

# The Network Newsletter: tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries

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The Network's Website is at [www.seapn.org.uk](http://www.seapn.org.uk) and includes information on courses, good practice, specific socially excluded groups, as well as the newsletter archive.

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## Did you see ...?

### ***CILIP Update***

The May 2016 issue<sup>1</sup> includes the following items of interest:

- “UN peace project wins award”, a brief news report on the UN’s Library for Peace initiative, which won an international award at the London Book Fair [p12]
- Helen Fallon “Ringling the Ogoni bells: the Ken Saro-Wiwa archive”, which reports on the development of the archive at Maynooth University<sup>2</sup> [pp28-30]
- Craig Menzies “No one in Glasgow should face cancer alone”, a report on the partnership between Macmillan Cancer Support and Glasgow Libraries<sup>3</sup> [pp39-41]
- Victoria Treadway, Peter Aspinall, Teresa Ashton and Laura Pringle “Bringing people together in memories”, which reports on a partnership between Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Wirral Council, which involved creating reminiscence boxes which are available in public libraries and the local acute hospital [pp42-44]
- Jamie Morgan-Green “Telling tall tales”, which looks at the involvement of the library at Halesowen College with National Storytelling Week, with their students writing stories to read at local schools (and plans for their involvement in Schools Autism Awareness Week)<sup>4</sup> [p45].

### ***Museums Journal***

The May 2016 issue<sup>5</sup> includes:

- Rob Sharp “Interest in Islamic heritage rises”, which reports on work including that by the heritage organisation, Everyday Muslim<sup>6</sup>, which has involved setting up a touring exhibition, and establishing an archive; the Islamic Art and Material Culture Subject Specialist Network<sup>7</sup>; as well as a number of exhibitions and festivals in museums [p9]

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<sup>1</sup> *CILIP Update*, May 2016, see: <http://www.cilip.org.uk/membership/benefits/monthly-magazine-journals-ebulletins/cilip-update-magazine>.

<sup>2</sup> The Ken Saro-Wiwa image archive is available at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/22668824@N07/sets/72157636927385056>. The audio archive is available at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library/collections/ken-saro-wiwa-audio-archive>.

<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/libraries/macmillan-at-glasgow-libraries/Pages/default.aspx>.

<sup>4</sup> See: <http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/world-autism-awareness-week/schools-autism-awareness-week.aspx>.

<sup>5</sup> For further information, see: <http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal>.

<sup>6</sup> See: <http://www.everydaymuslim.org/>.

<sup>7</sup> “The principal aim of this network is to share expertise, ideas and best practice on Islamic art and material culture with a focus on museum collections from across the United Kingdom and Ireland. Many of our members are museum and heritage professionals, but we also welcome the involvement of students, academics and artists.” See: <http://krc.orient.ox.ac.uk/iamcssn/index.php/en/>.

- Denise Bowler and Edwin Coomasaru “Are galleries just for girls?”, (“The Conversation” series), which looks at some of the gender issues around visiting and working in museums [p17]
- Jonathan Knott “Disabled access”, which looks briefly at how museums responded to the DDA; as the article concludes:

“Museums that view the need for better access as an opportunity rather than a burden are most likely to come up with creative ideas to improve and invigorate the service they offer – for all visitors.”  
[p61]

### ***Museum Practice***

A recent post<sup>8</sup> outlines how the British Museum has developed its touch tours of the Egyptian Sculpture Gallery:

“The gallery, which first opened in 1834, contains large-scale statues, columns and sculptures dating from 2600 BC. The touch tour is currently supported by Braille, and tactile drawings and large print guides, and a downloadable audio version of the tour.

However, in order to offer greatest access to the gallery for blind and partially sighted visitors, the decision was made to offer guided tours led by the museum’s volunteers.”

### ***Books for Keeps***

The May issue<sup>9</sup> includes a round-up of the winner and runners-up for the Little Rebels Children’s Book Award for Radical Fiction – and there is more information available on the Award website<sup>10</sup>.

