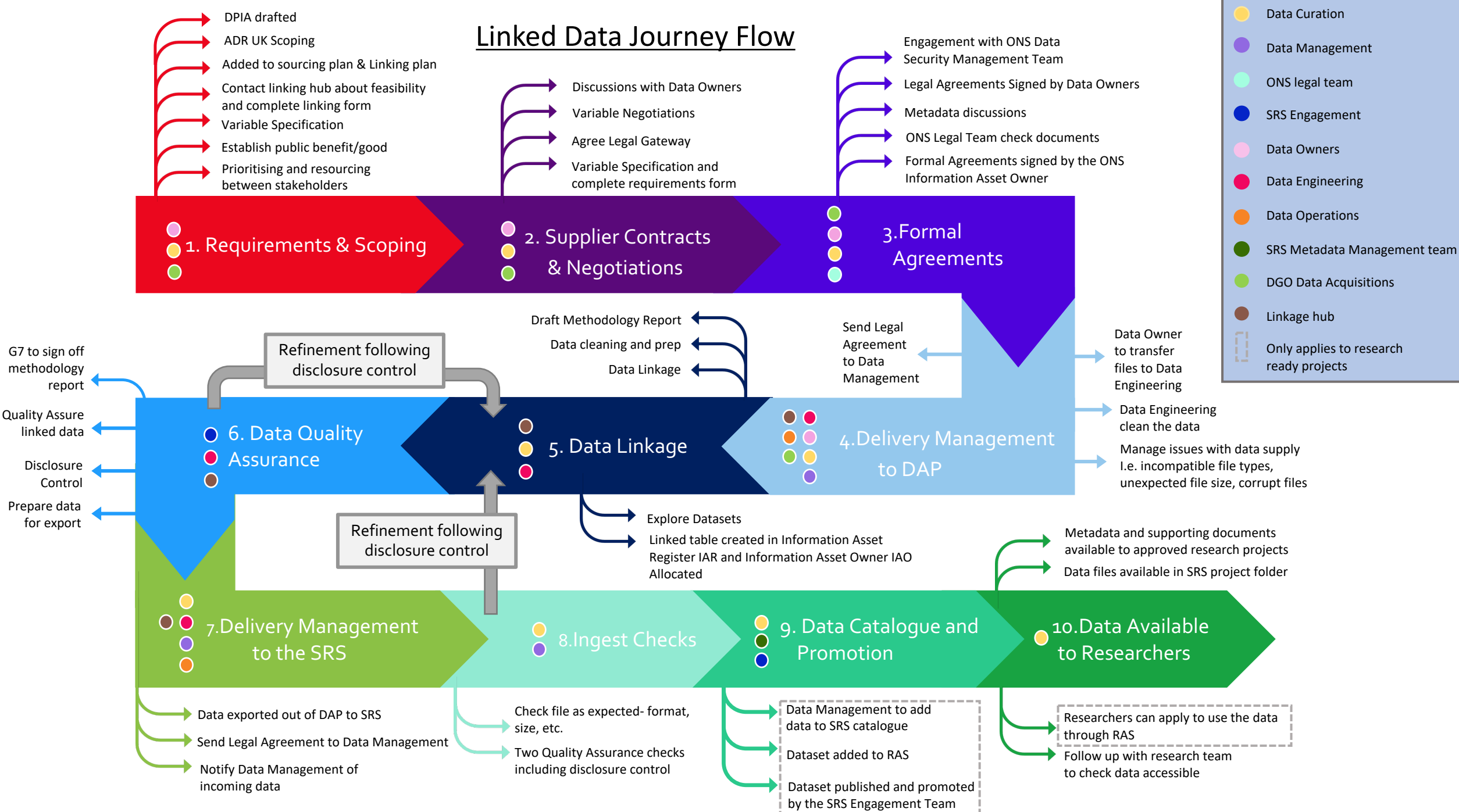
# The vision – now being realised

- **ADR UK is helping to resolve data access issues across government**, noting it is difficult for policy departments to invest in data sharing activities
- **ADR UK funds ONS to provide this service for UK government departments**, de-risking individual departments and providing a service that is resilient to departmental budget cuts (building on successes of DAs under previous investments)
- **One message to sell** to departments, ministers, academics and the public about how administrative data is shared, helping to build trust
- **2017 Digital Economy Act** provides the legal gateway for data linkage and access, bringing clarity across government about what data can be shared and why

