EDITORIAL

We had a reasonably successful 2016 conference in York late February with about 60 participants (programme on next page). I think most people enjoyed it.

We have been waiting for the papers from the February Conferencefor four months and have only received one; so we have decided to publish an issue with our backlog of submitted papers, and make the next issue the 2016 Conference papers.

These include a paper by the Acton family and friends on understanding or at least interpreting the demography of the Roma and other gypsy ethnic groups; two papers on problems with assessment processes, one on work capability assessment by John Hume and one on the predictive assessment of young children; a paper on the demography of the elderly population in 2014; and a paper on scientific collaboration in knowledge networks by Thng. Obviously a very eclectic collection and I am not going to make any attempt to link them, other than that they are all very interesting papers.

In this editorial, written on the day after 'Independence Day' (23rd June for those who don't avidly follow Boris Johnston or Nigel Farage), we also have to reflect on why data and information have had so little impact on the debate (and obviously that lack of impact is multiplied several times in terms of the impact of our information) and how that can be changed. Much of the Brexit debate was based on misleading economic and immigration information (from both sides), yet attempts to deliver correct information had absolutely no impact. Why Not?

Part of the problem is that 'we' have not understood the ways in which 'information' is adsorbed or understood by different socio-economic groups. Clearly the appeal to 'take back control of our country' was very powerful – and will be in France with Marine Le Pen and Geert Wilders in the Netherlands – but it is very disconcerting to believe that information has NO effect at all. What can we do – or what could be done by others - about it?.

Answers, on a virtual postcard, to RadStats.com. Replies unlikely.