

**Libraries and community cohesion: a paper for the South East
Museum, Library and Archive Council**

April 2005

1. Introduction

As noted in Section 2, the term “community cohesion” encompasses many others; for simplicity's sake, “community cohesion” will be used as the catch-all term throughout this document.

This paper is rather like the painting of the Forth Bridge – it will never be completed! We had hoped that the Government would have published the long-awaited results of the Community Cohesion Pathfinder projects by now, but these are still not available – therefore, we have decided to publish this paper now as it is, and update it later in the year with the Pathfinder material.

I am very grateful to all those (listed in Appendix 4) who shared their time, work and ideas with me, and would like to pay particular thanks to Sophia Mirchandani and Clare Lavis of SEMLAC for their help, support, and encouragement in what seems to have become a mammoth task!

John Vincent
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A: Community Cohesion

Section 2: What is community cohesion?

Section 3: Community cohesion and libraries – developing a definition

2. What is community cohesion?

The concept of community cohesion is complex and fast-changing (and is also becoming a contested one). Where does this place the work of libraries, museums and archives?

2.1 Background – social cohesion prior to 2001

The Office for Public Management produced one of the earliest reports [Miller, 1999] in the UK to look at the concepts of exclusion, inclusion and cohesion in relation to the management of public services. Clive Miller saw them as a continuum:

“At the exclusion end, the focus is on alleviating and eliminating the exclusion. Social inclusion adds to the exclusion focus the need both to satisfy the moral concerns of the rest of the population that people should not be excluded, and to ensure that the included do not suffer the 'spill-over' effects that can come from some aspects of exclusion such as crime or the costs of tackling exclusion. Finally, social cohesion adds to the aims of tackling exclusion and promoting inclusion the wish to do so within the context of a civil society whose cohesion is based on mutual links between people, that is, 'social capital'.

It is highly likely that, in any one local area, there will be at least some activity taking place at each point on the continuum.” [p8]

Other research during the same period [eg Forrest and Kearns, 1999] saw social cohesion much more in terms of the 'knitting together' of a community:

“There appears to be a shared sense of belonging and a shared sense of what a 'good' neighbourhood needs which cut across age, gender and ethnic group. When residents are asked about what the 'community' means to them, they talk about the positive qualities of the people around them. To the extent that dense webs of relationships, trust and familiarity are an important dimension of 'social capital', the areas studied have rich resources on which to draw. Residents recognised the physical deprivation of their neighbourhoods but retained a strong sense of resilience, with family and friends providing support and help on a reciprocal basis”.

[\[www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/4109.asp\]](http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/4109.asp)

In looking at disadvantaged communities in Teesside, London, Liverpool and Nottingham, they found that, whilst the communities studied certainly did not lack cohesion:

“Despite the shared sense of belonging, the disadvantaged neighbourhoods studied exhibited a need for social regeneration and community development. Several divisions existed among people residing in the same neighbourhood: between newer and older

residents; between younger and older people; between council tenants and housing association tenants; and between those in newly built houses and those in older homes.

In many cases, there was a recognised need to bring the community together and make it whole. Many people felt that the opportunities to come together were absent; there seemed to be a need for facilitation and facilities. In particular, residents desired:

- Facilities and clubs for young people.
- Community facilities that offered something for everyone, so that different groups might have the chance to share things and meet one another.
- Community-wide activities and festivals that were seen to have a cohesive function.

Residents wanted to see effort and resources put into these social aspects of regeneration as well as into the physical dimensions”.

[\[www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/4109.asp\]](http://www.jrf.org.uk/knowledge/findings/foundations/4109.asp)

2.2 The Cantle Report and beyond

During the spring and summer of 2001, there was a number of disturbances in towns and cities in England (including Bradford, Burnley, Oldham and Stoke-on-Trent).

The Government’s response was to establish a Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion whose role it was to “examine and consider how national policies might be used to promote better community cohesion, based upon shared values and a celebration of diversity.” [Denham, 2001]

At the same time, the Home Secretary also established a Review Team, led by Ted Cantle, “to seek the views of local residents and community leaders in the affected towns and in other parts of England on the issues which need to be addressed to bring about social cohesion and also to identify good practice in the handling of these issues at local level.” [Denham, 2001]

The Ministerial Group’s report [Home Office, 2001a] drew on the work of the Review team (and also on the local inquiries in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham) to outline “the most important factors:

- the lack of strong civic identity or shared social values to unite diverse communities;
- the fragmentation and polarisation of communities ... on a scale which amounts to segregation, albeit to an extent by choice;
- disengagement of young people from the local decision making process, inter-generational tensions, and an increasingly territorial mentality in asserting different racial, cultural and religious identities in response to real or perceived attacks;
- weak political and community leadership;
- inadequate provision of youth facilities and services;
- high levels of unemployment, particularly amongst young people;

- activities of extremist groups;
 - weaknesses and disparity in the police response to community issues, particularly racial incidents; and
 - irresponsible coverage of race stories by sections of the local media.”
- [p11]

The Cattle Report [Home Office, 2001b] team was particularly struck by “the depth of polarisation of our towns and cities” [p9] and set out its aims as:

“2.12. We believe that there is an urgent need to promote community cohesion, based upon a greater knowledge of, contact between, and respect for, the various cultures that now make Great Britain such a rich and diverse nation.

2.13 It is also essential to establish a greater sense of citizenship, based on (a few) common principles ... This concept of citizenship would also place a higher value on cultural differences.”

[p10]

Their strategy includes:

- A national debate, heavily influenced by younger people, to develop shared principles of citizenship
- A solid and permanent infrastructure to give young people a bigger voice and stake in democracy
- The resulting principles of new citizenship should be used to develop a more coherent approach to education, housing, regeneration, employment, etc
- Each area to prepare a local community cohesion plan as part of its Community Strategy
- This plan should include the promotion of cross-cultural contact, foster understanding and respect and break down barriers – there should also be a programme of “myth-busting”
- The establishment of a new Community Cohesion Task Force.

[taken from p11]

The Cattle Report then made 67 recommendations¹, grouped under the headings:

- People and Values
- Political and Community Leadership
- Political Organisations
- Strategic Partnerships
- Regeneration Programmes, Initiatives and Funding
- Integration and Separation
- Younger people
- Education
- Community Organisations

¹ Because of their significance in shaping subsequent work to build community cohesion, the recommendations are attached as Appendix 2.

- Disadvantaged and Disaffected Communities
- Policing
- Housing
- Employment
- The Press and Media.

[pp11-12]

The Community Cohesion Panel was created in April 2002 to fulfil a commitment in the Denham Report [Home Office, 2001a] to appoint people independent of the Government to work with and advise Ministers and officials in the development of community cohesion at a national and local level. Its final report was published in July 2004 [Home Office, 2004c], making recommendations that relate closely to the directions indicated in *Strength in diversity* [Home Office, 2004b], and covering:

- Shared Values and Sense of Belonging
- Implementation Strategy
- Citizenship
- Migration
- Concentration and Segregation
- Cross-Government Strategy on Community Cohesion & Race Equality
- Role of Local Authorities
- Faith Communities
- Social Capital and Civil Renewal.

2.3 The current definition of community cohesion

The Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion [Home Office, 2001a] defines community cohesion as:

“... a shared sense of belonging based on common goals and core social values, respect for difference (ethnic, cultural and religious), and acceptance of the reciprocal rights and obligations of community members working together for the common good.” [p18]

The working definition (drawn from the Cantle Report) currently used by the Government and other agencies – and promoted by the LGA [Local Government Association, 2002] – gives a strong sense that community cohesion is wider/deeper than other similar initiatives (such as tackling social exclusion, diversity, equality work):

“Community cohesion incorporates and goes beyond the concept of race equality and social inclusion.

The broad working definition is that a **cohesive community** is one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;

- the diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods." [Local Government Association, 2002]

Drawing on previously published research [Forrest and Kearns, 2000], the Cattle Report also suggests that community cohesion has a number of "domains":

- Common values and a civic culture
- Social order and social control
- Social solidarity and reductions in wealth disparities
- Social Networks and Social Capital
- Place attachment and identity

This report also has an appendix [Lynch, nd] which looks in more depth at some of the background to the concept of community cohesion. In this, Rosalyn Lynch cites evidence from Arun Kundnani that some local authorities had, in the past, pursued racist policies which had led to segregation in housing and in schools, and that attempts to teach children about each other's culture have not been very successful:

"The 'Asian' culture taught to whites did little to give them a meaningful appreciation of Asian life, based as it was on hackneyed formulae of samosas and saris."

[Kundnani, 2002, p3]

Arun Kundnani also draws on the Ouseley Report [Ouseley, 2001] to suggest that a generation has grown up without having been given the tools to understand how their own towns and cities have become increasingly divided by race.

The concept of "domains" of community cohesion has been revisited recently [Turok *et al*, 2004] as five "dimensions" of cohesion²:

- the level of inequality in society
- social connectedness – and that the opposite of connectedness is segregation and isolation, with barriers such as poverty, location and transport, low levels of skills, lack of confidence (and, for young people, the existence of gangs) causing this
- holding certain common values (eg of a "civic culture")
- a degree of social order
- attachment to place/territorial identity.

In the revised guidance for local authorities, produced by the LGA in November 2004 [LGA, 2004b], they use their 2002 definition, and add:

² However, this research also suggests that there are tensions between some of the "dimensions" (eg upward social mobility may cause a lessening of attachment to a place and less stability).

“Promoting community cohesion involves addressing fractures, removing barriers and encouraging positive interaction between groups. Community cohesion is closely linked to integration as it aims to build communities where people feel confident that they belong and are comfortable mixing and interacting with others, particularly people from different racial backgrounds or people of a different faith.”

[p7]

They also state that the “Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 will ... be a key mechanism for the delivery of community cohesion.” [p7], a view echoed by Keith Hill MP in a recent speech where he said that the principle of promoting good relations between people from different racial groups is “central to the work that local authorities do on community cohesion.” [Hill, 2004].

2.4 Community cohesion – experiences in different local authorities

2.4.1 Background

In practice, local authorities (and other organisations) are defining community cohesion in very different ways³.

Some, such as Leicester, Sandwell (see below) and Kirklees (also see below) see it as embracing all kinds of communities. Others are interpreting community cohesion more narrowly. For example, Huddersfield sees it relating only to race/BME issues:

“Community Cohesion isn’t a menu of policies or initiatives. It is a way of looking at everything we do to examine how it brings together different ethnic groups.”

www.huddersfieldpride.com/srb5/involvingcommunities/ccohesion.htm

and Luton have produced an excellent report (which is based closely on local needs) which focuses on race and young people [Luton Council, 2003].

Work elsewhere echoes the efforts in the UK. In Canada, for example, participants in “structured conversations” [Canada. Department of Justice, 2003] concluded that:

“a cohesive society is an inclusive society with a web of bonds and connections facilitating participation. They further said that such a society requires public spaces, institutions, and programs that act as bridges across distance and difference ...

These rapidly evolving areas warrant policy research and action:

³ And what is fascinating is that recent research has indicated that the establishment of New Towns, which were experiments in social cohesion, were not entirely successful in breaking down class barriers [Homer, 2001].

- participation, citizenship, and governance;
- income distribution, equity, inclusion, and access;
- immigration, integration, and respect for all forms of diversity;
- ...
- peace, safety, and security; and
- information technology, the new economy, globalization and integration.”

In 2000, the Canadian Cultural Research Network (CCRN) and the Cultural Information and Research Centres Liaison in Europe (CIRCLE), sponsored by the Department of Canadian Heritage, organised a research Round Table, “Making Connections: Culture and Social Cohesion in the New Millennium,” which took place in Edmonton, Alberta on 26-27 May 2000. The papers from the Round Table were published in a special double issue of the *Canadian Journal of Communication* [CJC, 2002], and they explore the various dimensions, functions, and contributions of culture in building social connections within increasingly diverse societies and communities.

Of particular interest for us is the summary of social cohesion in the UK [Fisher, 2002], which highlights the lack of real evidence to support the role that culture plays in contributing to community cohesion. However, Rod Fisher does say that:

“[Culture] allows people to retain contact with their roots, enhancing feelings of community and self-esteem. At the same time, by a process of self-invention, the arts can create fruitful fusions of old and new cultures. Cultural practices can also help build inclusive and participatory societies that are contingent not only on economics and social policy, but a sense of belonging.”

The Round Table also produced a useful summary of social cohesion policy and practice across Europe⁴.

2.4.2 Some examples of community cohesion in practice

Hounslow

Hounslow Council has produced an excellent strategy document [Hounslow Council, 2003] which states:

“Hounslow has focussed on:

- Promoting the inclusion of newly arrived communities with particular, but not exclusive reference to young people of Somali and other East African ethnic origin.
- Developing opportunities for disaffected White youth.
- Promoting the development and inclusion of minority ethnic communities, mainly residents in pockets of deprivation in

⁴ Available at: www.circle-network.org.

central Hounslow especially Heston, Cranford and Hounslow wards.

The approach within these themes has been to focus on addressing Community Cohesion for young people. It is recognised that a combination of poverty, family pressures, limited youth provision, racism and failure to access educational opportunity can result in a significant number of young people destined for under achievement and social exclusion ...”

[Hounslow Council, 2003, p14]

Via their Community Cohesion Steering Group, Hounslow have been consulting with partners on the following objectives:

- Objective 1: Build strong and positive relationships between young people from different backgrounds
- Objective 2: Promote the inclusion of newly arrived communities
- Objective 3: Re-engaging socially excluded communities
- Objective 4: Effective communications [with diverse communities]
- Objective 5: Resources [to sustain the Community Cohesion programme].

[taken from Hounslow Council, 2003, p28]

Kirklees

“... you feel comfortable and positive about living and working alongside your neighbours, wherever you may come from or whatever your background, family history or lifestyle.

Community cohesion goes beyond the issues of tackling racial equality, discrimination and social exclusion. It is about all kinds of relationships within communities and closing the divides between them.”

www.kirkleespartnership.org/communitycohesion/index.asp

Sandwell

“The Council has been addressing issues that affect how people live together for many years. For example, we have worked on crime reduction ...

However, more recently, we have taken a step back and looked at many of the issues that affect how people living together [sic] and have produced a report containing 80 recommendations to improve community cohesion ...”

www.smbc.sandwell.gov.uk/corporateservices/regeneration/communitycohesion.html

Sandwell's report includes:

- Community and political leadership
- Housing
- Education
- Crime, policing and anti-social behaviour
- Leisure
- The role of the media
- Youth issues.

[taken from
www.smbc.sandwell.gov.uk/corporateservices/regeneration/communitycohesion.html]

Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets Borough Council produces a free weekly newspaper, *East End Life*, which is used by the Council as a vehicle to promote community cohesion (specifically, welcoming new arrivals to Tower Hamlets; counteracting far-right political activities in the area; challenging racism). The paper is seen as helping to build bridges between communities.

[taken from GOSE, 2004, pp4-5]

2.5 So, what counts as community cohesion?

As noted above, local authorities (and other organisations) are interpreting community cohesion in quite different ways, and this problem has been exacerbated by the latest LGA Guidance [LGA, 2004] which includes a wide range of case studies and examples – some of which seem possibly not to be strictly ‘community cohesion’. This issue is explored further in Section 3.

2.6 How to assess the effectiveness of community cohesion work – emerging evidence

The Community Cohesion Unit’s guide to building a picture of community cohesion [CCU, 2003] sets out a list of 10 indicators that can be used by local authorities and their partners to help build a picture of community cohesion in their area. The intention is that using these indicators will help to provide a baseline assessment and a means of monitoring progress towards a better understanding of the local context.

The 10 indicators are:

Headline outcome

01 The percentage of people who feel that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds can get on well together

Common vision and sense of belonging

02 The percentage of respondents who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood/local area/county/England/ Wales/Britain
 03 Key priorities for improving an area

04 The percentage of adults surveyed who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area

The diversity of people's backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued

05 The percentage of people who feel that local ethnic differences are respected

06 Number of racial incidents recorded by police authorities per 100,000

Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities

07 Local concentration of deprivation

08 The percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C or equivalent

09 The percentage of unemployed people claiming benefit who have been out of work for more than a year

Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, schools and neighbourhoods

10 The percentage of people from different backgrounds who mix with other people from different backgrounds in everyday situations

The Home Office has recently published a review⁵ of Area Based Initiatives [Home Office, 2004e], in which they state:

“In 2001, following the disturbances in Bradford, Oldham, Burnley and other areas, it became glaringly apparent that the people living and working in some of our towns and cities were deeply polarised and many communities were in essence living ‘parallel lives’.” [p5]

Drawing on case studies from across England, this report examines the key issues in building in community cohesion:

- Understanding the local context
- Defining needs
- Setting geographical boundaries
- Flexibility – working beyond the boundaries
- Relationships between communities
- Supporting new residents
- Consultation and community capacity-building
- Communication
- Leadership and accountability
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Mainstreaming community cohesion

This review also includes a very useful set of questions for gaining understanding of the local context:

⁵ They have also just published a systematic review of the literature on community involvement in Area Based Initiatives [Burton *et al*, 2004].

