

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 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 November issue¹ includes:

- “£2.1 million grant for reading project to help older people”, a brief outline of the new Big Lottery Fund grant for “Reading Friends” [p15]
- Wendy Morris “The Big Read: how shared reading transforms lives”, which looks at a project at Kingston University, which also included outreach with a homeless organisation² [pp32-34]
- Sue Wills “Libraries Taskforce: an opportunity to contribute and develop”, which describes a secondment to the Taskforce [pp42-43]

Museums Journal

The November issue includes:

- Nat Edwards “A brave new world?” [“Comment” column], which argues that, post-Brexit, “We need the courage to engage more deeply and more meaningfully with communities that appear to have taken a step back from us – and to give them a voice.” [p14]
- Geraldine Kendall Adams “Naked ambition”, which looks at how some local authorities are intending to use culture to kickstart regeneration [pp20-27]
- Rob Sharp “Action points”, which looks at what some museums are doing to tackle social, political, economic and environmental issues. Included are brief discussions of RCMG’s “Exceptional & Extraordinary” project, looking at difference and disability³; Manchester Museum’s project, “Climate Control”⁴; Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art’s work with Arte Útil^{5, 6}; the People’s History Museum’s focus on its collection of activist

¹ *CILIP Update*, Nov 2016. Further info at:

<http://www.cilip.org.uk/membership/benefits/monthly-magazine-journals-ebulletins/cilip-update-magazine>.

² See: <http://kubigread.kingston.ac.uk/>.

³ See: <http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/rcmg/projects/exceptional-an>.

⁴ See: <http://www.museum.manchester.ac.uk/whatson/exhibitions/climatecontrol/>.

⁵ See: <http://www.arte-util.org/>.

⁶ “Arte Útil (roughly translating into ‘useful art’ or, more accurately, art as a tool or device) is an ongoing body of work that draws on artistic thinking to create and implement activities that can change society. Since its initiation by artist Tania Bruguera in 2011, the movement has grown through an expanding network of projects to provide a serious and real challenge to the contemporary art establishment. Most

material⁷; the Museum of Homelessness, which is launching its public programme next year, and which aims to broaden the background of those telling stories about homelessness⁸; and work outside museums, such as the attendance at last summer's Pride Festival⁹ [pp28-31, 33]

- Adele Patrick (interviewed by Eleanor Mills) "Being brave", looking at the work of Glasgow Women's Library¹⁰ [pp44-47]

ARC Magazine

The December issue¹¹ includes

- Jenny Marsden "If we don't put ourselves in history no one else will": the Hall Carpenter Oral History Archive", which outlines progress on "[...] a project to broaden access – with the ultimate aim being to make as many interviews available online as possible." [pp30-32]

Equality Act 2010

Religion or belief: is the law working?

The EHRC have just published this important report¹² which:

"[...] explores whether Great Britain's (GB's) equality and human rights legal framework sufficiently protects individuals with a religion or belief and the distinctiveness of religion or belief organisations, while balancing the rights of others protected under the Equality Act 2010 (the Equality Act)." [p3]

In a nutshell:

"[The report] finds the legislation is generally effective but a lack of understanding of the law has led to misinterpretation and confusion."¹³

Their evaluation looks at four questions:

- "Is the legal approach to defining a religion or a belief effective?"

recently represented in the award of the 2015 Turner Prize to the Assemble design collective." [Taken from: <http://www.visitmima.com/news/arte-util-summit-2016/>]

⁷ See: <http://www.phm.org.uk/>.

⁸ See: <http://museumofhomelessness.org/#who-we-are>.

⁹ See, for example: <http://www.museumsassociation.org/news/29062016-museums-pride-2016>.

¹⁰ See: <http://womenslibrary.org.uk/>.

¹¹ ARC Magazine, 328, Dec 2016. Further info at:

<http://www.archives.org.uk/publications/arc-magazine.html>.

¹² *Religion or belief: is the law working?* EHRC, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (425.84 kb) from: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/religion-or-belief-report-december-2016.pdf>.