# What's been difficult?

- **Government departments are (understandably) risk averse when it comes to sharing data:** when there were no agreed systems-level processes, there was no blueprint to follow. Instead, a huge organisational overhead for the first to set the precedent.
- **Legislative differences between data types increases 'process' complexity further:** NHS data is treated differently in law to other forms of administrative system data (birth/death registrations, benefits, income, education outcomes, crime and justice).
- **Administrative data needs to be turned into 'research ready data':** it was never created for research purposes, and there is an overhead to making it usable.
- **Research community need to be ready to use new forms of data:** still a huge difference in usage between previously existing and new datasets.

# Linked Data Journey Flow



- DPIA drafted
- ADR UK Scoping
- Added to sourcing plan & Linking plan
- Contact linking hub about feasibility and complete linking form
- Variable Specification
- Establish public benefit/good
- Prioritising and resourcing between stakeholders

- Discussions with Data Owners
- Variable Negotiations
- Agree Legal Gateway
- Variable Specification and complete requirements form

- Engagement with ONS Data Security Management Team
- Legal Agreements Signed by Data Owners
- Metadata discussions
- ONS Legal Team check documents
- Formal Agreements signed by the ONS Information Asset Owner

- G7 to sign off methodology report
- Quality Assure linked data
- Disclosure Control
- Prepare data for export

- Draft Methodology Report
- Data cleaning and prep
- Data Linkage

- Send Legal Agreement to Data Management

- Data Owner to transfer files to Data Engineering
- Data Engineering clean the data
- Manage issues with data supply i.e. incompatible file types, unexpected file size, corrupt files

Refinement following disclosure control

- Explore Datasets
- Linked table created in Information Asset Register IAR and Information Asset Owner IAO Allocated

- Metadata and supporting documents available to approved research projects
- Data files available in SRS project folder

- Data exported out of DAP to SRS
- Send Legal Agreement to Data Management
- Notify Data Management of incoming data

- Check file as expected- format, size, etc.
- Two Quality Assurance checks including disclosure control

- Data Management to add data to SRS catalogue
- Dataset added to RAS
- Dataset published and promoted by the SRS Engagement Team

- Researchers can apply to use the data through RAS
- Follow up with research team to check data accessible

**Legend:**

- Data Curation
- Data Management
- ONS legal team
- SRS Engagement
- Data Owners
- Data Engineering
- Data Operations
- SRS Metadata Management team
- DGO Data Acquisitions
- Linkage hub
- Only applies to research ready projects

# Working with the public



ADR UK is dedicated to ensuring people's data is used in a way that reflects the public's views and has public support. We **have a programme of ongoing public engagement activity** to make sure the research we enable accounts for the interests and concerns of its data subjects and the groups it hopes to benefit.