- How well do different groups in the area get on?
- What are the main factors that prevent people from getting on? For example, is it a thematic issue such as housing or education, or a generational issue, or perhaps something related to the history of the area?
- Do people who have recently moved into the area take part in local activities?
- How long do people stay in the area?
- How well are people from different minority ethnic groups and, in particular, asylum seekers and refugees, accepted locally?
- How involved are younger people, as well as older people?
- How involved are women, compared to men?
- Are there certain people, for example those belonging to certain ethnic or faith groups, who do not take part in local activities to the same extent as others?
- Who is actively engaged in local activities? Is it mostly people from just one particular neighbourhood, or are local activities open to everyone who may be interested?
- How easy or difficult is it to find out about local activities?

[taken from pp9-10]

The Home Office has also recently published *Community cohesion standards for schools* [Home Office, 2004d] which relate to:

- closing the attainment and achievement gap
- developing common values of citizenship based on dialogue, mutual respect and acceptance of diversity
- contributing to building good community relations and challenge all types of discrimination and inequality
- removing barriers to access, participation, progression, attainment and achievement.

[taken from pp5-6]

In the final report of the “Indicators of Integration” study [Ager and Strang, 2004], the Home Office sets out a number of indicators that can be used to assess how far “integration”⁶ has been achieved in any community. These indicators are based around 10 “domains”, three of which are particularly relevant and potentially useful for us: social bridges (establishing social

⁶ These indicators define an individual or group as being integrated into society when they:

- “achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health, etc which are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities;
- are socially connected with members of a (national, ethnic, cultural, religious or other) community with which they identify, with members of other communities and with relevant services and functions of the state; and
- have sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge, and a sufficient sense of security and stability, to confidently engage in that society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship.” [Ager and Strang, 2004, p28].

connections), social bonds (“bonds” that support a sense of belonging), and social links (engagement with governmental and non-governmental services).

In a recent article [Janner-Klausner, 2004], the LGIU suggests that local authorities should carry out risk and impact assessments of community cohesion, perhaps linked to their CPA.

2.7 Community cohesion – and controversy

As indicated above, there has been a shift in the definition and understanding of what community cohesion is; this section looks briefly at this controversy, and suggests that, if we wish to continue to use the term, we need to be very clear exactly what we mean by it – and what other people may understand us to mean.

Trevor Phillips (Chair CRE) stated in his evidence to a House of Commons Committee:

“I dislike the term ‘community cohesion’, frankly. I think it lacks clarity. I think we are beginning to talk more about the term ‘an integrated society’ because in order to advance a solution – which is what I think community cohesion is supposed to be – we have first to understand what it is you are trying to remedy. My view is that we are trying to remedy some of the fractures in our society. Some of these are economically driven; some are driven by other kinds of difference and division independent of economics.”

[quoted in House of Commons, 2004]

In a lead article in *Race & Class* [Burnett, 2004], Jonathan Burnett⁷ argues that “[w]ithout doubt, the ideological basis of community cohesion is exclusionary in its nature” [p15].

Starting by examining media coverage of the Northern uprisings, Burnett suggests that the image of the Asian communities involved were manipulated to fit two dangerous stereotypes: Asians as criminals, and Asians as ‘fundamentalists’ – both of which led to “the emergence of a language that bespeaks the enemy within” [p7].

As a response to this, therefore, community cohesion was:

“established as a value-driven, theoretical perception, one that makes assumptions about the identities and beliefs of those who come under its remit. Crucially, it encompasses not only what communities do and how they act, but their self-perception and sense of allegiance ... The role of the state, then, is to regulate citizenship and moral values in the drive for cohesive communities.” [p8]

⁷ Jonathan Burnett is a Research Officer at the Centre for Criminal Justice Studies, Department of Law, University of Leeds.

Jonathan Burnett then goes on to argue that the Cattle Report (and other documents) were used as an attempt “to control those non-white communities designated a risk to 'Britishness' because of their resistance to even more intrusive control” [p8] and that “the agenda of community cohesion panders to the white deprived communities” [pp8-9].

Drawing on a statement by one of the Community Cohesion Review Team, about “who we didn't meet and the questions we didn't ask” [Khan, 2002], Burnett then suggests that “the very concept of community cohesion became incorporated within a political circle of exclusion, segregation and control” [p9].

He concludes:

“Without doubt, the ideological basis of community cohesion is exclusionary in its nature. Under it, the contractual relationship between citizen and state is reworked as a developing relationship between citizenship, community and governance. Rather than the state having an obligation to cater for all its citizens, that obligation is now contingent upon the reworking and realignment of individual identities and value systems, and the shedding of responsibilities from government on to communities themselves. In its failure to provide for the fractured Asian communities who eventually reacted to government abnegation of responsibility with physical force and in the refusal to accept that government policies led to the uprisings/riots, community cohesion represents an attempt at self-vindication ... For the Asian communities who suffered both criminalisation and victimisation and fought against this, such measures provide little safeguard against future racist attacks and state-imposed discrimination ...” [p15]

3. Community cohesion and libraries – developing a definition

3.1 Defining community cohesion

The Ministerial Group on Public Order and Community Cohesion [Home Office, 2001a] says that, in relation to sport and culture:

“Sporting and cultural opportunities can play an important part in re-engaging disaffected sections of the community, building shared social capital and grass roots leadership through improved cross-cultural interaction.” [p28]

However, as noted above, not only are local authorities – and other organisations – interpreting community cohesion differently, but the latest guidance [LGA, 2004b] also seems to have varying interpretations. For example, it includes a case study on Cheshire Fire Service [p48], which, whilst fascinating in the way it outlines one Fire Authority’s approach to working with young people, does not necessarily contribute to community cohesion – except in the most general of ways. Similarly, the “Lark in the Park” event in Clayton-le-Moors, Lancashire [p62], which does bring together in one place people from a range of backgrounds, sounds as though it may be more ‘accidental’ than ‘designed’.

As Alison Gilchrist [Gilchrist, 2004] argues:

“The concept of community cohesion embraces core ideas of equality and integration. Achieving social justice for black and minority communities, alongside other excluded groups, has to be central to all activities. Unfortunately, the government’s initial community facilitation and Pathfinder programmes tended to be more superficial, drawing on psychological rather than political theories of how to improve inter-community relations. In particular, there has been an over-reliance on ‘contact theory’, which argues that simply encouraging people from different groups to undertake joint activities and to learn a bit about each other can reduce hostility and ignorance.” [p13]

Alison Gilchrist then goes on to argue that community cohesion principles have two strands – connection/cooperation and social justice, and that the former cannot improve without attention being paid to the latter.

And all this is an issue for libraries: if, for example, a successful reference library has students from a range of nationalities working at tables in it, could this be described as contributing to community cohesion? A storytelling session has children from different ethnic groups listening to a story in the same room, is this community cohesion? Some studies [eg Conder, 2002] have argued a strong case for the role of libraries as a meeting-place and an important community resource – yet is this what we would now term ‘community cohesion’?

Given all this, we need to ensure that, in attempting to promote community cohesion, we are not, at the same time, alienating parts of our communities, and making a political blunder.

We need to be clear that, for a piece of work to affect – or have the potential to affect – community cohesion, it needs to tackle the ‘big issues’, Trevor Phillips’s “fractures”, the underlying ‘themes’ in society, such as racism, long-term unemployment, and the growing digital divide. In addition, the work needs to value real diversity for all socially excluded groups, and create the “strong and positive relationships ... between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods”, as the Cattle Report suggests.

To ensure that we are clearly contributing to the community cohesion agenda, we need to be clear about the definition. Concerned about this, the writer spoke to or emailed the LGA, IDeA, the Community Cohesion Unit, the Community Development Foundation [Harris, ‘phone, 2004], and a number of individuals who have carried out work in this area⁸.

The general consensus was that, for a piece of work to be considered as contributing to community cohesion, it needed to have:

- A focus on the ‘bigger picture’ (eg countering racism, healing inter-generational rifts)
- The intention to contribute to community cohesion
- A strategic approach with long-term goals
- A change of culture for the service concerned
- The development of strong and healthy partnerships
- Sustainability – longer-term work, not one-off projects (unless these in turn lead to the longer-term).

In addition, recent research by Stonewall [Stonewall, 2003] suggests that, whilst personal contact is key in tackling prejudice:

“... people who knew someone from a different ethnic group were half as likely as those who knew no one from a different ethnic group to be prejudiced against minority ethnic people. Likewise, it found that people who knew someone who was lesbian or gay were half as likely as people who did not know any lesbian or gay people to be prejudiced against them.”

[Valentine and McDonald, 2004, p20]

there is a need for more than just ‘random’ contact:

“Contact in public spaces, without engagement, is not enough to foster respect and can even exacerbate prejudice. Seeing young black men, Asians or asylum seekers on the streets is linked to fear and anger just as seeing visible lesbians and gay men in public spaces can lead to expressions of prejudice.”

⁸ Included in the list in Appendix 4.

[Valentine and McDonald, 2004, p9]

“However ... it is not contact alone that produces respect. In some cases contact between different social groups, notably in schools, can be socially divisive and lead to the hardening of attitudes against minority groups. Rather it is the nature of contact that is important.

It is friendship, often started at work or as a result of neighbourhood help, rather than superficial contact, that encourages people to move from prejudiced to non-prejudiced views. Some leisure activities ... can also allow individuals to connect with other people and cultures in positive and meaningful ways.”

[Valentine and McDonald, 2004, p20]

This approach is borne out by the experience in some local authorities (such as Hounslow) where they have assessed the community needs, agreed priorities to meet these needs, and then ensured that all developments within the local authority are focused on these priorities. This avoids the ‘accidental’ approach.

The recently-completed study, published by MLA [Harris and Dudley, 2005], suggests that there are four “essential attributes” of the public library, which have a bearing on its place “in the public realm” and therefore on community cohesion. These are:

- Library as resource
- Library as expertise
- Library as place
- Library as symbol (of a public resource providing for the public good).

[Harris and Dudley, 2005, pp15-16]

3.2 What could libraries’ contribution to the community cohesion agenda be?

Just to remind ourselves, the current working definition of a cohesive community is:

“The broad working definition is that a **cohesive community** is one where:

- there is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- the diversity of people’s different backgrounds and circumstances are appreciated and positively valued;
- those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods.”

[Local Government Association, 2002]

For work carried out by libraries to be considered as contributing to community cohesion as defined here, therefore, it will need to demonstrate that it does meet the criteria developed above:

- A focus on the 'bigger picture' (eg countering racism, healing inter-generational rifts)
- The intention to contribute to community cohesion
- A strategic approach with long-term goals
- A change of culture for the service concerned
- The development of strong and healthy partnerships
- Sustainability – longer-term work, not one-off projects (unless these in turn lead to the longer-term).

There is work undertaken by museums, archives and libraries, which would seem to fulfil these criteria (eg some of the work that has been undertaken in relation to Positive Action for Young People [PAYP]⁹), but more work is needed to discover what other developments there have been.

The MLA study [Harris and Dudley, 2005] states:

“A key feature of our short inquiry has been the sense in which current policy frameworks tend to be seen in the library service just as solutions to social problems, rather than as part of a fundamental re-mapping of social relations. Our attention has been drawn to certain practical positive responses, illustrated by this quotation from one authority:

It appears that targeted services are not necessarily relevant here... Targets for people with disabilities, black and minority ethnic users, homeless, looked-after-children, refugees, etc. etc., can be patronising and labelling of people. Barriers to usage should be ascertained by public consultation and focus groups and where possible these barriers removed.

Our understanding of community cohesion then may need to be less about targeting specific groups and more about *removing constraints to social interaction.*” [Harris and Dudley, 2005, p11 – emphasis theirs].

They go on to suggest that:

“From the libraries’ point of view, there seem to be three complimentary and self-reinforcing areas for action:

- library services can participate in wider strategies aimed at improving community cohesion
- they can represent the notion of community cohesion in the ways in which they plan and deliver services
- and they can work at local level with local residents and groups, to support viable networks of self-support and communication.”

⁹ See, for example, Carol Dixon’s report in *The Network newsletter* no.22, July 2003, pp8-14.

[Harris and Dudley, 2005, p17]

Kevin Harris and Martin Dudley also have a go at providing some key questions that need to be asked to test whether a library is engaged with community cohesion:

“Policy and strategy

Is there a formal integration into published local strategic partnership and corporate planning strategies? What would be recognised as the library contribution to these? What definition of the library role to support community cohesion is shared across the service? What specific actions are there to meet cohesion objectives in the Public Library Position Statement?

Staff recruitment and training

Do staff largely reflect the make-up of the community they serve? Do they understand how the promotion of community cohesion is reflected in the work that they do in the library? Do they know and understand library policy in this respect? Do they know about the 'other' cultures in their service area – the significance of different religions, traditions, diets for example? Are there specific elements in the Training Programme in support of this? Is this programme offered on a shared basis with other agencies?

Reduction of rule based barriers

What is the minimum requirement for membership and use of library services? What steps have been taken to minimise bureaucratic barriers to use?

Marketing

Is there a plan that emphasises the library role and its services to all communities? Does the plan also market the service to partners and decision makers?

Consultation and user involvement

Are formal processes identified and organised? Are there systems of feedback in place to gather informal views?”

[Harris and Dudley, 2005, p33]

3.3 Some examples of work by libraries to contribute to building community cohesion

The following examples meet many of the criteria outlined above.

Blackburn with Darwen

The “Be Our Guest” programme involves a partnership between the Library Service and Area Health providers to assist asylum-seekers with informational and recreational needs. Elements of the programme include:

- Bringing together communities (“People talk in multiple languages, meeting new families, making contact with those they haven’t seen since last month.”)
- Promotion of the Library’s services
- Storytelling and health (“... help people who are asylum seekers feel comfortable speaking in public, in order to assist them in telling their own stories, protect self-esteem and alleviate boredom and stress. The group plays storytelling games, talking in small and large groups about their homeland and hostland lives using directed activities.”)
- Visits to schools and other venues to speak about life in other countries
- Activities for Refugee Week.

[taken from DCMS, 2004c]

Leicester

“Crafts in St Matthews involved a series of crafts workshops to bring together the diverse community groups of the St Matthews Estate in Leicester to create a lasting piece of artwork that would enhance the local area ...

Participants were of all ages and cultures, taking part in workshops at St Matthews Library, at the heart of the estate ...”

[RCMG, 2004b, p25]

“The value of the Crafts in St Matthews project on the estate has been to foster understanding and friendships between people in disparate communities who might not otherwise have met or even said ‘hello’; and to encourage them to adopt a more positive attitude towards the City Council.”

[RCMG, 2004b, p37]

“There was a feeling among participants that the success of the project would help promote a sense of pride in the community ...

These are small but important steps towards community cohesion in a deprived estate – fostering the understanding that people of different cultures can share experiences and concerns ...”

[RCMG, 2004b, p38]

B: Social inclusion and social exclusion

Section 4: Social inclusion and social exclusion

Section 5: UK libraries and the social exclusion/inclusion agenda

Section 6: Experience outside the UK

Section 7: How do we know what needs to be done?
Recommendations for tackling social exclusion

4. Social inclusion and social exclusion

This paper is focusing on community cohesion, but, in order to do this clearly, it also needs to encompass a number of other related concepts, including social inclusion/exclusion¹⁰.

Social inclusion as a concept has been recognised in Europe since at least the 1970s¹¹, but has been part of the policy agenda in the UK since only 1997.

The UK Government's earliest definition of social exclusion was quite broad and limited (and this is the definition that most organisations are still using):

“a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown.”

[eg in Social Exclusion Unit , 2001]

The importance of this definition is that the flagging-up of social exclusion as “a combination of linked problems”.