¹³ Taken from: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/common-sense-approach-needed-religion-and-belief-work>.

- Are the Equality Act exceptions allowing religion or belief requirements to influence employment decisions sufficient and appropriate?
- Does the law sufficiently protect employees wishing to manifest a religion or belief at work?
- Does the law sufficiently protect service users and service providers in relation to religion or belief?" [p3]

There is a mass of useful information in the report – for this assessment, we just list the recommendations under each of these questions.

Is the legal approach to defining a religion or a belief effective?

The recommendations are:

- “No change is made to the broad definition of the protected characteristic of religion or belief in the Equality Act.
- No change is made to the current approach whereby the courts decide whether any particular religion or belief is protected under the Equality Act.
- The definition of the protected characteristic of belief should be clarified through case law.” [p4]

Are the Equality Act exceptions allowing religion or belief requirements to influence employment decisions sufficient and appropriate?

- “There should be no change to the current occupational exceptions allowed under the Equality Act in employment for employers with an ethos based on religion or belief, or for employment for the purposes of an organised religion.
- The Department for Education (DfE) should review sections 60 (4) and (5) of the SSFA and the Scottish Government should review section 21 (2A) of the Education (Scotland) Act to ensure their compatibility with the EU Employment Equality Directive.” [p5]

Does the law sufficiently protect employees wishing to manifest a religion or belief at work?

- “The legal framework should remain unchanged because the existing model of indirect discrimination and the concept of balancing rights in human rights law provide sufficient protection for people manifesting their religion or belief.
- A duty of reasonable accommodation should not be introduced into law.
- Individual employees should not be permitted to opt out of performing part of their contractual work duties due to religion or belief where this would have a potential detrimental or discriminatory impact on others.” [pp6-7]

Does the law sufficiently protect service users and service providers in relation to religion or belief?

- “The Equality Act should not be amended to permit religion or belief or sexual orientation discrimination by organisations whose sole or main purpose is commercial.
- There should be clarification of the extent of freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience and religion in relation to religious organisations which is required, through case law.
- There should be no extension of harassment protections covering religion or belief to non-employment settings.” [p8]

The report is very helpful, in that it goes some way to clarifying some major points, although, as we already knew, many outstanding questions and issues may be resolved only via case law.

At the same time, the EHRC have produced some helpful, practical guidance, “Religion or belief: an employer's guide to religion or belief in the workplace”¹⁴. This web resource is divided into the following sections:

- What is religion or belief? What do we mean by 'religion or belief' and why is it important?¹⁵
- A guide to the law¹⁶
- How do I handle employee requests?¹⁷
- Frequently asked questions¹⁸

This is particularly valuable at the present, given issues around, for example, discrimination against people with other protected characteristics by people on the grounds of their religion/belief.¹⁹

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

State of the Nation 2016: social mobility in Great Britain

The latest report²⁰ on social mobility has just been published.

¹⁴ See: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/religion-or-belief>.

¹⁵ See: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/religion-or-belief-what-it-and-why-it-important>.

¹⁶ See: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publication-download/religion-or-belief-guide-law>.

¹⁷ See: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/religion-or-belief-how-do-i-handle-employee-requests>.

¹⁸ See: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/religion-or-belief-frequently-asked-questions>.

¹⁹ Source: National Secular Society *Newsline*, 2 Dec 2016.

²⁰ *State of the Nation 2016: social mobility in Great Britain: presented to Parliament pursuant to section 8B(6) of the Life Chances Act 2010*. Social Mobility Commission, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (15150 kb) from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/569410/Social_Mobility_Commission_2016_REPORT_WEB_1_.pdf.