### ***Broadsheet***

The latest issue<sup>11</sup> includes a short article about “Culture Counts”, Christabel Anderson “Placing culture centre stage – culture counts: speaking up for culture in Scotland” [p13].

“Culture Counts is a group of umbrella associations and organisations from across the arts, screen, heritage and creative industries in Scotland. The group formed in 2011 to advocate for the value and importance of culture to life in Scotland.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Selene Burn “British Museum, London”, see: [http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/23032016-british-museum-london?dm\\_i=2VBX,7XM4,27LU0M,PGOO,1](http://www.museumsassociation.org/museum-practice/23032016-british-museum-london?dm_i=2VBX,7XM4,27LU0M,PGOO,1).

<sup>9</sup> *Books for Keeps*, 218, May 2016; available to download from or read online at: <http://content.yudu.com/web/1mjdv/0A1mjdx/BfKno218May16/html/index.html?page=2>.

<sup>10</sup> See: <https://littlerebelsaward.wordpress.com/>.

<sup>11</sup> *Broadsheet* 37, May 2016. Available to download as a pdf (4410 kb) from: <http://www.scottisharchives.org.uk/broadsheet/issue37.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> Taken from: <https://culturecounts.scot/about-us/>.

## Tackling social and digital exclusion – Libraries, Museums, Archives and Cultural and Heritage Organisations

### ***Taking part: initial findings from the longitudinal survey***

This report<sup>13</sup> (by TNS BMRB<sup>14</sup> for DCMS) is dated July 2015, but seems to have just become available.

There has been coverage elsewhere, so this is going to concentrate on the demographic and other social information included in the report.

“Taking Part is a household survey in England which looks at participation in the cultural and sport sector. The survey is now in its tenth year and was commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in partnership with Arts Council England, Historic England, and Sport England. Since Year 8 of the Taking Part survey (2012/13), a longitudinal component has been included in the survey, whereby the same individuals (starting with individuals who participated in Year 7, 2011/12) are re-interviewed annually. The aim of the longitudinal component is to enable greater understanding of the extent of change over time in participation in and engagement with cultural and sporting activities at the individual level, and pathways in and out of participation and engagement. Over time the longitudinal component will help to build a picture of how changes in circumstances and other life events can help or hinder participation and engagement, and for how long.” [p3]

In terms of **Arts**:

“Respondents who reported engaging with the arts at both interviews were more likely to be in the upper socio-economic group compared to those who reported engagements at only one interview or at neither interview (60%, compared to 42% of former arts engagers, 47% of new engagers and 35% of non-engagers). 28% were classified as Wealthy Achievers, compared to 19% of former engagers, 19% of new engagers and 17% of non-engagers. They were also more likely to be female, white and working and to own their home (71%, compared to 57% of former engagers, 55% of new engagers and 53% of non-engagers).” [p10]

For **Heritage**:

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<sup>13</sup> Gillian Prior, Peter Matthews and Angela Charlton. *Taking part: initial findings from the longitudinal survey*. DCMS, 2015. Available to download as a pdf (1060 kb) from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/447739/TP\\_longitudinal\\_report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/447739/TP_longitudinal_report.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> “[...] TNS BMRB undertakes research that underpins decision-making by policy makers across national and local Government at the highest level, and provides knowledge which helps the private and third sectors plan and care for society. We offer market leading research expertise in public service delivery, public communication, public dialogue and engagement, and the collection and collation of national statistics.” Taken from: <http://www.tns-bmrb.co.uk/about-us>.

“Respondents who reported visiting heritage sites at both interviews were more likely to be in the upper socio-economic group compared to those who reported visits at only one interview or at neither interview (62%, compared to 49% of former visitors, 41% of new visitors and 34% of non-visitors). 30% were classified as Wealthy Achievers (compared to 19% of former heritage site visitors, 19% of new visitors and 11% of non-visitors) and 37% were at the higher levels of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (37% levels 8-10, compared to 26% of former visitors, 25% of new visitors and 19% of non-visitors). These respondents were also more likely to be white and aged 45-64. They were more likely to own their home (73%, compared to 58% of former visitors, 57% of new visitors and 50% of non-visitors).

