

## **Backhouse Blunder**

Such a pity that Roger Backhouse (LGC, 20 July) fails to understand that in order to improve processes you need to identify a starting point if you are to compare and learn from other organisations. This therefore involves the boring but necessary collection of data to establish this baseline.

Having been involved in running the U.K.'s biggest local government process benchmarking system, Performance Networks – comparing performance across 203 local authorities in 16 different service areas for the past seven years, I do.

If Roger wants to put down his theory book for a moment I am quite prepared to show him how many authorities up and down the country are actually getting on with the process of improving performance in practice.

To belittle the service improvements that local authorities have made over the past years, evidenced by CPA and efficiency savings targets, will do little to encourage the easing of the control mechanisms imposed by Government.

Paul O'Brien  
Chief Executive, APSE