As the foreword says:

“Britain has a deep social mobility problem. In this annual report we present compelling new evidence that for this generation of young people in particular, it is getting worse not better. Low levels of social mobility are impeding the progress of not only the poorest in our society. We identify four fundamental barriers that are holding back a whole tranche of low- and middle-income families and communities in England: an unfair education system, a two-tier labour market, an imbalanced economy and an unaffordable housing market.” [p iii]

The report argues the case for change, identifying the barriers to progress (noted above). It then argues for the need for a new approach, and puts forward a series of proposals – these “are not aimed exclusively at government but also at employers and educators, local councils and communities.” [p iv]

These include proposal relating to:

Parenting and early years, eg:

- “We recommend that the Government should set a clear objective for early years services that by 2025 every child is school-ready at five and the child development gap has been closed, with a new strategy to increase the availability of high-quality childcare to low-income families [...]
- We recommend a radical redistribution of resources within the education budget to get more investment and better-quality services to the children who need them most.” [p vii]

Schools, eg around closing the attainment gap “at GCSE level between poorer children and their better-off classmates so that the rest of the country levels up to what London is already achieving.” [p vii]

Post-16 education, eg looking at a fairer distribution of post-16 choices.

Jobs, careers and earnings including increasing the number of Living Wage employers; increasing progression opportunities for workers in the bottom half of the labour market; and proposing that the Government introduces a legal ban on unpaid internships.

Housing, including modifying the starter home initiative; stronger Government intervention into the house-building market.

The report concludes:

“Fundamental reforms are needed in our country’s education system, labour market and local economies to address Britain’s social mobility problem. We advocate a far bigger and broader approach than previous governments have considered. It cannot all be done from Whitehall. It will need the Prime Minister to take personal charge of forging a new national coalition with employers, universities, colleges, schools, councils and

communities behind one core purpose: the creation of a more level playing field of opportunity in Britain.

Higher social mobility – the breaking of the link between a person’s class or income and the class or income of their parents – can be a rallying point to prove that modern capitalist economies can create better, fairer and more inclusive societies.” [p xiii]

This is an important report, and could provide useful background information to assist in our arguing the case for the development of cultural provision.²¹

Tackling social and digital exclusion – Other Agencies

The missing million: a practical guide to identifying and talking about loneliness

In June 2016, the Campaign to End Loneliness published a key report²² which gave an overview of the existing methods being used to identify and engage with people experiencing loneliness.

This follow-up document²³ aims to:

“[...] provide practical guidance for commissioners, service providers, front line workers and volunteers; helping you to identify older people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, loneliness and to better understand and engage with these missing million lonely older people.” [p4]

It is in two sections, “How to identify loneliness” and “How to engage with lonely older people”.

None of it is ‘rocket science’, but it is a very useful reminder of the key steps to take. In terms of identifying loneliness:

- “Using a variety of different data sources, including open data, data visualisation packages, and health informatics
- Working with local communities and tapping into existing knowledge and capacity
- Developing partnerships with a range of individuals, groups and agencies” [p5]

²¹ Source: NCB *Policy & Parliamentary Information Digest*, 21 Nov 2016.

²² *The missing million: in search of the loneliest in our communities*. Campaign to End Loneliness, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (1420 kb) from: <http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Missing-Million-report-FINAL.pdf>.

²³ *The missing million: a practical guide to identifying and talking about loneliness*. Campaign to End Loneliness, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (908.48 kb) from: http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/CEL-Missing-Millions-Guide_final.pdf.

In terms of engaging with lonely older people:

- “Understand what loneliness is and why it occurs
- Facilitate a conversation about loneliness, using the skills and qualities of empathy, openness, warmth and respect, and help people to understand their own circumstances and plan their own solutions
- Provide support which is appropriate for the individual and encourage them to engage with external groups, resources and technology” [p5]

It includes a number of case studies, for example utilising technology [p21], but, sadly, does not include any examples from the cultural sector – this is an area where we need to show the range of provision we already make.²⁴

UK poverty: causes, costs and solutions

In September, JRF published its major report²⁵ which set out the evidence they used to back up their strategy to resolve UK poverty²⁶.

It starts by defining what poverty is; then looks at trends and projections; followed by a section on why poverty matters to us all.

This is followed by a chapter on the causes of poverty, which includes:

- Market, state and individual
- Low wages, insecure jobs and unemployment
- Lack of skills
- Family problems
- Ineffective benefit system
- High costs, including housing.