In general, the demographic profile of new heritage site visitors (who first reported visiting a heritage site at interview 2) was very similar to that of former visitors (who reported a visit at interview 1 but not interview 2). New visitors were, however, more likely to have a long term illness or disability (30%, compared to 23% of former visitors). Former visitors were more likely to identify as being of no religion (34%, compared to 26% of new visitors).” [p17]

### **Museums and galleries:**

“Respondents who reported visiting museums or galleries at both interviews were more likely to be in the upper socio-economic group compared to those who reported visits at only one interview or at neither interview (67%, compared to 50% of former visitors, 51% of new visitors and 42% of non-visitors). 30% were classified as Wealthy Achievers and 16% classified as Urban Prosperity, compared to 23% and 11% respectively for former visitors, 25% and 11% for new visitors, and 20% and 8% for non-visitors.

The profile of new museum/gallery visitors (first reporting a visit at interview 2) was older than that of the former visitors (who reported a visit at interview 1 but not interview 2); new visitors were more likely to be aged 65 or above (22%, compared to 16% of former visitors), while former visitors were more likely to be aged 44 or below (57%, compared to 47% of new visitors). New visitors were more likely to have a long term disability or illness (26%, compared to 18% of former visitors), possibly related to this older age profile. New visitors were also more likely to be white, Christian and home-owners, while former visitors were more likely to be private renters.” [p23]

### **For Libraries:**

“Those who visited libraries both years were more likely to be female (62%, compared with 52% of former library users, 54% of new library users and 47% of non-users). They were also more likely not to work (40%, compared to 30% of former users and 32% of non-users) but were more likely to be in the upper socio-economic group (61%, compared to 51% of former users, 50% of new users and 51% of non-users).

Respondents who stopped using library services between interviews 1 and 2 were more likely to be young adults, with 22% aged 16-24 compared to 15% of new users. New library users, however, were more likely to be classified as Hard-pressed (26%, compared to 18% of former users). Former library users were more likely to identify with no religion (36%, compared to 28% of new users), while new users were more likely to identify with a religion other than Christianity (13%, compared to 8% of former users).” [pp27-28]

In terms of reasons for using libraries:

“The most common reason given for using library services more often was to encourage a child to read books. Around one in five (21%) respondents who reported visiting libraries more often at interview 2 said this was a reason for their increased use of libraries, and 18% said it was the main reason. This was followed by a personal desire to read more, cited by 19% (11% said this was the main reason).” [p30]

The data are also presented in more detail in tables which include, for example, demographics by ACORN<sup>15</sup> category and by Index of Multiple Deprivation decile (“The IMD decile group splits neighbourhoods into ten groups according to the level of deprivation (e.g. 10% most deprived neighbourhoods” [p44]).

The MA has followed this up with a brief article<sup>16</sup>, quoting Alistair Brown, their policy officer:

“The sector has been attempting to reach out to new audiences across society for decades, and it is frustrating to see so little movement in these figures.”

The report does show just how much work there is to do to reach out and engage with people outside the ‘traditional’ user-base.

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## Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

### ***Destitution in the UK***

This new report<sup>17</sup> from JRF:

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<sup>15</sup> “Acorn is a powerful consumer classification that segments the UK population. By analysing demographic data, social factors, population and consumer behaviour, it provides precise information and an understanding of different types of people. Acorn provides valuable consumer insight helping you target, acquire and develop profitable customer relationships and improve service delivery”, see: <http://acorn.caci.co.uk/>.

<sup>16</sup> Patrick Steel, “English museums and galleries failing to diversify repeat visitors”, [http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/18052016-english-museums-failing-to-diversify-repeat-visitors?dm\\_i=2VBX,8D7U,27LU0M,R9HV,1](http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/18052016-english-museums-failing-to-diversify-repeat-visitors?dm_i=2VBX,8D7U,27LU0M,R9HV,1).