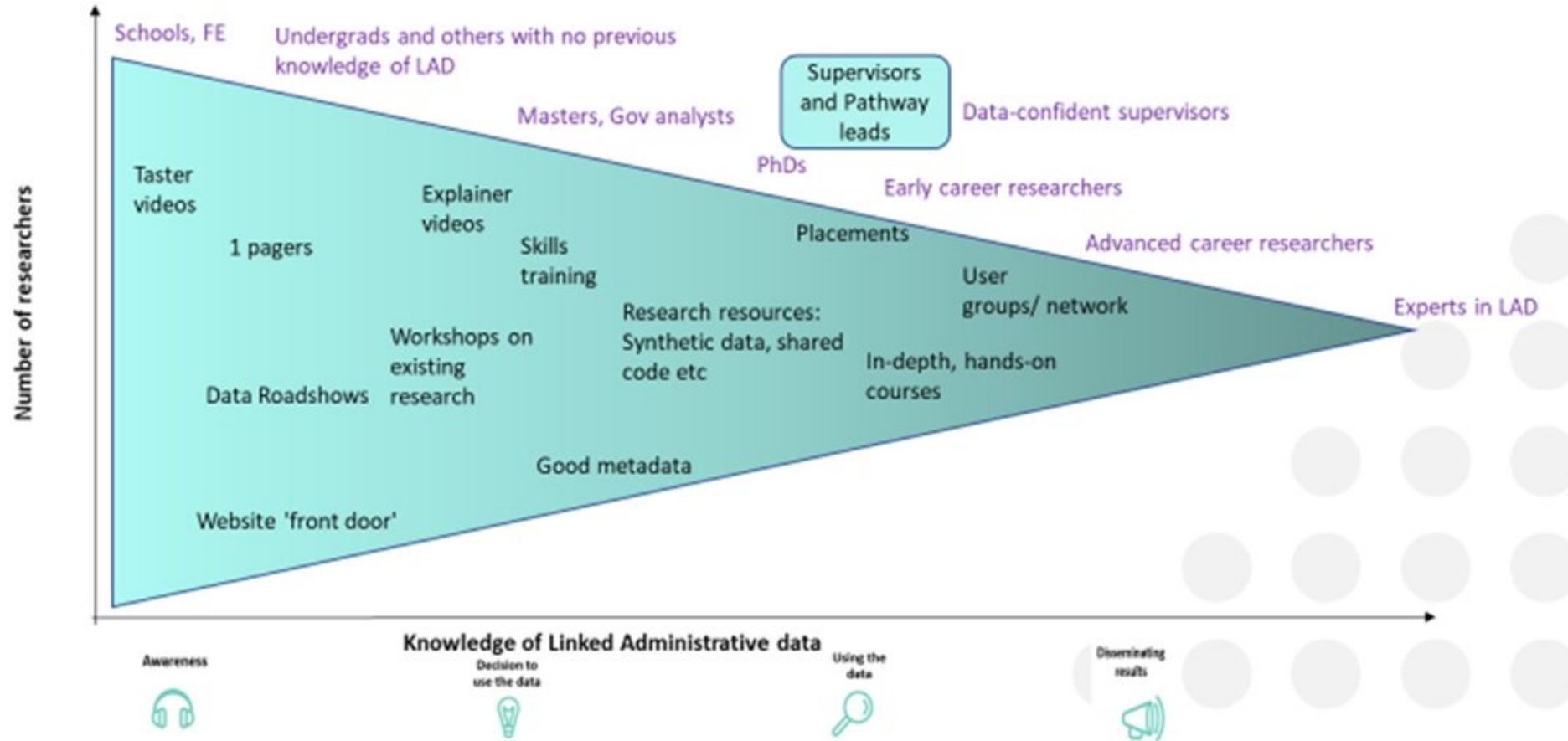
**Joint ADR UK / OSR report: on understanding the public perceptions of public good use of data for research and statistics published Oct 2022:**

[ADR UK and OSR publish research report on public perceptions of public good use of data for research and statistics - ADR UK](#)