These introductory chapters are then followed by the more detailed, step-by-step approaches to:

- Dealing with the high costs that are driving poverty
- Housing
- Childhood poverty
- Working-age poverty
- Poverty in later life.

²⁴ Source: DWP *Age Action Alliance Weekly Member's News*, 14 Nov 2016.

²⁵ *UK poverty: causes, costs and solutions*. JRF, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (4180 kb) from: https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/uk-poverty-causes-costs-and-solutions?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%205%20September%202016&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%205%20September%202016+CID_94165fa44638b3383c25ddda58f43839&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=Find%20out%20more.

²⁶ See: Solve UK Poverty, <https://www.jrf.org.uk/solve-uk-poverty>.

Finally, there is a section on poverty and complex needs, which includes, for example, the needs of asylum-seekers and refugees; families with young children; young people; and adults with complex needs.

The concluding, brief chapter draws the report together, and also issues a call to action:

“In this comprehensive strategy, we have shown that there is a lot that everybody can do.

It will not be quick or easy, but with vision, commitment and collaboration, we can all play a part in creating a society in which prosperity is more equally shared and the worst-off people and places are not left behind.

We can solve poverty by strengthening family life, ensuring all citizens have the skills they need to operate in the 21st century, fixing flaws in the benefits system, taking practical action to contain rising costs, and moving to more progressive employment and business practices.

Solving poverty relies on economic growth, but the proceeds need to be distributed more fairly, and the underlying causes, such as low pay, low skills and high costs, need to be reduced. Where possible, we have costed our policy recommendations and shown where there could be savings in the long term.

We hope that those who can make change happen will start to see they are part of a wider movement for social change. We hope some will be inspired to try out these recommendations in practice.

We are calling on national and local governments, businesses, employers, providers of essential goods and services, housing providers, public service providers, investors and philanthropists, community, faith and voluntary sector groups and citizens to work together, to reduce the risk of people falling into poverty, mitigate their experiences when they are in poverty and make it easier for them to escape from it.

We believe this country will be stronger if we act together to solve poverty. Join us. Let’s mobilise for prosperity. Let’s conquer poverty.”
[p249]

Recommended.²⁷

Talking about poverty: how experts and the public understand UK poverty

“The idea of poverty and the meaning of the term in the UK is contested, and those working to tackle poverty are finding it difficult to shift negative public attitudes and cultivate broad public support for policies to solve it. This research compares how experts – including people with experience

²⁷ Source: JRF *Weekly round-up*, 9 Sep 2016.

of poverty – and the public understand UK poverty. It analyses the overlaps and gaps between these ways of thinking to identify challenges in communicating about poverty and strategies for building support.”²⁸

The results of the first stage of this JRF-funded research project have just been published²⁹. The research was undertaken by the FrameWorks Institute³⁰.

“The second phase of the project, beginning in early 2017, will build on the initial recommendations to design and test new approaches to communicating about UK poverty.”³¹

The key findings of the research so far show the complexity of ‘poverty’ and also the large gap between experts’ understanding of it, and that of the public. For example:

“Experts on UK poverty, including those with experience of poverty, agree the following key points need to be more widely communicated:

- Poverty should be understood in terms of: a lack of resources to meet material needs and take part in society; the specific social and historical context in which an individual is living; and the effects of income and costs of living.
- While poverty can affect anyone, certain groups are more at risk than others.
- The causes and consequences of poverty are interconnected and vary geographically. In general, they include: low wages and insecure work; high cost of living; unemployment; low educational attainment; the way the benefits system works;

²⁸ Taken from: https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/talking-about-poverty-how-experts-and-public-understand-uk-poverty?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2014%20November%202016&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2014%20November%202016+CID_f7be199e0375747ce7f6e498b5111d0e&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=Read%20the%20summary

²⁹ Andrew Volmert, Marisa Gerstein Pineau and Nathaniel Kendall-Taylor. *Talking about poverty: how experts and the public understand UK poverty*. FrameWorks Institute, 2016.