<sup>17</sup> Suzanne Fitzpatrick *et al.* *Destitution in the UK*. JRF, 2016.

Full report (2720 kb) and “Findings” (summary) (165.36kb) available to download from: [https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016&utm\\_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-](https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-)

“[...] defines destitution in the UK, looking at how many people are affected, who they are, and the main pathways in and out of destitution. It looks at the impact and experience of those people directly affected.”<sup>18</sup>

The “expert-informed, publicly endorsed” definition of destitution used in this research is:

### **Definition of destitution**

People are destitute if:

a) They, or their children, have lacked two or more of these six essentials over the past month, because they cannot afford them:

*shelter* (have slept rough for one or more nights)

*food* (have had fewer than two meals a day for two or more days)

*heating* their home (have been unable to do this for five or more days)

*lighting* their home (have been unable to do this for five or more days)

*clothing and footwear* (appropriate for weather)

*basic toiletries* (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush).

To check that the reason for going without these essential items was that they could not afford them we: asked respondents if this was the reason; checked that their income was below the standard relative poverty line (i.e. 60 per cent of median income after housing costs for the relevant household size); and checked that they had no or negligible savings.

OR

b) Their income is so extremely low that they are unable to purchase these essentials for themselves.” [Full report, p2]

Using this definition:

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[up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016+CID\\_5be2cb903d3067962947ca037f3b7348&utm\\_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm\\_term=latest%20research](https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016+CID_5be2cb903d3067962947ca037f3b7348&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=latest%20research).

<sup>18</sup> Taken from: [https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016&utm\\_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016+CID\\_5be2cb903d3067962947ca037f3b7348&utm\\_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm\\_term=latest%20research](https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016+CID_5be2cb903d3067962947ca037f3b7348&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=latest%20research). There is also a related blogpost: Helen Barnard “1.25 million people can’t afford to eat, keep clean and stay warm and dry”, JRF Blog, 29 Apr 2016, [https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/over-1-million-people-cant-afford?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016&utm\\_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016+CID\\_5be2cb903d3067962947ca037f3b7348&utm\\_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm\\_term=Read%20Helen%20Barnards](https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/over-1-million-people-cant-afford?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2025th%20April%202016+CID_5be2cb903d3067962947ca037f3b7348&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=Read%20Helen%20Barnards).

"[...] we estimated that there were at least 184,500 households destitute and in touch with voluntary sector crisis services in a typical week in the UK in 2015. Our annual estimate, subject to additional provisos, is that 668,000 households, containing 1,252,000 people, of whom 312,000 were children, were destitute and in contact with these services during 2015." [Full report, p2]

In addition:

"Destitute households which do not make contact with any crisis services, or make contact with statutory services only, could not practically be captured using our methodology. However, we know from our analysis of the use of local welfare funds [...], that the latter group at least is likely to be substantial." [Full report, p3]

In terms of those most affected, the research shows:

"Our evidence indicates that, for most of those affected, destitution is not a one-off, transient episode, but rather typically occurs in a broader context of severe poverty and hardship extending over a considerable period of time. On average, we interviewed destitute respondents three to four months after they had completed the survey, and in about three-quarters of these cases we found that they were still destitute. Those who remained destitute included the great majority of migrants and UK-born interviewees with complex support needs (e.g. associated with long-term homelessness, substance misuse or mental health problems) (referred to below as the UK-complex needs group), but only around half of the other UK-born interviewees (referred to below as the UK-other group), who tended to experience relatively shorter episodes of destitution than the other two groups or to rotate between destitution and severe poverty.

The group which appears most at risk of destitution in today's UK is younger single men, but considerable numbers of families and children are also affected as noted above. While people born overseas (particularly those from the European Economic Area (EEA), the Middle East and Africa) face disproportionate risks of destitution when living in this country, the great majority (79 per cent) of those destitute in the UK during the course of 2015 were born here.