Such definitions were used by the Policy Action Teams [PATs] set up in 1999 by Government departments to develop their thinking and take forward these policy areas. For example, DCMS developed their work on social exclusion against a broad background definition:

“Social exclusion takes many forms. It can be direct or indirect, and can embrace both groups and individuals. Exclusion also has a geographical dimension embracing rural, urban and suburban areas alike.”

[DCMS, 1999, p9]

However, by 2001, the Government's definition had broadened considerably:

“Social exclusion is something that *can* happen to anyone. But some people are significantly more at risk than others. Research has found that people with certain backgrounds and experiences are disproportionately likely to suffer social exclusion. The key risk-factors include: low income; family conflict; being in care; school problems; being an ex-prisoner; being from an ethnic minority; living in a deprived neighbourhood in urban and rural areas; mental health problems, age and disability.” [emphasis theirs]

[Social Exclusion Unit, 2001b, p11]

The most recent definition from the SEU (in *Breaking the cycle* [SEU, 2004c]) states:

¹⁰ This section has been adapted from guidance notes on the MLA Website [Vincent, 2003].

¹¹ There is a useful paper by Rob Atkinson [Atkinson, 2000], which looks at some of this background.

“While social exclusion is often associated with highly marginalised groups facing extreme forms of multiple disadvantage, our approach is broader. We also include an understanding of how wider social inequality and intergenerational disadvantage can impact on the causes of social exclusion and the risk of becoming excluded.

This is a deliberately pragmatic and flexible definition. One of the characteristics of social exclusion is that problems are linked and mutually reinforcing ...” [p14]

Some people (eg the LGA) have tended to see social exclusion as being related almost entirely to poverty – certainly, there is an economic element to exclusion, but early work at the University of Bristol identified social exclusion as being “multidimensional” [Room et al, 1993] and more recent work at Leeds Metropolitan University has shown that there are at least seven “dimensions”:

- Economic (eg long-term unemployment; workless households; income poverty)
- Social (eg homelessness; crime; disaffected youth)
- Political (eg disempowerment; lack of political rights; alienation from/lack of confidence in political processes)
- Neighbourhood (eg decaying housing stock; environmental degradation)
- Individual (eg mental and physical ill health; educational underachievement)
- Spatial (eg concentration/marginalisation of vulnerable groups)
- Group (concentration of above characteristics in particular groups, eg disabled, elderly, ethnic minorities)

[taken from Percy-Smith, 2002]

In talking about social exclusion, we are focusing on the needs of groups and individuals who can be defined using the “dimensions” listed above and who do not have access to services and facilities, or to society’s decision-making and/or power structures:

“There are excluders as well as victims of social exclusion, and these excluders include mainstream public services, such as health, housing and education.” [Fitzpatrick, 1999, quoted in Geddes, 2000, p7]

As noted in the research on libraries [eg DCMS, 1999; Muddiman *et al*, 2000a], there are also clear barriers to the take-up of service by people who are socially excluded – further adding to their exclusion.

DCMS identified a considerable number of barriers:

Institutional

- Unsuitable or unduly restrictive opening hours, or restrictions upon the availability of library services

- Inappropriate staff attitudes and behaviour.
- Inappropriate rules and regulations
- Charging policies which disadvantage those on low incomes
- Book stock policies which do not reflect the needs of the community or are not in suitable formats
- Lack of signage in buildings, so that people can not easily find their way around
- Lack of a sense of ownership and involvement by the community
- Lack of integration of local authority services and a focal point for delivering them
- Lack of adequate provision of services or facilities for people with disabilities

Personal and social

- Lack of basic skills in reading, writing and communication
- Low income and poverty
- Direct and indirect discrimination
- Lack of social contact
- Low self esteem
- Lack of permanent fixed address

Perceptions and awareness

Perceptions that “libraries are not for us” exist both in individual and community terms. This perception causes difficulties for:

- People who are educationally disadvantaged
- People who live in isolation from wider society
- People who don't think libraries are relevant to their lives or needs
- People with a lack of knowledge of facilities and services, and how to use them

Environmental

- Difficult physical access into and within buildings
- Problem estates and urban decay
- The isolation problems experienced by rural communities
- Poor transport links.

[DCMS, 1999, pp12-13]

Clearly, until these barriers are removed, libraries cannot consider that they are tackling social exclusion.

Social inclusion occurs at a later stage, once socially excluded groups and individuals gain access to the mainstream. However, it is vital that work on inclusion also involves diversity – we are not looking for a society which is ‘all the same’. In addition, ‘inclusion’ has been taken to mean a lessening of the

economic costs of paying to support people who are excluded, and this may not be a definition with which we are comfortable¹².

In relation to public libraries, Dave Muddiman wrote, as part of *Open to all?* [Muddiman, 1999a] that there was a number of “prescriptions for action” for tackling social exclusion, which included empowering local communities; targeting resources and services; tackling consumerism and the managerial culture¹³; a re-examination of equality of opportunity; and the need to establish an information policy.

The Network uses the two main Government definitions (supplemented by a fuller list of people who are at risk of or likely to suffer social exclusion), plus Janie Percy-Smith’s seven “dimensions”, to describe social exclusion.

¹² In passing, it is also worth noting that social inclusion has also become a contested concept. The Cultural Policy Collective [2004], for example, considers that social inclusion policies are being used to strengthen the hold that the private sector has on society and to prevent a real pursuit of cultural democracy.

¹³ A recent reassessment of the ‘New Public Management’ [Taylor, 2001, p125] suggests that “Managerial approaches ... need to be placed in the context of wider approaches that embed individual achievement and outputs ... in a wider context, which also addresses systems of governance, of production and of organizational and institutional learning.

As such it is likely that the ‘one template fits all’ approach of ‘best practice’ and ‘performance indicators’ will be of limited value.”

5. UK libraries and the social exclusion/inclusion agenda

5.1 Introduction

Although it is rather light on tackling social exclusion, nevertheless a recent article on library design [Worpole and Bolton, 2004] usefully outlines some of the “drivers of change” for libraries:

- The rise of further and higher education
- The continuing rise of single-person households (estimated to be around 36% of households in England by 2016)
- Increasing mobility – although the article identifies this in relation to the urban population only, the groups the authors identify and the effects of their demands on service are important for all libraries. They state that a growing proportion of the population includes “contract workers from other countries, asylum seekers, and other transient groups. All such groups need or want to stay in touch with colleagues, friends and family around the world, and so the library is becoming a kind of electronic poste restante, where people call in on a daily basis to send and pick up their emails” [p2]
- Advancing technology
- Social interaction
- New forms of democracy.

5.2 Cross-sectoral approaches

Relatively little work has been done to look at the role that all kinds of libraries could play (although there has been some exploration of the role that libraries, archives and museums could play together).

The two notable exceptions are:

5.2.1 CILIP's Executive Advisory Group

The Social Inclusion Executive Advisory Group to CILIP reported in 2002¹⁴ [CILIP, 2002b] and made a number of clear recommendations, based on the view that “there should be a strong focus on a limited number of areas”, and including:

“1) CILIP should lead the mobilisation of the LIS sector's response to social exclusion and diversity through:

a) A reassertion of the LIS social justice role

¹⁴ In fact, this was its second report. The first, which was available on the CILIP Website, but is now no longer there, drew strongly from the PAG's original perspective, which was as a Social Exclusion PAG, rather than Social Inclusion. Although the second report does contain clear analysis and recommendations for action, it seems to be little known about.

- b) Planning for, and helping to shape, a more inclusive and diverse LIS workforce that truly reflects UK society in its composition
- c) Further investigation into Corporate Social Responsibility and the potential role for Library and Information services
- d) Effective advocacy to government and key stakeholders ...
- e) Support for leadership development
- f) Acting as an exemplar organisation in terms of its own corporate plan, structures, policies, practices and workforce

2) CILIP should encourage LIS organisations to mainstream services to socially excluded people and promote diversity, recognising that for most this will mean organisation transformation. It should

- a) Advocate the need for change
- b) Help to ensure, both by direct provision and by working in partnership with other relevant agencies, that the support mechanisms are available to those organisations undertaking change – training opportunities, best practice information, networks of support
- c) Seek to influence the Government and other key agencies to support such change through policy development, sympathetic regulation and inspection frameworks, networks of support

3) CILIP should encourage, and help facilitate, LIS organisations to engage effectively in partnerships and community activities to ensure that the voice of the excluded is centre stage in the planning and delivery of services, the benefits of combined skills and resources are maximised, sustainability issues are addressed and the nature of the contribution of LIS organisations is identified ...” [p32]

5.2.2 LISC (Wales)

Mapping social inclusion in publicly-funded libraries in Wales [LISC (Wales), 2003] took a cross-sectoral approach and identified a number of key issues to be resolved, which can be summarised as:

- Cross-sectoral and partnership working
- Access issues
- Staffing and training
- Profile of libraries
- Measuring impact.

Following the publication of the report, there has been in-depth, behind-the-scenes work (eg meetings, training) to put the recommendations into practice. This has included further initiatives to develop cross-sectoral working (eg groupings of public libraries and colleges to deliver ICT), and the establishment of cross-authority consortia (eg for training) [LISC (Wales) SIWG, 2003]. The training has included a number of courses for SET (the South East Wales Training Consortium) run by The Network.

In addition, Welsh public library authorities have worked together to promote their services, and have produced two advocacy/marketing documents:

- *Public libraries ... open to all* which includes a page each on regeneration, improving the quality of life (with a case study of a blind 7 year old boy), social inclusion (which mentions Bookstart and a range of services) and lifelong learning [SCL Wales, c2003]
- *Libraries ... investing in the future* which highlights the challenges facing Welsh libraries in delivering a modern and relevant service for children and young people (including the need to promote social inclusion), and then promotes a range of public and school library services for children [CILIP Wales, c2003]

5.3 Public Libraries

Since the 1970s (at least), there have been publications identifying the role that public libraries could play in tackling social exclusion – then often called “disadvantage” or “deprivation” [eg Hill, 1973; Clough and Quarmby, 1978; Department of Education and Science, 1978; Coleman, 1981; Vincent, 1986; Martin, 1989].

A major response was via “community librarianship”¹⁵ which, whilst establishing new ways of working, was, as Dave Muddiman describes it, “an inconclusive and incomplete revolution” [Muddiman, 1999b].

From the late 1990s onwards, there has been a number of key reports looking at the role of the public library in tackling social exclusion:

5.3.1 Roach and Morrison

What might be called the ‘modern generation’ of reports started with Roach and Morrison [1998] which focused on the “social distance ... between the public library and ethnic minority communities”, the “lack of clear vision and leadership on ethnic diversity and racial equality matters”, and the lack of account by public libraries for their “progress in respect of race equality whilst current performance systems are largely colour-blind.”

Amongst their recommendations were calls for:

- A clear strategic plan for public libraries
- Greater integration and partnership between the public library service and related service providers
- A review of the ongoing training and professional development needs of public library staff in the light of changing demographic and social circumstances.

¹⁵ See, for example, Vincent, 1986; Martin, 1989; Black and Muddiman, 1997.

Marlene Morrison and Patrick Roach also published a set of baselines for good practice [Morrison and Roach, 1998], which some library authorities used to reassess their service provision.

5.3.2 Libraries for all

As noted above, in 1999, DCMS published *Libraries for all* [DCMS, 1999], a consultation document which identified the role that public libraries could take in tackling social exclusion (with case studies). This also included a set of assessment criteria, six steps which can be used to assess where a library service has reached. These are:

- Identify the people who are socially excluded and their distribution. Engage with them and establish their needs
- Assess and review current practice
- Develop strategic objectives and prioritise resources
- Develop the services, and train the library staff to provide them
- Implement the services and publicise them
- Evaluate success, review and improve.

The final results of the consultation were published in 2001 [DCMS, 2001].

5.3.3 Open to all?

Open to all? [Muddiman *et al*, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c] reported the findings of an 18-month research project, “Public Library Policy and Social Exclusion”, funded by the then Library and Information Commission.

The research project consisted of three main elements: researching and writing a set of Working Papers; a survey of all public library authorities in the UK; and 8 case studies.

Volume 1 [Muddiman *et al*, 2000a] contained the overview and conclusions of the research; and Volume 2 [Muddiman *et al*, 2000b] contained the survey, case studies and research methods.

The Working Papers were published as the third volume of the report [Muddiman *et al*, 2000c] and looked at both over-arching issues, for example: theories of social exclusion and the public library [Muddiman, 1999a]; public libraries and social class [Pateman, 1999]; user and community perceptions of public libraries [Muddiman, 1999c]; central and local government policies [Dutch, 1999]; the struggle against racial exclusion [Durrani, 2000]; ICT, social exclusion and public libraries [Dutch and Muddiman, 2000]; and provision for and issues facing certain groups, for example provision for LGBT people [Vincent, 1999a]; public libraries, children and young people and social exclusion [Vincent, 1999b]; women, public libraries and social exclusion [Vincent and Linley, 2000]; and public libraries, disability and social exclusion [Linley, 2000].

The report concluded “that UK libraries have adopted only weak, voluntary and 'take it or leave it' approaches to social inclusion. The core rationale of

the public library movement continues to be based on the idea of developing universal access to a service which essentially reflects mainstream middle class, white and English values.” Key consequences of this approach include:

- “a continuing underutilisation of public libraries by working class people and other excluded social groups
- a lack of knowledge in the public library world about the needs and views of excluded 'non users'
- the development in many public libraries of organisational, cultural and environmental barriers which effectively exclude many disadvantaged people.” [p viii]

The project included a survey of UK public libraries, and findings included:

- only one-sixth of public library authorities [PLAs] approximated to a comprehensive model of good practice for social inclusion
- most PLAs (60%) had no comprehensive strategy and had uneven and intermittent activity
- ¼ of PLAs had little apparent strategy and service development
- only approximately ⅓ of PLAs comprehensively targeted disadvantaged neighbourhoods and social groups
- most PLAs had no consistent resource focus on exclusion, and this was sometimes very marginal
- many of the UK's most marginal and excluded people were not considered to be priorities in PLA strategy, service delivery and staffing. These included refugees, homeless people and Travellers.

These findings were supported by the eight case studies (carried out across the UK), which found that there were:

- “some successes in addressing social exclusion, most frequently linked to targeted initiatives employing community development, partnerships, and other proactive ways of working;
- problems in developing an overall, PLA wide, policy framework with exclusion issues 'mainstreamed' only exceptionally;
- a reluctance to adopt resourcing models that consistently prioritise excluded communities or social groups;
- limits on the ability of library staff to work with excluded people because of lack of skills and training and sometimes negative attitudes;
- a tendency to suggest that any 'community' activity automatically addresses exclusion and a tendency to consult with communities and excluded groups only sporadically;
- a preoccupation with libraries as 'passive' service which prioritises 'access' rather than with proactive and interventionist ways of working.” [pp ix-x].

The report's final conclusion was that public libraries need to be transformed “to become much more proactive, interventionist and educative institutions, with a concern for social justice at their core.” The specific strategies for such a transformation were identified as:

- “the mainstreaming of provision for socially excluded groups and communities and the establishment of standards of service and their monitoring;
- the adoption of resourcing strategies which prioritise the needs of excluded people and communities;
- a recasting of the role of library staff to encompass a more socially responsive and educative approach;
- staffing policies and practices which address exclusion, discrimination and prejudice;
- targeting of excluded social groups and communities;
- the development of community-based approaches to library provision, which incorporate consultation with and partnership with local communities;
- ICT and networking developments which actively focus on the needs of excluded people;
- a recasting of the image and identity of the public library to link it more closely with the cultures of excluded communities and social groups.”

[p x]

A small number of library authorities (eg Kensington & Chelsea; the SEELB in Northern Ireland) is using the findings of *Open to all?* to assess their work in tackling social exclusion.

5.3.4 Neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion

In 2002, Resource published a report [Parker *et al*, 2002] of research into the role that libraries, archives and museums could play in neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion.

Whilst the report found “clear evidence that the sector is actively involved with projects focusing on neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion” (and a number of other positive benefits created by the sector), it also showed that:

- There was a lack of knowledge on the part of organisations as to what the sector could offer
- There was a lack of effective, comprehensive evaluation methods to measure the sector’s impact on neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion
- There was limited evidence of the sector’s working in “inter-domain or pan-sectoral collaborative partnerships”¹⁶.