Full report available to download as a pdf (664.48 kb) from:

http://frameworksinstitute.org/assets/files/PDF/JRF_UK_Poverty_MTG_2016.pdf.

“Findings” report (pdf 161.23kb) and Web summary both at:

https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/talking-about-poverty-how-experts-and-public-understand-uk-poverty?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2014%20November%202016&utm_content=JRF%20weekly%20round-up%20wc%2014%20November%202016+CID_f7be199e0375747ce7f6e498b5111d0e&utm_source=Email%20marketing%20software&utm_term=Read%20the%20summary

³⁰ “The FrameWorks Institute is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1999 to advance science-based communications research and practice. FrameWorks conducts original, multi-method research to identify the communications strategies that will advance public understanding of social problems and improve public support for remedial policies. FrameWorks’ work also includes teaching the nonprofit sector how to apply science-based communications strategies in their work for social change.” [full report, p42].

³¹ Taken from “Findings” report, p4.

discrimination and stigmatisation; social isolation and exclusion; stress and illness; family breakdown; and economic stagnation and low economic productivity.

- Poverty is complex, but can be addressed through state, market and individual-level solutions.
- Social and economic support should be broad, sufficient and responsive to individuals' needs over the life course, with a combination of universal and targeted support. Action should be taken to prevent poverty, have an impact now and in the future, and include a focus on place.
- Solutions must be driven by input from people living in poverty." ["Findings", p2]

However, the public use "[...] 'cultural models' – shared assumptions and patterns of thinking – which [they] broadly share and draw upon when thinking about poverty." ["Findings", p2]

These are:

- **"The 'non-negotiable needs' model:** Poverty is understood as the lack of basic, absolute needs – food, shelter, clothing and warmth. All other things are understood as 'wants' or luxuries. This cultural model can help to garner support for a limited form of welfare support that meets basic needs, and action to address the costs of housing. However, it undermines support for a more robust welfare state and leads the public to focus on tightening up the benefits system.
- **The 'spectrum of self-determination' model:** People reason that material resources are important because they both satisfy wants or needs and enable people to freely choose or determine their own path in life. This allows people to see a spectrum of poverty, where more resources means more self-determination. This expands public thinking about the support people need to live an autonomous life, but it can also undermine the sense that society should provide a basic level of welfare support to all.
- **The 'post-poverty' model:** There is a strong tendency to identify poverty with other places – such as the third world – and the UK's past. Drawing upon this model, the public assumes UK society is prosperous and has progressed beyond poverty, undermining concern for the issue in the UK today.
- **The 'poverty romanticism' model:** People romanticise poverty as a form of freedom from unnecessary consumer goods and modern materialistic society. This model directly impedes thinking about poverty as a serious social problem that must be addressed.
- **The 'game is rigged' model:** People draw upon an assumption that economic outcomes, such as poverty, are controlled by elites who employ government policies to benefit themselves and keep others down. This model helps to highlight inequality, but makes change through government-led reform seem unrealistic.

- **The ‘economic naturalism’ model:** People view the economy as shaped by mysterious market forces beyond individual or societal control. This leads people to assume that there are significant limits on society or government’s ability to reduce or eliminate poverty by affecting the economy.
- **The ‘self-makingness’ model:** People frequently attribute an individual’s circumstances to their personal choices and level of motivation. They understand poverty to be the result of inadequate effort and poor choices, undermining the public’s ability to appreciate the environmental and systemic contexts that enable or constrain individuals to shape their lives.
- **The ‘culture of poverty’ model:** This model perceives certain communities to have a set of shared norms and values – particularly worklessness – which result in an unbreakable intergenerational cycle of poverty. This model shifts blame from the individual to the community, and undermines support for any solution other than fundamentally changing cultural norms among certain groups of society. It can lead members of the public to support a tightening of the benefits system to prevent exploitation.
- **The ‘opportunity structures’ model:** People understand poverty to be caused by a lack of adequate opportunities, such as good education and strong social networks. This model enables people to appreciate the impact of social structures on the chances of an individual experiencing poverty. It can move people beyond a ‘basic needs’ view of poverty, and make them more receptive to education and skills development policies.” [“Findings”, pp2-3]