The geography of destitution in the UK matches very closely that of poverty in general, apart from some particularities related to the location of key migrant groups, including asylum seekers. It is therefore clustered in former industrial areas, largely in the north of England and in the other UK countries, and in some London boroughs and seaside towns, with much lower rates found in affluent suburban and rural or small town districts in southern England." [Full report, p3]

Looking at routes into destitution, the research found that:

"The picture of routes into destitution emerging from this study is a complex one, with no predominant, single cause. Rather, a number of

interacting factors tend to undermine the ability of people living on extremely modest resources to meet their essential needs in particular circumstances.” [Full report, p3]

In terms of the impact of destitution on the people interviewed and their families:

“Almost universally, our interviewees were explicit about how demeaning they found it to have to seek help with basic material needs like food, clothes and toiletries from charitable organisations, despite the kindness and respect with which they reported being treated by the staff and volunteers.

This sense of humiliation extended to relying on family and friends for basic material needs, exacerbated by the knowledge that in many cases they too had little to spare. For migrant interviewees in particular, access to help from family, especially parents, was often limited, and for this group (at least those using voluntary sector services), only short-term or intermittent help could reasonably be expected from friends.

The support role of statutory and public agencies was generally less to the fore in our study. In part this reflected our recruitment methodology [...], but also probably the fact that some destitute groups (particularly certain categories of migrants) are entitled to little or no state assistance.” [Full report, p5]

Looking at routes out of destitution:

“[...] about a quarter of our interviewees had managed to leave destitution since they completed the survey (most of whom were in the UK-other group), while three-quarters remained destitute.

For those who had moved out of destitution, the critical factor had usually been the resolution of a benefit issue, typically the ending of a benefit sanction or delay, or a change in benefit eligibility status. But other developments, such as improved or cheaper housing, paying off debts, gaining employment, receiving support to address complex needs, or even the advent of warmer weather (which reduced energy costs), also featured in some people's accounts.

The UK-other interviewees who were still destitute generally viewed paid work as the 'ideal' pathway out of their predicament, but for those with major health problems in particular, resolving benefit issues was often perceived as a more immediate route to improving their circumstances. Dealing with accommodation difficulties, and reducing high housing costs featured prominently for some. Among the UK-complex needs group, resolving benefit and housing problems were similarly to the fore, but it was clear that many also needed help with their social, health and other support needs if they were to escape, and stay out of, destitution. With regard to migrants, the emphasis on employment as a route out of destitution, coupled with access to education and training, or volunteering opportunities, was even stronger. But for current and refused asylum seekers, as well as undocumented migrants, their (lack of) legal status

was undoubtedly a first order barrier to their finding a pathway out of destitution.” [Full report, p5]

The report’s broad conclusions are:

“This study shows that destitution is closely linked to broader poverty. Tackling destitution requires action on the fundamental drivers of poverty (e.g. unemployment, low pay and high living costs), as well as better emergency support for those in crisis. For some groups other policy areas are also important including debt, immigration, asylum, housing, homelessness, mental health, addictions, and complex needs.”  
[“Findings”, p4]

This report is an indictment of the current provision in the UK, with so many people ‘falling through the net’. JRF will be drawing on the findings of the research to inform their future work:

“The development of detailed policy proposals was beyond the remit of this study. However, its findings have been used to inform JRF’s UK-wide anti-poverty strategy, to be published later this year, which will give particular attention to those experiencing the very extreme forms of material need evidenced in this report.” [Full report, p5]

For us, it highlights the importance of providing information and ‘signposting’, as well indicating areas where we could prioritise our work.<sup>19</sup>

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## Abbreviations and acronyms

DCMS = Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
DDA = Disability Discrimination Act  
JRF = Joseph Rowntree Foundation  
UN = United Nations

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This Newsletter was compiled by John Vincent, and all items are written by him, unless otherwise stated. Please send any comments or items for the next issue to:

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<sup>19</sup> Source: *JRF Weekly Update*, 29 Apr 2016.