5.3.5 Social/cultural impact studies

There has also been a number of studies of the social impact of public libraries; a key document is *New measures for the new library* [Linley and Usherwood, 1998] which used a ‘social process audit’ to evaluate the social impact of libraries in Newcastle upon Tyne and Somerset. The research data

¹⁶ I think this means partnerships between libraries, archives and museums, and work outside the MAL sector!

showed that the library's "established roles" (culture, education, reading and literacy, and information) had an "enduring relevance" which included:

- "The library is a centre of cultural life.
 - Library services support both adults' and children's educational needs
 - ...
 - The library supports the development of children's reading skills.
 - The library is a 'non-stigmatised' place for adult literacy classes ..."
- [p95]

In addition to this, the research found that the library also has a social and caring role which included:

- "Individuals gain new skills and confidence from using the library ...
- The library is a place where people meet and share interests, being described as 'part of the cement in the social fabric.'
- Library provision promotes greater understanding between different cultural groups.
- The library service supports community groups and activities and builds confidence in individuals which might then have an effect on the wider community.
- The library sustains local identity by developing and maintaining community self-esteem, especially in areas which lack other local facilities and resources.
- The library has a beneficial effect on psychological health and well-being, especially for isolated and vulnerable elderly and disabled people."
- [p96]

The report also highlights the role that libraries can play in social cohesion and community empowerment, including:

- Overcoming social isolation
- Intercultural understanding
- Acting as a safe place for meetings (eg of a Bosnian refugees group in Newcastle)

although "there were somewhat mixed messages about whether the library service did or did not have an impact in promoting understanding between people from different cultural backgrounds. Nonetheless, it is significant that the focus groups drawn from people from the ethnic minority communities felt that library materials and exhibitions created greater understanding between different cultural groups." [p37]

Further background reading on this topic can be found in Evelyn Kerslake and Margaret Kinnell's literature review [1997], although this is now rather dated.

5.3.6 Other studies

Examples of other work looking at the role of public libraries include:

- The survey carried out by the then Resource in 2001 [Resource, 2001] showed that, whilst 83% of public libraries' equal opportunity policies mention disabled people, only 27% had, at that stage, a disability action plan, 45% provided disability training to all staff, and 53% consulted with user groups.
- Whilst not looking specifically at public libraries, nevertheless the Central London LSC report [London Central LSC, 2002] does make it clear that young people do not necessarily see libraries as a source of information about further courses of study and career options.
- A survey of public libraries' provision for refugees and asylum-seekers [Ryder and Vincent, 2002] found that some library authorities were providing excellent levels of service, whilst some were barely providing a service at all¹⁷
- There is some evidence [Goulding, 2004] to show that public libraries can provide a focus for civic engagement, but there are some issues arising from this, including:
 - The clash between the “old” and the “new”
 - The homogeneity of users may deter others
 - Expectations of appropriate behaviour.

As Anne Goulding says:

“The very success of democratic public space lies in its embrace of conflict and plurality and libraries need to consider how to address any tensions inherent in their use and access whilst still ensuring that their capacity to help promote social capital is maintained.”

- The IDeA report, *Cultural connections* [IDeA, 2004] includes examples of where libraries have contributed to the Shared Priorities. These include:
 - Barnet and Bournemouth's community learning centres
 - Blackburn with Darwen's Asian women's reading group
 - Stockton-on-Tees's ICT provision
 - Liverpool's “Surfzone” and “Kids.com” provision
 - Lancashire's SMILE centre
 - Leeds's job-seekers' support work.
- The latest YLG publication, *Bright young things* [Mears, 2004], gives examples of the range of work that public and school library services are undertaking to support learning by children and young people,

¹⁷For example, several library authorities knew they had refugees and asylum-seekers within their authority, but did not know what languages they spoke.

including young people who may be socially excluded (eg in Homework Centres, “Big Book Share”).

- As noted above, the latest report from DCMS, *Bringing communities together through sport and culture* [DCMS, 2004c], highlights the role that public libraries can play in tackling social exclusion.

5.4 School Libraries

It is clear that school libraries can play a key role in tackling social exclusion – just one example is the work that has been developed at Highlands School in the London Borough of Enfield, where the School Librarian has been working to make the library as inclusive as possible [Vincent, Love and Stalker-Booth, 2004]¹⁸.

School libraries are encouraged to adopt the IFLA/UNESCO School Library Manifesto [IFLA, 2000] which includes under “The Mission of the School Library”:

“School library services must be provided equally to all members of the school community ... Access to services and collections should be based on the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Freedoms ...”

Within the “Goals of the school library” it includes:

“The following are essential to the development of literacy, information literacy, teaching, learning and culture and are core school library services:

- ... organizing activities that encourage cultural and social awareness and sensitivity ...
- promoting reading and the resources and services of the school library to the whole school community and beyond.”

The School Library Association [SLA] had social inclusion as the topic for their annual Weekend Course in 2003 [Lonsdale, 2003].

Individual School Library Services have drawn up resources selection policies [eg Tower Hamlets, 2000] which place the selection of stock within a multicultural community, eg:

“Resources that combat racism and promote self-esteem of children from ethnic minority backgrounds by showing people from these groups taking responsibility, making decisions, being successful, respected and admired.”

¹⁸ Some further examples of good practice can be found in the CILIP advocacy document, *School libraries – making a difference* [CILIP, c2004], and, in relation to study support, in the YLG publication, *Bright young things* [Mears, 2004].

5.5 University and College Libraries

INSPIRE is a “seamless cross-sectoral pathway for learners across public, academic and national libraries”

Inspire¹⁹ has now been set up in order to

- Develop an online, cross-regional library collections and access map
- Build on existing networks of successful access partnerships to create a single national access route irrespective of geography
- Ensure that learners can have access to the most appropriate learning materials irrespective of the status of the learner or the location of the materials
- Provide opportunities and access for socially excluded individuals and groups
- Provide a guide for learners to libraries with collections and materials relevant to their needs
- Set the pace for fulfilling key aspects of the Framework for the Future 2013 vision:
 - Any member of a public library can also access materials held in Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) libraries
 - Anyone seeking opportunities for learning and training can be guided to a course through a public library
- Support and Develop the library and information workforce by raising awareness of access agreements and collections in other sectors
- Streamline information about access rights and responsibilities in a sustainable format for future development

Laines report SEMLAC website (libraries)

Learning Cities – Milton Keynes Learning Cities Libraries Network.

5.6 Health Libraries

The findings and recommendations of the Wanless Report [Wanless, 2004] in relation to health inequalities should have a major influence on health libraries – however, this is not particularly noticeable from CILIP’s Executive Advisory Group’s recent report [CILIP, 2004].

5.6.1 “Widening Participation in Learning Developing Libraries”

NHS Libraries across the South East are engaged in a project funded by the NHSU entitled "Widening participation in Learning – Developing Libraries". The aim of this project is to equip NHS Library staff with the skills and knowledge to support the widening participation agenda – this involves widening provision to meet the needs of more users (patients and carers, as well as NHS staff), and to support NHS staff in developing their skills.

So far, this has involved workshops to carry out a development needs analysis (relating particularly to information, advice and guidance [IAG])

¹⁹ <http://www.inspire.gov.uk/> [accessed 17/02/05]

skills, and learning), which recognised that NHS Libraries needed to be providing information, providing advice, and signposting users to other resources. A series of two-day training sessions for frontline staff has been organised, including networking and interviewing skills, and looking at ways to broaden resources. These will be followed up via action planning.

In addition, an Action Learning Programme has been developed for managers, looking at strategic working and mainstreaming provision within the NHS. The participants will also be involved in carrying out a project, and writing this up, so there will be tangible developments by the end of the process.

5.7 Prison Libraries

Prison Libraries offer a wide range of good practice in tackling social exclusion. Here are a few examples:

- Working with Writers and Readers in Residence – eg Clive Hopwood’s “Writers in Prison”
 - Medway Libraries, Cookham YOI, and Rochester YOI – working with reluctant readers, literacy, providing link for when prisoners leave prison
 - “Through the Reading Gate” in the North West – family literacy aimed at males aged 15-21, supporting children’s reading
 - Leicestershire Libraries, Gartree and Leicester Prisons, and Glen Parva YOI – reading and literacy
 - “Big Book Share” [see Dyer, 2004]
 - “Free to Write”
 - “Project Hero”²⁰
 - “Storybook Dads”
 - Provision of learndirect and distance learning.
- [taken from Vincent, forthcoming]

5.8 Examples of work with specific communities

Who is defined as being socially excluded? Work in preparation for the MLA toolkit [MLA, 2004a] by the University of Northumbria at Newcastle [UNN, 2003] identified the following people:

- Alcohol and substance abusers
- Carers
- Some children and young people, especially looked-after children and children at risk
- Disabled people
- Disaffected young people
- Elderly people

²⁰ The “Project Hero” case study is available on the SEMLAC Website at: www.semlac.org.uk/casestudies_projecthero.html.

- Ex-offenders
- Homeless people
- Housebound people
- Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people
- Part-time and temporary workers
- People living in remote or isolated locations
- People in poor mental and/or physical health
- People with basic/essential skills needs
- People with learning disabilities
- People with low incomes
- People without qualifications
- Prisoners and their families
- Prostitutes
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Refugees and asylum-seekers
- Travellers
- Unemployed people
- Unskilled manual workers
- Victims of violence
- Some Women
- Working class people.

Whilst some of these groups are having their needs met by libraries, others are certainly not, and it would be a useful development to assess provision for each of these groups.

5.8.1 Alcohol and substance abusers

5.8.2 Carers

5.8.3 Some children and young people, especially looked-after children and children at risk

Whilst, obviously, not all children and young people are socially excluded, many are. Despite considerable work over the years to identify their library and information needs [see, for example, Hill, 1973; Vincent, 1999b; CILIP, 2002a], children and young people (and their parents/carers) still see enormous barriers [see The Reading Agency, 2004; Book Marketing Ltd, 2004].

However, work has been developed in public and school libraries to remove some of these barriers to take-up of services and to engage young people in planning and developing provision (for some recent examples of initiatives, see Vincent and Hurst, 2004; Vincent, Love and Stalker-Booth, 2004; McElwee, 2004). There has also been considerable work undertaken with looked-after children and young people²¹.

5.8.4 Disabled people

²¹ See case study examples at www.seapn.org.uk.

Many library services have developed provision for disabled people – a good example of the range of provision by a public library is that by Kent Arts & Libraries whose services are clearly laid out on their Website at www.kent.gov.uk/e%261/artslib/community/disabled.html.

5.8.5 Disaffected young people

Positive activities for young people (PAYP)

This is a national scheme of developmental activities for young people at risk. It aims to reduce youth offending and support young people to return to education or training.

5.8.6 Elderly people

The BBC Peoples War initiative allowed most libraries the opportunity to link in to the national project to promote internet services to older people.

Among the goals of UK Online is to increase the use of Information and Communications Technology for leisure and lifelong learning by elderly people

5.8.7 Ex-offenders

SEMLAC and Hampshire Libraries, as part of a larger partnership, have been successful in obtaining funding from SEEDA through EXODUS. Exodus (Ex-offenders Discharged Under Supervision) has been made available from the European Social Fund under Equal 2, for a three-year project in the South East and London regions to develop effective interventions with short-term prisoners and priority offenders, to reduce re-offending through increasing employability.

With support from EXODUS, SEMLAC and Hampshire Libraries aim to produce an Introduction to Libraries pack. The project will also be looking at training some library staff in acting as mentors for ex-offenders wishing to use library facilities as a way of self directed learning. The project is part of CLIC, a pilot project which aims to facilitate ex-offenders from Winchester prison over two years to achieve a healthy, safe and sustainable lifestyle, by assessing their needs and providing appropriate intensive support and care. The EXODUS funding will be instrumental to assisting ex-offenders back into the community and the workplace.

5.8.8 Homeless people

5.8.9 Housebound people

Bournemouth Libraries are running a Laptop Outreach Project. This is a service offered to those who cannot come into the libraries to access the computers. Staff or volunteers regularly visit people in their homes and can give them training on using a computer. They find out what the user is interested in and adapt the visit to suit their requirements and interests.

The visit allows access to the Internet, all Microsoft Office products and adaptive technology including Zoomtext (screen magnification software) and trackball mice. It can also offer advice on suitable computer books and websites that the user maybe interested in. The visits are very 'user friendly' and it is appreciated that some users may have never even seen a computer before, let alone used a laptop.

The project also visits residential homes and operate group sessions on the laptops. Mobile internet cards have been purchased so that user's can access the internet without having to use their phone line.

5.8.10 Lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered people

5.8.11 Part-time and temporary workers

5.8.12 People living in remote or isolated locations

Internet connections to library service websites allow remote users the opportunity to access information, request books and connect with local authority services.

Rural areas are also served by mobile libraries.

5.8.13 People in poor mental and/or physical health

Libraries have been working for some time to develop services tailored to meet the needs of people with mental health problems. Two innovative bibliotherapy projects are Calderdale's "Reading and You Scheme" [Vincent, 2004] and Cardiff's "Books on Prescription" [*Innovations in Information*, 2004].

A brief summary of provision by museums [Dodd, 2003] concludes with a very useful set of points for action, which include:

- establish and build up over a period of time a relationship with museums that will develop mutual understanding
- seek an advocate in the museum
- offer training and mentoring to museum staff
- aim for sustainability
- understand each other's objectives
- develop partnerships that can unlock different sources of funding.

In the South East there are two Bibliotherapy projects in IOW and Portsmouth, working jointly with local health services.

5.8.14 People with basic/essential skills needs

Research by the National Literacy Trust for Resource [Barzey, 2003] has shown that libraries, archives and museums are committed to supporting the *Skills for life* [DfEE, 2001] agenda, undertaking promotional work to reach

adults with basic skills needs and working in partnership with providers to support basic skills courses.

These findings have been supported by recent work in London [Brockhurst and Dodds, 2004] which shows that:

- “There is strong evidence that libraries and museums are already providing important learning opportunities for adults with basic skills needs ...
- Libraries are successful at widening adult participation in learning ...
- Libraries, museums and archives have the potential to significantly strengthen progression ...
- Learners see a natural synergy between libraries, museums, archives and learning ...
- Libraries and museums are involved in local learning partnerships with mainstream providers ...” [p4]

5.8.15 People with learning disabilities

5.8.16 People with low incomes

5.8.17 People without qualifications

Lifelong learning is a core library service activity.

5.8.18 Prisoners and their families

5.8.19 Prostitutes

5.8.20 Racial and ethnic minorities

Southampton Library Service runs a number of Storysack projects, eg the Roshni Project (linking Asian elders with young children to share cultural experience), and, from 2003, a Storysack project which aims to promote reading and storytelling across different cultures and generations, whilst educating about environmental issues.

[taken from: www.literacy.trust.org.uk]

Slough Libraries run multicultural storytimes in 4 languages other than English (Arabic, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu):

“Our storytellers are members of the community.

Our audience is diverse. While we target children who either speak the particular language or come from homes of a particular culture, some of the children who attend do not belong to that particular cultural group, and may attend just for the enjoyment of hearing a story being told or because they want to learn the language ...”

5.8.21 Refugees and asylum-seekers

The “Welcome to Your Library” project, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and run in 5 London library authorities²², has piloted a range of methods for engaging communities and library staff. The final report [Carpenter, 2004] highlights key lessons and shows that public libraries need to:

- “Build their capacity and manage change, so they can fulfil their potential over time
- Adopt a strategic approach backed up with practical actions to support this process
- Gather relevant evidence consistently about local communities to provide management information and strengthen policy arguments
- Set priorities based on evidence rather than a 'one size fits all' approach
- Monitor and evaluate their work and use this to develop services further
- Involve refugee umbrella and community organisations and others working on their behalf – provide human, financial and physical resources so that [refugee and community organisations] and other agencies can be active partners in service development as well as individual asylum seekers and refugees themselves
- Learn from other sectors working with asylum seekers and refugees and share good practice as widely as possible
- Use work in this field to raise the profile and demonstrate the value of public libraries locally, regionally and nationally.” [p6]

In conjunction with a range of community organisations, (particularly Congolese), Enfield Libraries developed the “Africa Collection” at Edmonton Green Library [Plews, 2004].

Lincolnshire Library Service has been developing strong links with guest workers in the county, playing “a crucial role in hospitality and welcome and being safe environments for guest workers to celebrate their cultures” [Pateman, 2004].

5.8.22 Travellers

The winner of the 2004 “Libraries Change Lives” Award was Essex County Libraries who have developed a highly effective library service to Traveller sites [see Baker, 2004].