It’s important to recognise this gap in understanding, as it may well be something that we can help clarify. The research recommends:

- “Avoid talking about ‘needs’ – the public equates this only with basic subsistence needs, not in terms of wider resources and living standards.
- Emphasise the link between material resources and self-determination to move away from the idea that any resources beyond subsistence needs are luxuries.
- Use examples to explain what UK poverty looks like today and how it works, focusing on the role of systems and policies in creating and perpetuating poverty.
- Tell stories that explain poverty as a systemic and structural issue, and make systems and structures a character in the story, along with people.
- Be explicit about how poverty constrains people’s opportunities, enabling the public to think more about social context, structures and systems.
- Try to explain how economic forces are shaped by policies and institutions, and how they could be shaped differently to address poverty, to tackle fatalistic thinking about elite control or uncontrollable market forces.

- Do not invoke individual politicians' potentially negative motives when criticising government, as this is highly likely to reinforce the sense that reform through government policy is impossible.
- Avoid describing the need for material resources in terms of consumption, as this may trigger anti-consumerist thinking that can be connected to romanticised views of poverty.
- Contextualise and explain statistics on UK poverty; otherwise, the public will interpret them through their default cultural models.
- Avoid explicitly addressing the public's unproductive thinking about individuals in poverty needing to work harder or be more responsible – rather than defusing such ways of thinking, this will more likely reinforce the message.” [“Findings”, p4]

This is a valuable piece of research, and it will be interesting to see what communications approaches are trialled and reported in the second phase.³²

Alternatives approaches to reducing poverty and inequality: existing evidence and evidence needs

This recent report³³ from the Public Policy Institute for Wales summarises “[...] a workshop which brought together a select group of academic experts, senior policy makers and practitioners to discuss the current state of the evidence regarding approaches to reducing poverty and inequality and future evidence needs.”³⁴

It usefully draws together the Welsh Government approach, and, adding to the JRF work above, also identifies approaches to understanding poverty, including:

- Human Rights based approaches: “A human rights perspective see poverty as a denial of a person’s rights to a range of basic capabilities—such as the capability to be adequately nourished, to live in good health, and to take part in decision-making processes and in the social and cultural life of the community. An individual is seen as living in poverty if basic rights, such as the rights to food, health and access to political participation, are not fulfilled.” [p6]
- Equalities based approaches: “An equalities approach to tackling poverty examines who, defined by the protected characteristic of gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, transgender, age, religion or belief, is living in poverty. This approach differs from area based approaches which risk overlooking the needs of those from these groups who do not live in the most deprived parts of Wales. This could have implications for the

³² Source: JRF *Weekly round-up*, 18 Nov 2016.

³³ Emyr Williams. *Alternatives [sic] approaches to reducing poverty and inequality: existing evidence and evidence needs*. Public Policy Institute for Wales, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (660.87 kb) from:

<http://ppiwi.org.uk/files/2016/11/Alternative-approaches-to-poverty-reduction.pdf>.

³⁴ Taken from:

<http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/11515/NOVEMBER+2016+Bulletin+FINAL.pdf/657b38c9-1d13-4d8a-8468-0f4a924a7f84>.

Communities First approach as almost half of those people who are deprived live outside Communities First areas.” [p7]

- Capabilities based approaches: “Capabilities based approaches are associated with the Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen, who recognised that large-scale anti- poverty programmes in the global south missed out important dimensions of how poverty was actually experienced by those living in it. Sen’s approach can be used to place an emphasis on what people themselves value rather than the wishes of policy makers alone. Rather than focusing on deficits in income, wealth or rights, a capabilities based approach emphasises the importance of analysing what people can do and be (what Sen calls ‘functionings’ and ‘capabilities’) and has regard for the importance of diversity, substantive freedom, agency and participation. Therefore capabilities based approaches place a strong emphasis on measuring wider factors than simply income and advocates of this approach argue that poverty should be measured using multidimensional indices, not simply an economic measure.” [pp7-8]

The workshop went on to acknowledge that:

“A range of capabilities based approaches have been tried in the developing world but there is a lack of rigorous evaluation of their effectiveness. Capabilities approaches have not been trailed extensively in the UK but Oxfam claim that a recent pilot in Wales has resulted in improved outcomes for individuals and significant cost savings.