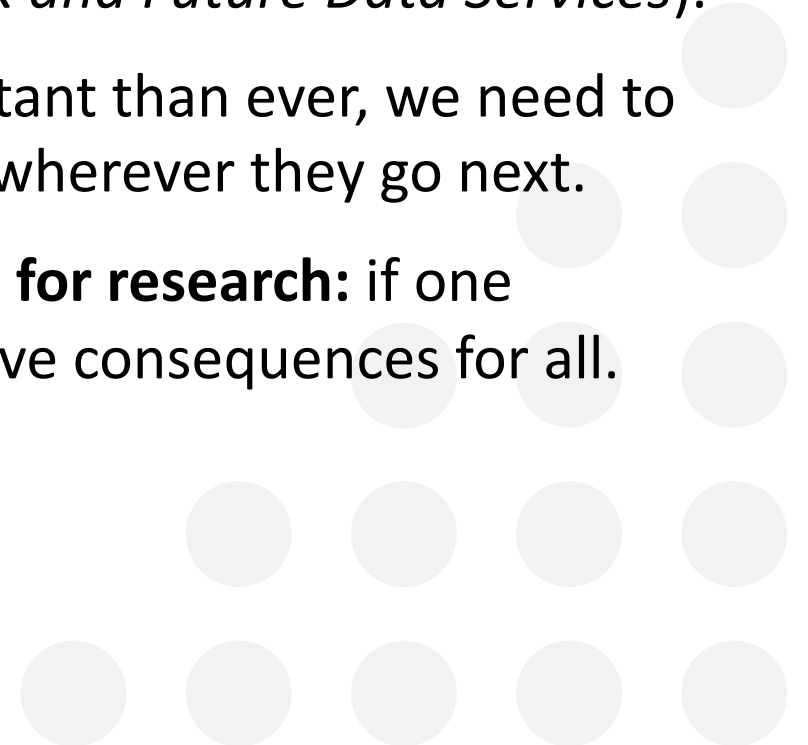
# Training & capacity building activities



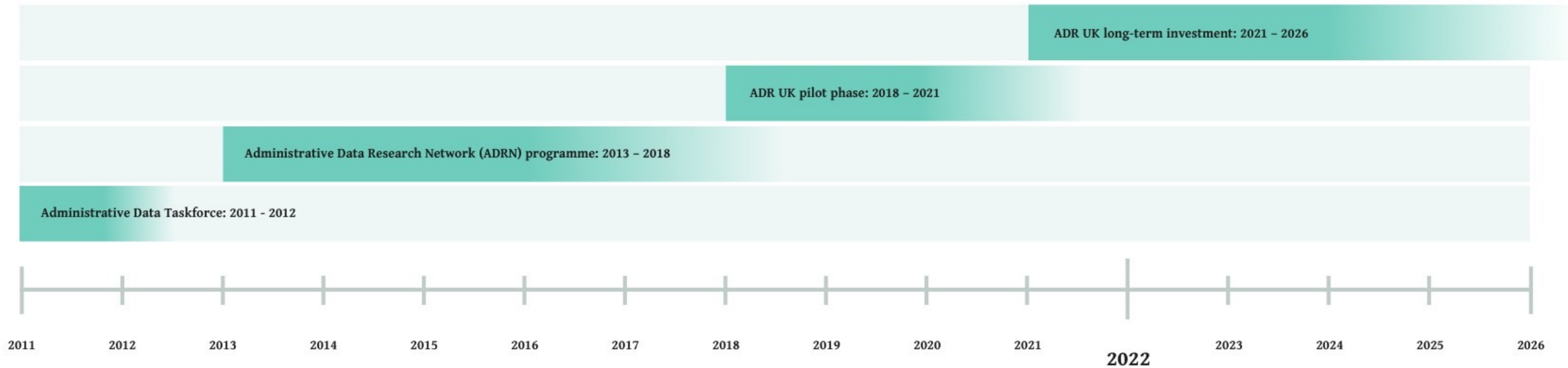
# How do we (collectively) work together?

We need:

- **Incremental, system-level improvements within each type of data infrastructure:** (survey, admin, Digital Footprints), but also need to ensure these don't 'break' the potential for a federated infrastructure system (*DARE UK and Future Data Services*).
- **To embrace training and capacity building:** more important than ever, we need to ensure graduates are in a position to engage with data, wherever they go next.
- **To keep engaging with the public about the use of data for research:** if one investment / group of researchers doesn't, this could have consequences for all.



# How long has all of this taken?



**Administrative data is  
an invaluable resource for  
public good.**

***We're using it.***