Hampshire Library Service has established a partnership with the Traveller Education Service to develop links with Traveller communities in the North and South of the County. The Traveller Project links the local library with the project worker and tackles issues such as basic skills and health education.

5.8.23 Unemployed people

²² Brent, Camden, Enfield, Merton and Newham.

Most libraries have links with job centres, career advice. The Peoples network allows job searching online training for improved IT and CV skills. There is are Job Centre Plus jobpoint (touch screen) kiosks in Norfolk libraries

5.8.24 Unskilled manual workers

5.8.25 Victims of violence

5.8.26 Some Women

5.8.27 Working class people

5.8 The Welsh experience

As noted above, the report [LISC (Wales), 2003] on the role of libraries in tackling social exclusion in Wales was cross-sectoral from the start (the Welsh Assembly took the view that it wanted to look at all types of library).

6. Experience outside the UK

The *Open to all? Working Papers* [Muddiman *et al*, 2000c] included a paper by Shiraz Durrani, which looked at people's struggles for political and social inclusion (which focused on the struggles against globalisation); and a paper by John Pateman, which applied Clive Miller's models of communities [Miller, 1999] to the role of the State and analysed four different approaches to tackling social exclusion (exclusive diversity, voluntary inclusion, required inclusion, inclusive diversity).

For more recent publications, the CILIP Information Team carried out a search of LISA²³ for me, looking for evidence of libraries' work on social exclusion/inclusion and community cohesion outside the UK, but this revealed that very little has, so far, been published in the mainstream library press. There was a couple of interesting articles about working with specific socially excluded communities, a lot about the "digital divide", and one article [Lerche, 2003] that showed that library workers in Denmark are grappling with some of the same issues we are in terms of their role in working with communities such as refugees.

Since then, Charles Newby and John Pateman of Lincolnshire Library Service have published an article about library services in Nordic and Cuban libraries [Pateman and Newby, 2004] – key points include:

"The Nordic region was the first area in Europe to fully appreciate the benefits of applying ICT to the development and provision of public services. Public Library services were given strong leadership by central government strategy and resources were made available to set up national electronic networks ...

[However, a] key finding of [Finnish Ministry of Education, 1999] was that:

'Social exclusion from various causes and social inequality pose the most serious threats to the development of an information society.' [p22] ..."

"Tampere Library in Finland was literally driving ICT out to the community through the use of an ex municipal 'concertina' bus. The 'Net Bus' was set up as a co-operative project and offers a training room and a suite of Internet linked PCs with classes being delivered by adult education and youth workers."

"A network of Danish libraries overseen by the Danish Central Library for Immigrant Literature (DCLIL) has set up www.finfo.dk. The site is a marvellous community resource, providing a vast amount of civic and cultural information in 13 community languages."

In conclusion, Charles Newby says:

²³ *Library and information science abstracts*.

“There are a number of key reasons why Nordic public libraries have been able to achieve so much through the application of ICT.

Many library services such as Silkeborg and Arhus have been restructured so that staff are able to work in dynamic new ways ...

The Finnish library service has tried to make libraries more inclusive, designing and locating libraries that satisfy the needs of different community groups.

Helsinki City Libraries opened the Pasila Music Station in central Helsinki in 2002. The library has been designed so as to appeal to the needs of young people. The library has been a great success generating 375,000 loans in its first full year. 70% of all visitors are men, with good usage from people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds ...

Itakeskus Library is located in a busy shopping and transport hub in a working class suburb of Helsinki; in recent years, many people from different ethnic backgrounds have also moved into the area. The library is located in a cultural centre, which also includes adult education, the youth service, an art gallery, theatre, dance studio and restaurant ...

UK public library authorities have a lot to learn from the strategic approach, creativity and vision of Nordic libraries. Through following an inclusive approach Nordic Libraries are delivering a thriving and dynamic library service.”

In relation to libraries in Cuba, John Pateman writes:

“Libraries in Cuba are part of a national strategy to foster and develop a fully literate society. Illiteracy in Latin America is 11.7 per cent and in Cuba 0.2 per cent.”

“Bauta Library has a total of 21 employees to staff all branches and carry out the library’s extensive outreach and programming effort. It has its own programme room and offers cultural programmes for the entire municipality. The librarians visit senior citizen centres and grandparent circles and talk about books and the university for seniors. They give conferences and run contests promoting books. They also visit work centres – at times, reading to the manual workers on shift ... Bauta’s very active outreach programme is called ‘Librarian in the Community’. The town is divided into 26 neighbourhoods, each one being visited by a librarian, bringing books by bicycle.”

[Pateman and Newby, 2004, pp30-31]

A recent article in *Update* [Peoples, 2004] suggests that public libraries in the US are breaking some of the cycles of social exclusion by offering branded programmes at both national and regional levels (eg “Youth Access”, aimed at 10-18 year-olds).

7. How do we know what needs to be done? Recommendations for tackling social exclusion

In terms of tackling social exclusion, there is plenty of evidence of what is required [eg Muddiman *et al*, 2000a]; and 'what works' – services that are:

- Targeted (rather than taking an 'open to all' approach, are there specific activities/services for specific excluded communities and individuals? Are resources targeted? Is the library service taking a needs-based approach?)
- Mainstreamed (for example, are there written and agreed policies in place? Are strategies long-term? Are all staff aware of and involved in this work, as appropriate? Is it funded as part of the core provision? Are existing policies and procedures being challenged throughout the service?)
- In partnership with the community and with other local authority departments. Are local people involved and consulted about service provision and development?
- Sustainable
- With training and support for staff.

[taken from Vincent, 2003]

In addition, there is at least one library authority that has published a report which reviews the service through the 'lens' of tackling social exclusion [Leicester City Libraries, 2000] and gives strong pointers as to how to proceed; and one library authority that has made its social inclusion strategy available on the Web [Gloucestershire County Council, 2002]. In addition, some library authorities have started developing innovative ways of consulting (eg Warwickshire's interactive voting²⁴) which aim to ensure greater involvement of socially excluded people.

Separately, there has also been work undertaken on exactly what 'mainstreaming' might mean in terms of tackling social exclusion:

- Is social inclusion prioritised in political management arrangements?
- Has social inclusion been mainstreamed in the organisation's staffing structure? (eg staff involved at all levels? All employees involved in developing the plan? Are there guiding principles?)
- How far are budget planning and social inclusion aligned?
- Is social inclusion prioritised in Best Value Reviews?
- Is social inclusion built into policy evaluation and monitoring?
- How sustainable is the social inclusion policy? (eg have the approaches developed actually tackled social exclusion? Have communities or interests been involved in developing the approaches? Are new ways of working embedded? Are capacity-building, social capital, democratic participation taken into account in assessing outcomes?)

[taken from Newman and Geddes, 2001, pp47-48]

²⁴ See Astill, 2004.

The LGIU has also looked at budget issues:

“Approaching the budget on a short-term basis, focusing around the annual budget cycle leads to incrementalism, across the board changes (usually cuts) and no time for resource reallocation” [Woods, 2000, p17]

Good practice in terms of budgeting therefore involves:

- Adopting a long-term financial planning approach
- Carrying out an impact analysis of current expenditure on social exclusion
- Identifying potentially ‘free’ resources which could be moved
- Looking at how this money could be spent on cross-cutting issues and what impact this would have
- Looking particularly at the impact on capacity-building, social capital and democratic participation
- Looking at leverage
- Consulting on options
- Cross-referencing the options with corporate themes and priorities – then making final decisions.

[taken from Woods, 2000, p19]

7.2 'Toolkits' and other resources

There is also now a number of 'toolkits' that can be used to assess progress in tackling social exclusion. These include:

- The earliest 'toolkit' was the six-point plan drawn up by DCMS [DCMS, 1999] which gives a very useful starting point in terms of assessing where a service has reached
- Although slightly dated now, the *Handbook* published by The Network [Durrani, 2001] gives a useful introductory summary of research and practical ways forward
- An “Access for All” 'toolkit' that has been developed nationally by the MLA [MLA, 2004a] and which ties into *Inspiring learning for all* [MLA, 2004b]
- A 'toolkit' that has been developed by Suffolk County Council for use in any Council service [Suffolk County Council, 2002]
- A toolkit that has been developed by an Exeter-based community group to assess progress primarily in the voluntary and community sector [Magne and McTiernan, 2004].

The immensely valuable resource guide [RCMG, 2004a] that forms part of *Not for the likes of you*²⁵ lists a huge range of material, as well as links to Web-based resources.

²⁵ *Not for the likes of you* is a joint initiative by the Arts Council England, MLA, HLF and English heritage. It aims to provide the support for cultural organisations to

Finally, John Pateman's recent publication for NIACE [Pateman, 2003] sets out how to develop a needs-based library service, which has tackling social exclusion at its core.

7.3 Monitoring and evaluation

7.3.1 Public Library Service Standards

As noted elsewhere in this paper, DCMS issued in October 2004 the first part of the revised Standards [DCMS, 2004b] – the second part, which will include impact measures, is still under development. These should provide a key way of measuring how public libraries are tackling social exclusion.

7.3.2 Comprehensive Performance Assessment

In addition, the Audit Commission is revising the measures used to carry out CPAs²⁶. Their intention is to relate future CPAs to the Shared Priorities, and to focus particularly on:

- “the attention given to diversity, human rights and user focus as part of the delivery of services
- effectiveness in managing cross cutting issues between shared priorities
- judging achievement through the investment a council and its partners make for the future, the focus they have on seeing these initiatives through to conclusion and the evidence of real impact locally at the time of the assessment.”

[Audit Commission, 2004, p2]

This too should prove a rigorous measure of the effectiveness of public libraries in tackling social exclusion.

7.4 Some other issues

7.4.1 Volunteering

There is growing evidence [eg IVR, 2004; Blackadder, 2004] of the value of volunteering for socially excluded people, as one way of their getting greater involvement in society and gaining skills. A number of libraries has used volunteers, perhaps most interestingly Kent in its use of refugees to help build links between refugee communities and the library service – is this something that libraries would like to consider developing further?

7.4.2 Services for teenagers

become more accessible. Available at:

www.newaudiences.org.uk/feature.php?news_20040901_4.

²⁶ The draft paper is out for consultation on the Audit Commission Website until February 2005.

A major issue for many young people is finding somewhere safe to meet after school:

“A haven for teenagers to relax and meet friends will soon be open ... It's to be called 'the meeting point' and has resulted from research carried out by Welwyn Hatfield's Cultural Consortium, a partnership of public organisations. They identified that young people's main concern in the district was that there wasn't enough comfortable, informal and safe environments where they could meet up with friends outside of school ...” [*Welwyn Hatfield Life*, 2004, p7]

C: Other definitions

Section 8: Other definitions

- Diversity and cultural diversity
- Widening participation
- Social capital
- Civil Renewal
- Community development
- Neighbourhood Renewal and regeneration
- Sustainability
- Shared Priorities
- Public Value

8. Other definitions

As well as touching on social inclusion/exclusion, this paper looks briefly at:

- Diversity and cultural diversity
- Widening participation
- Social capital
- Civil Renewal
- Community development
- Neighbourhood Renewal and regeneration
- Sustainability
- Shared Priorities
- Public Value.

8.1 Diversity and cultural diversity

Sandra Sanglin-Grant [2003] notes that there has been a shift in the UK over the past decade to talking about equal opportunities and diversity, and defines diversity as:

“... adding another dimension to ‘equal opportunities’. It encompasses all types of difference beyond those covered by the legislation and focuses in particular on the needs of the individual. It is also concerned with the culture of the organisation, and adds value through a sort of enlightened self-interest, usually in association with a well-developed business case.” [p2]

In terms of cultural diversity, ALM London uses the following definition:

“In the context of our work today, we use the term Cultural Diversity to mean the complex composition of society, made up of individuals and groups who may have multiple identities. These may relate to ethnicity, faith, gender, sexual orientation and intellectual and physical ability, but might equally include health status and educational and social background.”

[ALM London Website²⁷]

Some recent research into training in racism awareness and cultural diversity [Home Office, 2002] has some useful findings which could be applied to MAL:

1. “Organisations need to root their activity within a continuous improvement/culture change model and they should be clear on what they want to change and achieve at the very start of their journey.
2. Success is deeply contextual and builds on where the organisation is and what it has done in the past. It is essential that it pulls people a little further than they are already, challenges them a little more, and works to keep people positively engaged.

²⁷ Available at: <http://lmal.org.uk/priorities/index.cfm?NavigationID=113>.

3. Embodying diversity within organisations is an iterative process of planning, acting and reviewing. These iterations are likely to comprise a journey of increasing sophistication and complexity, and a growing appreciation of the benefits and some of the challenges of implementation. It is firmly grounded in evaluation and feedback, and a willingness to do things differently.” [p xxi]

8.2 Widening participation

The term “widening participation” has been used for some time to describe methods for involving “non-traditional” students in learning.

Recently, however, it has gained a specific meaning with the development of the Aimhigher programme.

“Funded jointly by the Higher Education Funding Council [HEFCE], the Learning and Skills Council [LSC] and the European Social Fund [ESF], Aimhigher will work with schools, and every Further and Higher Education College and University in the South East. Its purpose is to run a wide range of activities which will engage and motivate students and young people aged 13 to 30 years to aspire to enter higher education and to gain qualifications ...

While the initiative will work with young people from all walks of life, it will concentrate on those who are underachieving, lacking in confidence or undecided, yet have the potential to enter higher education. Research shows that many such young people come from disadvantaged social and economic backgrounds, ethnic minority communities [or are] disabled. “

[from HESE Website]

8.3 Social capital

The definition of social capital is also changing^{28,29}, but the one currently used most frequently is that provided by the OECD:

“[Social capital] networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups.”

[Cote and Healy, 2001, quoted in Goulding, 2004]

²⁸ There is some interesting discussion of social capital and other issues on a new Website for the International Observatory on Place Management, Social Capital and the Learning Region [PASCAL] at: www.obs-pascal.com.

²⁹ The term ‘social capital’ was much discussed at the World Gathering of Artists and Intellectuals in Defence of Humanity, Caracas, Venezuela, 1-6 December 2004. There were concerns that it reduced people to the level of economic units which have an economic value that can be bought and sold, and it was agreed that the preferred term was “human capacity” or “human potential” [Pateman, email, 2004].

In a recent publication [Kearns, 2004], Ade Kearns pulls together a number of definitions of social capital:

“features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives...Social capital, in short, refers to social connections and the attendant norms and trust” [Putnam, 1995]

“features of social organisation, such as civic participation, norms of reciprocity and trust in others, that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit” [Kawachi *et al*, 1997]

“defined simply as a set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permits cooperation among them. If members of the group come to expect that others will behave reliably and honestly, then they will come to trust one another. Trust is like a lubricant that makes the running of any group or organisation more efficient” [Fukuyama, 1999]

“the networks, norms and relationships that help communities and organisations work more effectively” [MacGillivray, 2002]

The National Economic and Social Forum in Dublin goes further than this, and states in a recent report [NESF, 2003] that there is a number of interrelated and overlapping “key dimensions” of social capital:

- Community engagement
- Community efficacy (“a shared sense of empowerment and capacity to effect change at community level”)
- Volunteering
- Political participation
- Informal social support networks
- Informal sociability (speaking, writing, emailing, etc)
- Norms of trust and reciprocity
- Trust in various institutions.

[taken from p3]

They also stress that “[n]ot all forms of social capital are positive. For example, tightly knit networks can use their access to financial assets, information or authority to exclude others ...” [p4]

8.4 Civil Renewal

As the Home Office’s Civil Renewal Unit Website states:

“Civil renewal is at the heart of the Home Office’s vision of life in our 21st century communities. As a political philosophy it has been around for centuries but it is, increasingly, being taken up by public bodies, people working in the voluntary and community sector, and active citizens in their own communities, as the effective way to bring about sustainable change and improve the quality of people’s lives.”

[taken from the Civil Renewal Unit Website]

Recent Government thinking on the position of Civil Renewal within the overall modernisation agenda has been developed in two published speeches by David Blunkett [Blunkett, 2003a and 2003b].

As Henry Tam, Head of the Civil Renewal Unit, recently outlined, there seems to be a widening gap between citizens and Government; in order to tackle these issues, Civil Renewal aims to develop:

- Active citizens³⁰
- Organisations that provide a means for bringing people together to solve problems
- Public organisations that recognise that citizens are more than customers.