The workshop explored two examples of a capabilities style approach – the Human Development Paradigm and the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach [...]” [p8]

Then:

“The experts who participated in the workshop agreed that there was a degree of overlap between approaches based on Human Rights, Equalities and Capabilities. Equalities underpins much of the human rights agenda [...]

There are also strong links between the different variants of capabilities based approaches including:

- a recognition that poverty is multi-faceted and multi-dimensional;
- a focus on individuals’ and communities’ strengths and opportunities rather than needs and deficits; and
- an emphasis on engagement and participation in policy decisions by people who are experiencing poverty.” [pp9-10]

Finally, the workshop concluded that new ways of viewing and assessing poverty were needed; “[...] that it is important to use multi-dimensional measures of poverty and well-being (which could be seen as the corollary of poverty).” [p10]; and that there was a need for greater data (at a local level, and

disaggregated by, for example, age and ethnicity) and more evidence of the effectiveness of the different approaches to tackling poverty.³⁵

Integration city: a new communities agenda for London

“In 2014, [The Challenge³⁶] convened the Social Integration Commission – an independent inquiry, chaired by Royal Society of the Arts Chief Executive Matthew Taylor, which sought to explore how people from different communities and backgrounds relate to one another in modern Britain [...]” [p1]

This report³⁷ sets out the Commission’s ideas on how to promote integration in London. It begins by celebrating the diversity of London:

“Over 300 languages are spoken in our city, and one in three Londoners were born outside the UK (with one in four born outside of Europe.) [...]”

London is also home to some of our country’s very richest and very poorest citizens – the capital’s population comprises 15% of the poorest tenth of the UK population and 15% of the richest tenth [...] And today more Londoners than at any point in recent history are aged either under 18 or over 65 [...]” [p15]

However, at the same time:

“But there is evidence to suggest that London’s intensifying diversity isn’t translating into comparative levels of integration between people from different walks of life. And whilst Londoners undoubtedly demonstrate tolerance of people from different backgrounds on a daily basis, there is at present no strategy at any level of government to go beyond tolerance – to ensure that people from different backgrounds are not living separate lives, side by side. No plan in place to ensure that our differences don’t end up dividing us.” [p15]

As the report says:

“This matters. A lack of interaction between people with different experiences of life impacts negatively on the health, strength and cohesion of London’s communities in a variety of ways:

- Growing anxiety and fear of crime.

³⁵ Source: Local Government Association *Analysis and Research Bulletin*, Nov 2016.

³⁶ “The Challenge is the leading charity for building a more integrated society and employs over 700 members of staff. The modest number of 158 young people reached in 2009 continues to grow and we now deliver our programmes to over 40,000 people each year and impact the lives of a great deal more through our work with policy-makers.” [Taken from: <http://the-challenge.org/about-us/our-history>]

³⁷ Nicholas Plumb, Hannah Millinship Hayes and Richard Bell. *Integration city: a new communities agenda for London*. The Challenge, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (1770 kb) from: http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/files/news/Mayor_of_London_-_Intergration_Strategy_-_October_2016.pdf

- Increasing the likelihood that communities will experience civil unrest.
- Encouraging the prejudice that feeds extremism.
- Fuelling the development of a politics of division, recrimination and blame.
- Inhibited life chances, especially for younger people.
- A lack of access to diverse social networks can also restrict potential for social mobility.” [p9]

This is followed by a section on “The risk of rising segregation” which looks at the dangers of not building integrated communities, for example their greater likelihood of experiencing civil unrest; and that “[...] meaningful engagement between people of different ethnicities, cultures and faiths prevents the development of the misunderstandings, prejudice and hatred between communities that feed extremism.” [p22]

The report then looks at key areas for change:

- Community-proofing London’s housing and planning laws
- Creating twenty-first century community institutions
- Creating the conditions for migrant integration
- Ensuring London’s public services bring people together.