[taken from *Finding the dots*, 2004]

Over the last year, the Government has also consulted on its role in Civil Renewal [Home Office, 2003b]; first findings show that the themes emerging from the consultation were:

- “The importance of long term resourcing for community organisations: this would show commitment to the civil renewal agenda and lead to sustainability
- The need for easier access to funding
- Better and more consistent training of community workers
- More recognition of the good work already being undertaken at community level and the will to build on this
- More awareness and acceptance that 'one size does not fit all'
- The need to encourage a 'bottom' up approach
- The importance of support for citizens and communities at neighbourhood or community level, and endorsement of the key components set out in the consultation paper.”

[also taken from the Civil Renewal Unit Website]

The Home Office has very recently published its plan of action to support community capacity building more effectively [Home Office, 2004f]. This report identifies six underlying principles which “will underpin Government action to bring about change:

- Adopt a community development approach, accepting as a starting point the values on which community development is based.
- Recognise and build on what exists – focusing on the assets and strengths of communities, as well as their needs or deficiencies.
- Take a long view – there are no quick fixes if change is to be lasting.

³⁰ See www.active-citizen.org.uk/default.asp.

- Ensure that support is accessible at neighbourhood, parish or community level ...
 - Accept that learning is a key to success for everyone involved.
 - Embrace diversity and recognise solutions are needed which respond to local circumstances, rather than taking a 'one size fits all' approach."
- [p3]

8.5 Community development

The Community Development Foundation defines community development as:

“Community development is a range of practices dedicated to increasing the strength and effectiveness of community life, improving local conditions, especially for people in disadvantaged situations, and enabling people to participate in public decision-making and to achieve greater long-term control over their circumstances.

Community life means activities undertaken voluntarily by people pursuing common interests, improving shared conditions or representing joint concerns. These activities often take place locally, but may equally happen through different types of common interest, need or identity such as ethnicity, age, gender, faith or any other that people think are important.”

[CDF Website]

8.6 Neighbourhood Renewal and regeneration

The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit sees the new role of neighbourhood renewal as being to:

- Attack the core problems of deprived areas, such as weak economies and poor schools;
- Harness the power of all sectors to work in partnership;
- Focus existing services and resources explicitly on deprived areas;
- Give local residents and community groups a central role in turning their neighbourhoods around.

[taken from NRU Website]

A recent article in LGIU *Briefing* [Gibson, 2004] suggests, in relation to Neighbourhood Renewal, that:

“If socially excluded communities are the aggregate of socially excluded families and individuals, it follows that public service interventions seeking the reconstruction of functional communities should be packaged around individuals and family units. “ [p8]

David Gibson then goes on to look at a systemic approach to mainstreaming:

1. Neighbourhoods are defined
2. A local index of multiple deprivation identifies priority neighbourhoods

3. Neighbourhoods are aggregated together into Community Forum Areas, providing an operational area for management purposes
4. Improvement targets are set at the neighbourhood level
5. Targets are aggregated together as area plans
6. Resources are allocated to area plans
7. Area plans are implemented.

[taken from p9]

It is worth noting that some work by the LGIU has thrown doubts over the successes of area-based initiatives [Root, 2000], although the recent Home Office assessment [Home Office, 2004e] considers them to be effective.

8.7 Sustainability

Defra are tracking the Government's "Indicators of Sustainable Development"³¹ which include, under "Social Progress":

- Poverty and social exclusion
- Education
- Health
- Housing
- Crime.

8.8 Shared Priorities

All this work by local authorities is being carried out within the "Shared Priorities" framework [ODPM, 2002b]. This was agreed between the Government and the Local Government Association in 2002, and sets out the priorities required to make improvements to public services.

The key priorities are:

- Raising standards across our schools
- Improving the quality of life of children, young people, families at risk and older people
- Promoting healthier communities by targeting key local services such as health and housing
- Creating safer and stronger communities
- Transforming our local environment
- Meeting transport needs more effectively
- Promoting the economic vitality of localities.

Working with DCMS, IDeA has produced a Web-based resource³², "Cultural Connections", which shows the contribution of MAL to the Shared Priorities.

8.9 Public Value

³¹ Available at: www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/indicators/index.htm.

³² As far as I can see, this is currently (October 2004) available only at: www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=76729.

According to the *New Statesman* [Crabtree, 2004], Public Value – described as “a yardstick for measuring public service reform” – is going to feature heavily in the lead-up to the next elections. “Public value ... explains why citizens may support goods produced by public bodies largely because of their public nature.” Interestingly, the person who conceived of public value, Mark Moore, used a librarian as his favourite example!

D: Measuring the impact of culture

Section 9: The problem with culture?

9. The problem with culture?

“Culture, but not just its aesthetic dimension, can make communities. It can be a critical focus for effective and sustainable urban regeneration. The task is to develop an understanding (including methods of study) of the ways – cultural and ethical – in which even the 'worst estates' can take part in and help shape the relics of their city (and society) as well as their locality. This is a massive challenge to academics, professionals, business, and to local and ultimately national government and – of course – citizens. But nothing less can work.”

[Catterall, 1998, p4, quoted in Evans and Shaw, 2004]

Although there has been a number of recent studies [eg LGA, 2003b; LGA, 2004a; DfES, 2004b; DCMS, 2004a; IDeA, 2004] that show something of the contribution of culture to the community cohesion and other agendas, some fundamental problems remain, and the key issues have been identified in recent reports by London Metropolitan University for DCMS [Evans and Shaw, 2004] and Kate Oakley for the SEEC [Oakley, 2004].

The contribution of culture to regeneration in the UK: a review of the evidence – a report to the Department of Culture Media and Sport

This report was a “stock-take” of the evidence-based literature on the impact of culture on social, economic and environmental regeneration, together with an analysis of the limitations of the evidence, some examples of best practice, and recommendations.

From the review, they identified three models via which cultural activity is involved with regeneration:

- Culture-led regeneration, where cultural activity is the catalyst for/engine of regeneration
- Cultural regeneration, where cultural activity is fully integrated into an area strategy alongside other activities
- Culture and regeneration, where the two are not fully integrated at the development/planning stages.

There appears to be some strong evidence of the role that culture can play in, for example, economic regeneration, but, when it comes to social regeneration, the evidence is much less clear. Graeme Evans and Phyllida Shaw suggest that there may be two extremes – advocacy and promotion which claims that there is a wealth of evidence, and negative evaluations that suggest that the social impact of culture is “intangible” [eg Jackson, 2000, quoted in Evans and Shaw, 2004].

However, there has been some work on what the social impact of culture might look like, especially in the work of François Matarasso [eg Matarasso, 1997] and Gerri Moriarty [eg Moriarty, 2002].

In addition, there has been some work in Australia to assess the long-term impact of community-based arts activity [Williams, 1996, quoted in Evans and Shaw, 2004], which identified that social benefits included:

- “Established community networks of ongoing value
- Raised public awareness of a social or community concern
- Inspired action on a human rights or social justice issue
- Improved leisure or recreational options
- Improved understanding of different cultures or lifestyles
- Lessened social isolation for individuals or groups
- Developed community identity or sense of itself
- Increased appreciation of the value of community arts projects”.

[Evans and Shaw, 2004, p30]

The importance for us of the work by Evans and Shaw is that it identifies the gaps in the evidence, looks at reasons for these, and makes recommendations for action.

They suggest that the **rationale for measuring cultural impact in relation to regeneration is often absent or not sufficiently understood or valued**. In particular:

- Culture is not generally recognised in social policy and quality of life indicators, and therefore is absent from regeneration measurement criteria
- Regeneration takes place over a long period – most monitoring and evaluation tends to be short-term
- Measuring impacts and evaluating beyond a project's immediate objectives and performance (and beyond the objectives of the project's funders) is generally not the responsibility of cultural organisations or funders
- Cultural development objectives may conflict with economic and environmental/physical regeneration objectives, and there is also some resistance by community and cultural organisations to measuring impacts³³
- Cultural regeneration is typically more concerned with themes such as community self-development and self-expression, whereas economic regeneration is more concerned with 'growth' and property development – the latter may not contribute to the former
- Whilst there is now a wealth of evaluation measures and indicators, there are very few holistic and integrated approaches that can be applied to culture and regeneration. Toolkits may not be being used – or may be difficult to use. “There is therefore a surfeit of 'guidance' but a dearth of their actual application” [p58]
- Evans and Shaw quote from work by Hall and Robertson [2001] to show why research into public art rarely manages to measure

³³ Evans and Shaw add: “Most major project evaluation, *worldwide*, tends to produce a dialectic – two (or more) stories of winners and losers; rich and poor; visitor/employment impacts and failure to achieve 'trickle down' or wider participation/benefits; gentrification and displacement, and so on.” [p57, their emphasis].

impact: “The two prevailing critical paradigms in public art research are productionist³⁴ and semiotic, commonly employed in some combination. Both of these paradigms are flawed as a basis for evaluating the regeneration claims of public art, although both have been employed to this end.”

- Evaluation takes time and money – few projects or funders are willing to fund this (or fund it adequately).

Graeme Evans and Phyllida Shaw then go on to summarise the **reasons for these gaps in the evidence** (drawing particularly on work by Michelle Reeves [2002]):

- “a lack of interest on the part of the cultural sector in developing evaluative systems through which to prove its value
- the view, held by some creative practitioners in particular, that evaluation is an unnecessary, bureaucratic intrusion in the creative process
- the view that evaluation is an additional and probably unaffordable burden on small organisations
- the failure of funding bodies to insist that provision for evaluation is made
- the perception of data collection as a chore rather than a tool to help organisations improve their own practice
- a failure to recognise evaluation as an essential part of the process of learning about culture's contribution to regeneration and about how to make the most effective use of cultural provision or activity in a regeneration context
- a tendency, in the design and implementation of an evaluation exercise, to give too great a priority to funders' objectives
- a lack of experience, in the cultural sector, of undertaking formally structured evaluations
- in relation to the arts, the absence of planning norms for arts facilities, against which to measure the quality and quantity of provision.”

[Evans and Shaw, 2004, p59]

Finally, Evans and Shaw make a series of recommendations which include:

- Programme-wide evaluation should incorporate cultural impact measurement
- Government departments and their agencies should consider how appropriately-trained artists could play a role in designing and delivering evaluation
- More acknowledgment of and publicity for examples of good practice and the long-term work of community/arts organisations
- The nature of cultural projects which feature in regeneration may also need to be assessed more rigorously in terms of the impacts they make ie not only the difference between cultural and “non-

³⁴ ie written by artists and arts administrators who fail to say much about the public reception of the work.

cultural” investment in regeneration, but also between different types of culture and where the activity took place

- As there is improved statistical data-gathering at a local and national level, there is now an opportunity to undertake a cultural impact study which tests the various evaluation and indicator systems alongside various regeneration programmes
- There is a need for a sample of longitudinal impact studies which, “need to consider not just the impact of arts programmes on individuals, but also their effect and the extent to which it can be and is sustained on the communities in which individuals live” [Newman, Curtis and Stephens, 2003, quoted in Evans and Shaw, 2004].

[Evans and Shaw, 2004, p61]

Developing the evidence base for support of cultural and creative activities in South East England

In her report [Oakley, 2004], Kate Oakley argues that:

“... in many cases the evidence base is under-developed and thus few ‘conclusive’ claims can be supported or disproved. This is largely because of the lack of long term research funding for work in culture, with the consequence that much of the research has been carried out in an ad hoc, small-scale way and often as part of ‘making the case’ for cultural investments. Thus much research work is thinly-disguised advocacy and lacks the rigour that is necessary for evidence based policy making.” [p2].

The need now is to “move on to develop more robust methods, for instance longer-term and more systematic research, and a more realistic appraisal of the spillover effects of cultural investments.” [p3]

Realising the potential of cultural services: the case for libraries

Incidentally, none of these criticisms is new, of course. In 2001, the LGA published an assessment [Coalter, 2001] which began by placing libraries within “a state of transition” (p8), and argued that, whilst loans may be dropping, some research shows that libraries are ‘open to all’, retaining “a value for the poor who use them” (p8 – their emphasis), and drawing on Francois Matarasso’s work [eg Matarasso, 1998] to support this. It then went on to look at topics including: inclusiveness and safety; social cohesion; local image and identity; libraries and the arts; individual and community empowerment; young people and literacy; adult skills and literacy; ICT literacy; economic impact; libraries and health.

The major findings were the limits of current evidence; the need for adequate output measures; the need for more information about organisational processes which lead to successful outcomes; the need to identify valid outcome performance indicators; and the “need to develop a greater understanding of the nature and distribution of the socially excluded, their needs and the perceived institutional, social, personal and environmental constraints to use [of] libraries.” (p7)

However, whilst the research did pick up on one of the *Open to all?* Working Papers (that by John Pateman, which was additionally published in a journal [Pateman, 1999c]) and uses a reference from this to exemplify cuts in opening hours, it did not look at the rest of our work, which calls into question the 'open to all' theory and also the take-up of services by all social classes, and this is a fundamental weakness of this report. This is particularly highlighted in the recommendations in the section on "Social cohesion", where, had our research been used, the results might have been very different.

The report also stated that:

"The concepts of 'social cohesion' and 'social inclusion' are amorphous and complex, making any evaluation of the impact of library services difficult (it will inevitably be only one factor in a much more complex process)." (p17).

which, whilst they may be, does not assist in clarifying anything.

Conclusions

To finish this section, it is worth noting that, despite a long history of involvement by public libraries in the arts, there is still a long way to go [Capital Planning Information, 1999], particularly in terms of networking and resolving differences in structure and policy, and these issues need to be re-examined if tackling social exclusion through cultural activities is to be successful.

There is an urgent need, therefore, for libraries (and archives and museums) to start to collect the relevant evidence to fill these gaps, and to assist in making a stronger case for the role of culture in building community cohesion and tackling social exclusion³⁵.

³⁵ The recently-launched DCMS/IDeA Website, "Cultural Connections", www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=76729) still has only rudimentary information available as to how libraries (and museums, archives and the arts) meet the Shared Priorities.

E: The national context

Section 10: Government departments and other national organisations

Section 11: The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

10. The national context

Work to tackle social exclusion and on building community cohesion quite rightly involves most Government Departments, and, at the moment, is developing extremely quickly – however, this does mean that it is very hard to keep up with who is doing what and with new reports, advice and consultations. The Social Exclusion Unit (see below) does pull together some of this work across the Government, but there is still a lot of material published which appears unrelated to the SEU.

10.1 Government departments

10.1.1 Department for Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS]

DCMS is the Government Department with responsibility for, amongst other things, public libraries, museums and galleries, and archives.

Libraries for all etc

In 1999, DCMS published *Libraries for all* [DCMS, 1999], a consultation document which was compiled by expert practitioners and which identified the role that public libraries could take in tackling social exclusion (with case studies), and which also included a still-useful set of assessment criteria, six steps which can be used to assess where a library service has reached. These are:

- Identify the people who are socially excluded and their distribution. Engage with them and establish their needs
- Assess and review current practice
- Develop strategic objectives and prioritise resources
- Develop the services, and train the library staff to provide them
- Implement the services and publicise them
- Evaluate success, review and improve.

The final results of the consultation were published in 2001 [DCMS, 2001].

Framework for the future

In 2003, DCMS published the milestone report, *Framework for the future* [DCMS, 2003]. This report highlighted a number of major issues for public libraries, including “the tendency for libraries to focus on current users rather than non-users [p20], and the idea that “people who find reading difficult and groups in the community most at risk of social exclusion may find libraries distant or even intimidating places rather than seeing them as symbols of community” [p40].

Framework then identified the three main themes that should be at the core of the “library's modern mission”:

- “The promotion of reading and informal learning,
- Access to digital skills and services, including e-government,

- Measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity and develop citizenship.” [p23]

Specifically, the report stated that:

“All libraries need to work to establish programmes that will engage groups and individuals that are hard to reach by identifying them and establishing what are their particular needs and then by redesigning services where necessary so that there are no barriers to inclusion.” [p41]

Framework has been developed into an action plan by MLA – see below for further details.

In their latest consultation document [DCMS, 2004a], they suggest that culture drives regeneration in many ways, including via the provision of iconic buildings and redevelopment of rural communities. There needs to be a strong emphasis on community consultation and participation, and:

“participation in cultural activities delivers a strong sense of belonging, trust and civic engagement, bringing far-reaching benefits including improvement in education and health, and reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour.” [p4]

This document also identifies three priority areas for action:

1. Building partnerships – nationally, regionally and locally, involving local people as partners
2. Supporting delivery – spreading good practice
3. Strengthening evidence - “finding coherent and robust methods for measuring impacts in the short and long terms” [p5].