In terms of “Creating twenty-first century community institutions”, this should include:

- “Making volunteering a rite of passage for young Londoners.
- Setting up cross-community sports leagues.
- Revitalising shared spaces.
- Using digital technology to grow community support networks.
- Applying an ‘integration test’ to publicly-funded religious and cultural events.” [p35]

With regard to “Creating the conditions for migrant integration”, the report wants to boost levels of contact and build trust between new arrivals and “host communities”, and to ensure that the strategy includes:

- “Joining up services for migrants.
- Expanding English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision.
- Reforming the citizenship process.
- Launching community mentoring programmes for new migrants.
- Importing ideas for integration initiatives from other world cities.” [p45]

In the section on “Ensuring London’s public services bring people together”, the report recommends:

“City Hall should seek to embed a focus on promoting meaningful engagement between Londoners from different ethnic, socio-economic and age groups not just within neighbourhood-level initiatives but in all of the institutions which shape life in modern London – including our schools and public services.

Many of our city's public services – such as children's centres – already facilitate equal status interactions between people from different walks of life; but this is largely accidental rather than the result of conscious design. As a result, the integration impact of even these institutions has been limited.

The new Deputy Mayor for Social Integration, Social Mobility and Community Engagement might explore policy ideas such as:

- Embedding community organisers within schools.
- Encouraging schools to provide interfaith workshops especially single faith schools.
- Designing services for new parents to promote cross-community contact.
- Establishing intergenerational community centres.” [p55]

Although applying to London specifically, this report is well worth reading wherever you are based, as it gives all sorts of valuable pointers to ensuring that communities are more cohesive.³⁸

Broader issues – Government, Government Agencies and Local Government

Eroding trust: the UK's Prevent counter-extremism strategy in health and education

This report³⁹ has just been published. It argues that:

“The UK's Prevent strategy, which purports to prevent terrorism, creates a serious risk of human rights violations. The programme is flawed in both its design and application, rendering it not only unjust but also counterproductive.” [p3 – quotations taken from the Executive summary]

It also “creates a risk of discrimination, particularly against Muslims. Frontline professionals have broad discretion to act on their conscious or unconscious biases in deciding whom to report under Prevent.” [p5]

Amongst other key issues, it raises serious concerns about the treatment of children via Prevent; and:

³⁸ Source: *MEMO [Minority Ethnic Matters Overview]*, 503, 21 Nov 2016.

³⁹ *Eroding trust: the UK's Prevent counter-extremism strategy in health and education*. Open Society Foundations, 2016. Executive summary – available to download as a pdf (1220 kb) from: <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/eroding-trust-executive-summary-20161017.pdf>.

Full report – available to download as a pdf (1090 kb) from: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/eroding-trust-20161017_0.pdf.

“Finally, there are serious indications that Prevent is counterproductive. The case studies show that being wrongly targeted under Prevent has led some Muslims to question their place in British society [...] Other adults wrongfully targeted under Prevent have said that, had they been different, their experience of Prevent could have drawn them *towards* terrorism, and not away from it.” [p6 – emphasis theirs]

This is an important report, well worth reading, especially as there is a ‘growth industry’ of training⁴⁰ and other work springing up from it.⁴¹

Abbreviations and acronyms

CILIP = Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

DWP = Department for Work and Pensions

EHRC = Equality and Human Rights Commission

JRF = Joseph Rowntree Foundation

SSFA = School Standards and Framework Act 1998

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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⁴⁰ As a personal example, my partner, who teaches in a university, had to work through a risible online course to allow him to continue to teach!

⁴¹ Source: email from Bill Bolloten, 24 Oct 2016.