DCMS issued in October 2004 the first part of the revised Standards [DCMS, 2004b] – the second part, which will include impact measures, is still under development.

10.1.2 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister [ODPM]

The ODPM leads much of the Government's work on community cohesion/social exclusion.

In their latest statement [ODPM, 2004a], the Government has indicated that community cohesion is one of the shared priorities for central and local government, being reflected in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment for 2005. Amongst other things, the CPA will measure success in mainstreaming community cohesion in its political, policy and planning roles, and in its operational areas. The report also includes an outline of the role that Local Strategic Partnerships can play in promoting community cohesion:

- “encouraging early, ongoing and varied involvement of local organisations ... and residents in developing local solutions to

deprivation, and in designing and delivering programmes and services;

- making sure that decisions on resource allocation take account of local concerns as well as wider considerations. Decisions should be evidence based (this might include soft evidence such as surveys), consider geographical areas, communities of interest, and have a cross-community focus where possible; and
- considering the impact of decisions and actions that could be perceived as favouring particular groups or communities to the detriment of others.”

[p5]

The future of local government

In its 10-year vision for local government [ODPM, 2004c], the ODPM stress the challenges in this agenda which must:

- establish a more coherent and stable relationship between local and central government
- clarify accountabilities and responsibilities at each level for the delivery of services
- improve local community leadership
- increase levels of citizen engagement
- secure improvements in public services
- ensure the finance system is fair and fit for the purpose.

[p9]

There is heavy emphasis on the need to enhance the regional and sub-regional involvement.

The learning curve

In looking at the education and training needs of people working with communities via Neighbourhood Renewal – and which specifically mentioned libraries and museums staff amongst the “professionals” who would be involved – the ODPM [ODPM, 2002a] identified the following skills needs:

- Analytical skills
- Interpersonal skills
 - Strategic leadership
 - Management of people
 - Valuing diversity
 - Partnerships
 - Working with the community
 - Communications
 - Conflict resolution/consensus-building
- Organisational skills
 - Project management
 - Finance and budgeting
 - Research, monitoring, evaluation
 - Risk assessment

- Mainstreaming
- IT.

The intention was that, by employing these skills, there would be changes in behaviour that would become:

- Entrepreneurial
- Problem-solving
- Reflective.

The state of our towns and cities

The ODPM has just announced (October 2004)³⁶ that, in 2005, they will be publishing a full report on *The state of our towns and cities* [SOCR]. This will be an independent report to Government, providing:

- A comprehensive audit of urban conditions in England
- An analysis of urban trends and drivers of change
- An assessment of the contribution of cities to national success
- A review of policy performance in urban areas.

The reports will cover four main themes:

- Governance and the urban impact of policy
- Economic performance of cities
- Social cohesion and exclusion
- Urban liveability.

Case studies will take place in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Derby, Burnley, Leicester, Leeds, Sunderland, Sheffield, and **the Medway Towns** [my emphasis].

10.1.2.1 Social Exclusion Unit [SEU]

The SEU was established in 1997, and, since then, has worked in two ways: firstly, developing general strategies for tackling social exclusion; and, secondly, by focusing on the needs of specific socially excluded groups.

The general strategic approach

In terms of the general strategic approach, much of the Government's thinking was laid out in *A new commitment to neighbourhood renewal* [Social Exclusion Unit, 2001a] which stated that:

“The purpose of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal is to tackle the unacceptably bad conditions in this country's poor neighbourhoods.

³⁶ See

www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_urbanpolicy/documents/page/odpm_urbpol_031647.hcsp.

By focusing on the area aspects of social exclusion, it complements other social exclusion policies that look at particular groups, such as unemployed people, people from ethnic minorities, lone parents or older people, regardless of where they live.”

[Social Exclusion Unit, 2001a, p12]

It introduced the renewed focus on key areas, such as work and enterprise, crime, education and skills, health, and housing and the physical environment; and also introduced Local Strategic Partnerships and Neighbourhood Management in order to empower local communities, with national and regional support.

Two months later, the Government then produced *Preventing social exclusion* [Social Exclusion Unit, 2001b] which set out the Government’s approach and broad goals:

- Preventing social exclusion happening in the first place
- Reintegrating those who become excluded
- Getting the basics right – “delivering basic minimum standards to everyone – in health, education, in-work income, employment, and tackling crime”

These were set within a “Modernising Government” approach which emphasised:

- More open policy-making processes, including those affected by social exclusion and those on whose efforts policy will depend
- Joined-up implementation of policy
- A new emphasis on the link between economic and social policy
- More focus on outcomes
- A “rights and responsibilities” approach “that makes Government help available, but requires a contribution from the individual and the community.”

[taken from Social Exclusion Unit, 2001b, pp6-7]

Whilst neither of these documents focused specifically on libraries, they have had a great influence on the way that services have been targeted and delivered over the last three years.

More recently, the SEU has produced a consultation document, *Tackling social exclusion: taking stock and looking to the future – emerging findings* [Social Exclusion Unit, 2004b] which briefly summarises some of the successes in tackling social exclusion, and then highlights the “remaining challenges”:

- Sustaining progress, particularly to tackle persistent inequalities (eg employment rates, health, low income, educational attainment)
- Helping the hardest-to-reach (eg people with poorer educational qualifications and skills; those without recent work experience; people with poor health and disabilities; those from some ethnic minority)

- groups³⁷; people with personal problems such as alcohol or drug dependency, homelessness or a criminal record)
- Tackling persistent inequalities.

The SEU has just published a series of reports in their “Breaking the Cycle” series. The key report [Social Exclusion Unit, 2004c] takes stock after seven years of work by the SEU. Based on new research and analysis, it outlines:

- Progress to date
- Lessons learned
- Challenges that remain
- Outlines priorities for future action.

Chapter 1 starts by looking at definitions. The report restates the commonly-used definition (“A short-hand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems ...”), but then goes on to say:

“While social exclusion is often associated with highly marginalised groups facing extreme forms of multiple disadvantage, our approach is broader. We also include an understanding of how wider social inequality and intergenerational disadvantage can impact on the causes of social exclusion and the risk of becoming excluded.

This is a deliberately pragmatic and flexible definition. One of the characteristics of social exclusion is that problems are linked and mutually reinforcing ...” [p14]

The report then goes on to highlight examples of exclusion related to the definition (eg family breakdown; discrimination; poor health). It spells out who is at risk – and some of this data is newly-collected, and paints a horrific picture, eg about young people:

- “Children aged 15 years ‘missing’ from schools and not accounted for anywhere else in the system (10,000 in 2003) ...
- 16-18 year-olds not in education, employment or training (177,000)” [p25].

Chapter 2 then gives a brief overview of what the Government has done to date, and Chapter 3 outlines overall progress in tackling social exclusion. Key beneficiaries include children and young people; rough sleepers; unemployed people with increasing opportunities to gain employment; reduction in pensioners living in absolute poverty.

Chapter 4 looks at how progress can be sustained. It highlights how much work still needs to be done, even in areas where there have been improvements (eg combating childhood poverty), and identifies five key problems that continue to drive social exclusion – and which are holding back progress:

³⁷ The report identifies Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups as continuing to fare badly on a range of indicators [Social Exclusion Unit, 2004b, p19].

- Low educational achievement
- Economic inactivity and concentrations of worklessness
- Health inequalities
- Concentrations of crime
- Homelessness.

Chapter 5 looks at equalising opportunity. As the Chapter Summary says:

“... evidence suggests that, in the UK, children’s life chances are still strongly affected by the circumstances of their parents. The social class a child is born into, the socio-economic position of their parents, parental involvement in crime, and parental levels of education and health are still major determinants of a child’s life chances and mean that social exclusion can pass from generation to generation.” [p83]

The Government has therefore introduced a range of policies, seeking to improve life-chances, and this Chapter outlines these, taking the following themes, and assesses how successful policies have been, and what more could be done to improve relative life-chances:

- Education and skills
- Child poverty
- The family and the development of social capital
- Financial assets
- Childhood health
- Discrimination.

Chapter 6 looks at reaching the most disadvantaged, “a generic term concealing a complex pattern of need across different age groups. They include children with behavioural problems and special needs, and those lacking family support, people who are very poor and persistently poor, people who are very old, especially those living alone with a disability, lone parents, those dependent on alcohol or drugs, homeless people, and those who have a criminal record. However, policies consistently find it hard to have a positive effect on three broad, overlapping groups of people:

- People with physical and mental disabilities or chronic health problems.
- Those who lack skills or qualifications, both formal qualifications and broader basic and life skills.
- People from some ethnic minority groups, including asylum seekers and refugees.” [p96]

The Chapter ends with ideas for improving services for the most disadvantaged, including personalised services.

Chapter 7, “Facing the Future”, looks at future trends that may influence the nature of social exclusion over the coming decades. These include:

- Much bleaker prospects for people without skills
- Increasing numbers of very old people
- Risks of poverty for single parents and for person households

- Growing homelessness
- Discrimination
- Health inequalities
- Divisions between those who have access to new technologies and those who do not, and between those who exploit it to the full, and those who do not
- The spatial dimension is likely to persist (ie particular areas are likely to continue to be affected by poor housing and other issues).

Chapter 8 pulls together the key points from the report, and concludes by stating:

“This report challenges public services to make ... a transformation.”
[p138]

By ‘transformation’, they are including:

- Building capacity at the frontline to ensure good services are tailored to meet the requirements of those with complex and multiple needs
- Adding systems to increase accountability.

From September 2004, the SEU has been asked to develop a new work programme. The key groups the Unit has been asked to focus on are:

- Disadvantaged adults including people from some disadvantaged ethnic minority groups, people who have poor basic skills, and those who have health problems or physical and mental disabilities;
- Young adults, aged 16-25, with troubled lives, who may need support to make an effective transition to adulthood;
- Excluded older people;
- People and communities affected by frequently moving home.

The SEU will also be conducting a 12-month programme to promote inclusion through innovation in new technology.

[taken from SEU Website]

Specific socially excluded groups

The SEU has investigated the needs of truants and young people excluded from school [SEU, 1998a]; rough sleepers [SEU, 1998b]; 16-18 year-olds not in education, training or work [SEU, 1999a]; teenage pregnancy [SEU, 1999b]; young runaways [SEU, 2002]; and looked-after children and young people [SEU, 2003].

The latest in the SEU’s reports is that on *Mental health and social exclusion* [Social Exclusion Unit, 2004a] which is a very thorough survey of the current position, and a call for action in the following areas:

- Dealing with stigma and discrimination
- Role of health and social care in tackling social exclusion
- Employment

- Supporting families and community participation
- Getting the basics right – ie access to decent homes, financial advice, and transport
- Making it happen – clear arrangements for leading this programme and maintaining momentum.

10.1.2.2 Neighbourhood Renewal Unit [NRU]

As noted above, *The new commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal* was published in 2001. The Strategy sets out the Government's vision for narrowing the gap between deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country, so that, within 10 to 20 years, no one should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live. The aim is to deliver:

- Economic prosperity;
- Safe communities;
- High quality education;
- Decent housing;
- Better health to the poorest parts of the country.

At national level, the Action Plan is implemented by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) which is part of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

At Regional level, Neighbourhood Renewal teams have been set up in the nine government offices to provide a direct channel of communication from neighbourhood/community groups to the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and will act as:

- facilitators to support the development of Local Strategic Partnerships;
- mediators to resolve difficulties which may arise over the participation of Government agencies in Local Strategic Partnerships, and in the negotiation of partnership and plan rationalisation proposals;
- accreditors to assess whether Neighbourhood Renewal Fund grant conditions are being met and that Local Strategic Partnerships are effective and involve genuine community participation.

[taken from NRU Website]

In 2003, the NRU produced a paper [NRU, 2003], outlining how they intended to mainstream environmental equity and sustainable development into the delivery of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal. This makes the strong argument that:

“It is increasingly recognised that local environmental issues are key considerations for people locally and are crucial to improving quality of life and tackling social exclusion ...”

The NRU has just produced guidelines for involving faith communities in urban and rural regeneration [NRU, 2004]. The guidelines outline the benefits and importance of involving faith communities, look at mapping local

communities, and then describe good practice in making and sustaining contact.

10.1.3 Home Office

The Home Office definition of purpose includes:

- To work with individuals and communities to build a safe, just and tolerant society enhancing opportunities for all and in which rights and responsibilities go hand in hand, and the protection and security of the public are maintained and enhanced
- To support and mobilise communities so that, through active citizenship, they are able to shape policy and improvement for their locality, overcome nuisance, anti-social behaviour, maintain and enhance social cohesion and enjoy their homes and public spaces peacefully.

Its aims include:

- To reduce crime and the fear of crime, tackle youth crime and violent, sexual and drug-related crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder, increasing safety in the home and public spaces
- To reduce the availability and abuse of dangerous drugs, building a coherent, co-ordinated drugs strategy, covering education and prevention, supply and misuse. To focus on effective intelligence and detection, preventative measures at local level, community regeneration, and – with other relevant departments and agencies – the provision of necessary treatment and rehabilitation services. To reduce the incidence of drugs in prisons and provide appropriate follow-up and remedial services.
- To regulate entry to and settlement in the United Kingdom effectively in the interests of sustainable growth and social inclusion. To provide an efficient and effective work permit system to meet economic and skills requirements, and fair, fast and effective programmes for dealing with visitors, citizenship and long term immigration applications and those seeking refuge and asylum. To facilitate travel by UK citizens.
- To support strong and active communities in which people of all races and backgrounds are valued and participate on equal terms by developing social policy to build a fair, prosperous and cohesive society in which everyone has a stake. To work with other departments and local government agencies and community groups to regenerate neighbourhoods, to support families; to develop the potential of every individual; to build the confidence and capacity of the whole community to be part of the solution; and to promote good race and community relations, combating prejudice and xenophobia. To promote equal opportunities both within the Home Office and more widely and to ensure that active citizenship contributes to the enhancement of democracy and the development of civil society.

[taken from the Home Office Website]

The Home Office has recently produced a research report [Home Office, 2004a], identifying hard-to-reach groups as being:

- Minority groups
- People who are “slipping through the net”
- People who are “service resistant”.

It may be useful to ally this report with the SEU’s consultation report [Social Exclusion Unit, 2004b].

In addition, in its consultation document, *Strength in diversity* [Home Office, 2004b], the Home Office sets out its vision for community cohesion and race equality. At present, it does not really include culture, although it does look at some aspects of Britishness. There is a strong lead in terms of ensuring that public sector workforces are representative of the communities they serve, and, in our response [Network, 2004, unpublished], we stress the importance of this, particularly in relation to positive action, training, CPD, and the ‘tone’ of public services.

The Home Office has also identified the following specific areas where the voluntary and community sector could play a greater role in delivering public services relating to community cohesion:

- provision of services and activities which help bring about measurable improvements in race equality
- provision of services and activities to support refugee integration and inclusion, particularly mental health and trauma services and services for children
- provision of services and activities to help communities come together to solve problems and strengthen links
- provision of services to promote language skills and practical knowledge about the UK for refugees and ‘new citizens’

[taken from Futurebuilders, 2004]

10.1.3.1 Community Cohesion Unit [CCU]

The Home Office is also responsible for the CCU:

“The CCU divides its work primarily into 2 main strands.

Firstly, this involves the review of government policy, which is assisted by the Community Cohesion Panel and its practitioner groups. These groups include housing, press and media, regeneration, education to name a few and are made up of individuals independent of government, whose practical knowledge of specific policy areas and local issues is used to analyse policy and to make proposals that are considered by the ministerial group.

Secondly, encouraging and facilitating new learning through the Community Cohesion Pathfinder Programme. This was launched in

April 2003 and has been aimed at building real life examples of areas that are getting community cohesion right.

The ongoing objectives for the programme include:

- Identifying innovative approaches to promoting community cohesion;
- Identifying any barriers to community cohesion;
- Developing learning groups and building organisational capacity and expertise in community cohesion;
- Making recommendations for how resources are best organised to support the processes and disseminating information nationally.”

[Community Cohesion Unit Website]

The Pathfinder Programme has funding provided until September 2004, and aims to produce a 'what works' guide early in 2005. A review of the first six months of operation was published in October 2003 [Home Office, 2003a].

“The fourteen funded programmes were selected to demonstrate the potentially wide application of community cohesion principles in the pursuit of greater social cohesion.”

[Home Office, 2003a, p1]

Key issues and challenges identified at the six-months stage were:

- Engagement with leaders
- working with the voluntary and community sector
- Communication – especially how to communicate with the wider community about community cohesion and what it means
- Sustainability.

The report also identified two specific issues which require more work:

- How to explain the concept of community cohesion in simple, meaningful and direct terms
- How to link cohesion work effectively to complementary national and local activities.

10.1.3.2 Civil Renewal Unit

The Civil Renewal Unit has been created to promote the Home Secretary's agenda for civil renewal, working across the Home Office and Government [see, for example, Rogers and Robinson, 2004].

Civil renewal is both a political philosophy and a practical approach to improving quality of life. It involves local people in identifying and solving the problems that affect their communities, and has three essential ingredients:

- Active citizens who contribute to the common good
- Strengthened communities in which people work together to find

- solutions to problems
- Partnership in meeting public needs, with government and agencies giving appropriate support and encouraging people to take part in democracy and influence decisions about their communities.

The Unit has four sections:

1. Community Development – the task of which is to devise policy to increase people’s active involvement in the governance of their communities
2. Government Action – which ensures that Government departments take the concerns of civil society organisations into account and that these are also reflected in the policies agreed by the Head of Unit, the Director and Ministers in the Home Office.
3. Research and Policy – providing research and policy advice about civil renewal to government and other organisations, especially those in the voluntary and community sectors and in local government.
4. Communications – explaining and promoting civil renewal through speeches, interviews, publications, articles and press announcements, and marketing campaigns in partnership with individuals and organisations who share our interest in civil renewal.

[taken from the Civil Renewal Website]

10.1.3.3 Active Community Unit

The Unit (which is situated within the Home Office’s Active Communities Directorate) aims to promote the development of the voluntary and community sector and encourage people to become actively involved in their communities, particularly in deprived areas. The ACU is responsible for the achievement of the Government’s target of increasing voluntary & community sector activity, including increasing community participation, by 5 per cent by 2006.

The ACU divides its work into three strands:

1. Service Delivery, including policy co-ordination, liaising with other Government departments and with the main voluntary and community sector umbrella bodies; development and implementation of the Compact; removing barriers – funding and procurement issues.
2. Community Participation, including increasing diversity in community participation; managing the mentoring programme; developing policy on corporate community involvement; raising awareness of community involvement through the media; taking forward other initiatives to encourage and facilitate involvement by individuals in volunteering and less formal kinds of community engagement

3. Sector Development, including developing and sustaining more effective and efficient sector support structures and programmes; building capacity in community organisations.

[taken from the Active Community Website]

10.1.4 Department for Education and Skills [DfES]

The Department's aim and objectives are as follows:

To help build a competitive economy and inclusive society by:

- **Creating opportunities** for everyone to develop their learning
- **Releasing potential** in people to make the most of themselves
- **Achieving excellence** in standards of education and levels of skills

With the objectives:

- Give children an excellent start in education so that they have a better foundation for future learning.
- Enable all young people to develop and to equip themselves with the skills, knowledge and personal qualities needed for life and work.
- Encourage and enable adults to learn, improve their skills and enrich their lives.

This is being carried out within the context that:

The Government is working to make Britain a society that is:

- **inclusive:** creating opportunities and removing barriers to ensure that everyone can fulfil their potential; and
- **prosperous:** with individuals able to develop the skills they need to remain employable and for businesses to be internationally competitive.

[taken from DfES, 2002]

DfES have just published the Government's 5-year strategy on learning [DfES, 2004] which highlights the need to focus on particular groups:

“We also fail our most disadvantaged children and young people – those in public care, those with complex family lives, and those most at risk of drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, and involvement in criminal activity. Internationally, our rate of child poverty is still high, as are the rates of worklessness in one-parent families, the rate of teenage pregnancy, and the level of poor diet among children. The links between poor health, disadvantage and low educational outcomes are stark.

But as well as failing those with disadvantages, our system also performs less well than it should for the middle group. In international

comparisons, our top performers help pull up our averages and mask the fact that the middle group – on some reckonings, as much as 40 percent of the population – are not so successful. This large group has also traditionally not had a great deal of attention focused on it. But it is one of the causes of under performance in secondary schools which then feeds into our poor staying-on rates after 16.”

[DfES, 2004]

The strategy also focuses firmly on the role of personalised learning [see below].

10.1.4.1 Children, Young People and Families Directorate

As well as its role in education, DfES has, since the publication of *Every child matters* [DfES, 2003], taken on a wider responsibility for children, for example leading cross-Government on work with looked-after children and young people.

A key area in which DfES is leading is that of ISA [information sharing and assessment] which spells out what information about children and young people Council departments should share and how they should go about it. This development clearly has the potential for affecting libraries' work – although, at present, the system is not fully functioning [Hunter, 2004].

Sure Start

The Sure Start Unit sits within the newly-formed CYPF Directorate. One of the major developments arising from the work that Sure Start has undertaken is the establishment of Children's Centres to provide integrated education, child care, family support and health support. Public libraries are already involved in this initiative (for example in Enfield, Blackburn with Darwen, and Hull), and this initiative is likely to have a long-term impact on library provision [taken from EYLN, 2004].

10.1.4.2 DfES Innovation Unit

The Innovation Unit is currently [September 2004] developing an agenda for “personalised learning”^{38,39} which is likely to have a major impact on public and school libraries⁴⁰, both in terms of the support required for individuals following their personalised learning and also because one way that this is likely to develop is via an increase in participation in out-of-school-hours learning [Schopen, 2004].

³⁸ According to a spokeswoman for the Innovation Unit [quoted in Schopen, 2004], “Individualised learning is sitting and working on your own, maybe through a computer programme, for example ... [p]ersonalised learning is about tailoring education to meet individual needs.” There is an online debate about personalised learning at: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/innovation-unit.

³⁹ There is also an interesting paper by Charles Leadbeater [2004] available on the DfES Website.

⁴⁰ For further discussion of the changing role of school librarians, see Lynn Barrett's recent article in *Update* [Barrett, 2004].

10.1.5 Department of Health [DOH]

The DOH published earlier this year the final Wanless Report [Wanless, 2004] which clearly recognises health inequalities:

“The distribution of goods and services between individuals is dependent on their initial resource endowment; wealthy individuals will gain a greater share of the goods than poorer individuals ... Interventions to tackle market failures could also potentially have a positive contribution to play in reducing health inequalities ...

Income inequalities can also have direct impacts. People on lower incomes have fewer resources to devote to healthy goods and services. They may also be more time constrained ... Finally, with low incomes now, people may not be in the position to consider the future as fully as those on higher incomes ...”

[pp158-159]

Amongst the Report’s recommendations⁴¹ are three for Government which it describes as “immediately relevant and important”:

- “advice should be made freely available in forms, languages, media and locations easily accessible by all;
- periodic communication about the state of public health at national and local levels should be available to encourage the involvement of individuals and organisations; and
- feedback should be sought regularly from the population indicating the degree of awareness about information and the acceptability of state interventions.”

[p165]

The Department of Health has also focused on a number of key issues, including teenage pregnancy, and the Teenage Pregnancy Research Programme has recently looked at sexual behaviour and young parenthood in rural and seaside areas (including Brighton) [DOH, 2004].

10.1.6 Department for Rural Affairs [Defra]

“Defra ... works for the essentials of life – food, air, land, water, people, animals and plants. Our remit is the pursuit of sustainable development – weaving together economic, social and environmental concerns. Defra therefore:

- brings all aspects of the environment, rural matters, farming and food production together
- is a focal point for all rural policy, relating to people, the economy and the environment

⁴¹ Taken from chapter 7 which is available at:
www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/07/61/41/04076141.pdf.

- has roles in both European Union and global policy making, so that its work has a strong international dimension”

[taken from the Defra Website]

Defra provides access via its Sustainable Development Website (www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/indicators/index.htm) to up-to-date information about the Government’s “Indicators of Sustainable Development”⁴². This includes details of the current position of all 147 indicators in the core set, plus information about the “Headline Indicators” – the 15 indicators that form a “quality of life barometer”. These include, under “Social progress”:

- Poverty and social exclusion
- Education
- Health
- Housing
- Crime.

Defra has just produced its *Rural Strategy 2004* [Defra, 2004] which stresses that, amongst the five strategic priorities for creating sustainable communities, is:

- tackling disadvantage by reviving deprived neighbourhoods and tackling social exclusion.

It lists amongst “the issues deliverers will have to weigh”:

- affordable housing
- local transport/accessibility
- post-16 education and training
- children's services
- mental health services
- services for older people
- drug treatment and rehabilitation services
- business support services
- uptake of sport and recreation
- productivity of the tourism industry
- employment rates of disadvantaged groups
- road traffic accidents
- community engagement

and states that the strategy “is to target ... efforts at socially excluded groups and empower them to improve their lives and communities. The voluntary and community sector are often better at doing this than statutory services. So we are funding the sector right across rural areas to improve its capacity to address the particular issues of social exclusion in their counties and at the most appropriate level.”

⁴² This also includes links to work being undertaken by the Scottish Executive and the Welsh Assembly.

Amongst changes introduced via this *Strategy* are the creation of a single funding programme (instead of the range of rural social and community programmes) and the strengthening of the role of Rural Community Councils.

10.1.7 Department for Work and Pensions [DWP]

DWP aims to:

- Sustain a higher proportion of people in work than ever before, while providing security for those who cannot work
- Halve child poverty within a decade and eliminate it in a generation
- Combat poverty and promote security and independence in retirement for today's and tomorrow's pensioners
- Improve the rights and opportunities for disabled people in a fair and inclusive society
- Modernise welfare delivery so as to improve the accessibility, accuracy and value for money of services to our customers.

[taken from the DWP Website]

The DWP was responsible for producing the *United Kingdom National Action Plan on social inclusion 2003-05* [DWP, 2003] which, as well as highlighting good practice in the UK, also provided a practical way for EU Member States to make comparisons between themselves. It also spells out some of the major issues and challenges, including:

- Gender (exclusion issues faced by women)
- Joblessness
- Low income
- Groups at particular risk (children; large families; people from ethnic minorities; disabled people; older people)
- Living in a deprived community
- Rural exclusion
- People whose first language is not English.

10.2 Other national organisations

10.2.1 Local Government Association

The LGA has taken the lead in producing *Guidance on community cohesion* [Local Government Association, 2002] which sets out the importance of engaging with this agenda issue, and outlines approaches in terms of:

- Policy and practice (the role of central government; local context; the value of local strategic partnerships)
- Working with specific communities (faith communities; young people; refugees and asylum-seekers, etc)
- Involving and working with different agencies (eg housing and planning; community safety and policing; press and media).

In its report on “rural revival”, the LGA set as a goal: improved access to

services for young people in rural areas, and stated that DCMS and its agencies should ensure that their policy and programmes encourage activities for young people in rural areas [LGA, 2003a, p17].

10.2.2 Improvement and Development Agency

IDeA has recently published a set of case studies [IDeA, 2004] that demonstrate how cultural services can contribute to the Shared Priorities.

In addition, working with DCMS, IDeA has produced a Web-based resource⁴³, “Cultural Connections”, which shows the contribution of MAL to the Shared Priorities.

10.2.3 Local Government Information Unit

The LGIU has carried out research and published a number of reports on aspects of social exclusion and community cohesion.

They also produce regular briefings for members, and, earlier in 2004, they produced one on accessibility planning⁴⁴ [LGIU, 2004], which drew on and developed the work carried out by the SEU on transport. This briefing outlines the requirement for planners to examine access to the four services identified by the SEU (health; education; work; and food shops); and for local authorities, health authorities and regional development agencies to evaluate the location of relevant sites, such as schools, training colleges, hospitals and surgeries, and to re-look at the organisation of services.

The LGIU has also launched a new Charter to shape national policies that will form the framework for local councils after the next general election [LGIU, 2004a, quoted in Sorabji, 2004], which, amongst other aims, seeks “an acceleration of local council experiments with new ways to engage and empower communities ...”

10.2.4 Institute for Public Policy

IPPR aims to engage civil society in informed political and policy debate, and has an Arts and Culture Research Programme. In May 2004, they published *For art's sake? Society and the arts in the 21st century* [Cowling, 2004] which argues that the arts must begin to develop a robust evidence-base that underpins the unique contribution that the arts can make to society. It focuses in particular on the areas of mental health, education and offender rehabilitation.

A forthcoming IPPR research project, “Culture, Community and Civil Renewal”, will examine the role that heritage and cultural policy can play in

⁴³ As far as I can see, this is currently (October 2004) available only at: www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pageId=76729.

⁴⁴ Further information on accessibility planning is available at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_localtrans/documents/page/dft_localtrans_023937.hcsp.

developing social capital, bridging diverse cultural communities and encouraging active citizenship. The objectives of this project are to:

- gather evidence of the impact of arts, heritage and cultural activity on civil renewal
- identify research gaps
- examine best practice
- provide a road map of how cultural and heritage policy can best contribute to civil renewal.

The research is interested in what current projects demonstrate best practice, what works and what does not, what support is necessary to develop sustainable impacts and how current agencies can best contribute⁴⁵.

10.2.5 Countryside Agency

The Countryside Agency is working to identify and tackle social exclusion in rural areas. As they stated in *Not seen, not heard?* [Countryside Agency, 2000, quoted in MacKeith and Osborne, 2003]:

“Great hardship [arises] from low income, lack of a secure home, difficulties reaching health care and services, social isolation and powerlessness – the kinds of problems which together can lead to social exclusion. The disadvantages [people in rural areas] face are every bit as acute as those for people in urban areas. The difference is that they are often hidden, obscured in the wider community alongside people in very different circumstances ...”

10.2.6 Employers' Organisation for Local Government

The Employers' Organisation (together with the LGA, the Association of London Government, Stonewall and UNISON) has produced guidance [Employers' Organisation, 2003] for local authorities working with lesbian, gay and bisexual communities, which, as well as giving some useful starters, works through:

- Corporate planning
- Service delivery and customer care
- Community development and involvement
- Local authority employees
- Monitoring and evaluation.

The Employers Organisation also has some useful pointers for local authorities with small Black and ethnic minority populations on their Website at: www.lg-employers.gov.uk/diversity/race/bme, which, as well as giving some useful starters, works through:

- Corporate planning
- Service delivery and customer care
- Community development and involvement

⁴⁵ This information has been taken from Culture South West, 2004.

- Local authority employees
- Monitoring and evaluation.

10.2.7 Economic and Social Research Council

The ESRC published a report in 2003 [Scharf et al, 2003], looking at the needs of older people in deprived neighbourhoods, and the report concluded:

“These findings present an important challenge to policy makers. There is a need for contemporary urban and social policy to consider the position of older people in deprived areas in terms of their potential vulnerability to the multiple risks of poverty and social exclusion.”

10.2.8 CASE

The ESRC Research Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) was established in October 1997 with funding from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

The core research of CASE is divided between five inter-related strands: economic exclusion and income dynamics; social welfare institutions; family change and civil society; community, area polarisation and regeneration; and exclusion and society. Its aim is to understand the dynamic processes at work within its areas of study and to investigate the individual characteristics and social institutions which prevent exclusion, and promote recovery, regeneration and inclusion.

10.2.9 National Literacy Trust

The NLT is at the half-way stage of 3-year project, “Literacy and Social Inclusion”⁴⁶, and has produced a discussion paper [NLT, 2004]. In a recent article [Bird, 2004] summarising the project, Viv Bird argues for greater family involvement in literacy work, and also suggests that there is a powerful role *for* arts, sport and ICT to motivate disaffected young people and ‘at risk’ adults to improve their literacy skills.

⁴⁶ Further information from: www.literacytrust.org.uk/socialinclusion.

11. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council [MLA]

MLA provides strategic guidance, advice and advocacy across the whole of Government on museum, library and archives matters.

Amongst its priorities in its Operational and Strategic Plan for 2004/5-2006/7 [MLA, 2004d] are to:

- Contribute to community cohesion
- Foster and celebrate diversity
- Ensure accessibility at all levels.

Framework for the future

As noted above, in 2003, DCMS published the report, *Framework for the future* [DCMS, 2003]. The MLA have recently produced a revised action plan [MLA, 2004e], and are now in the throes of working with a number of agencies to carry out a vast range of activities, including developing a series of national offers for public libraries [see, for example, McKearney, 2004].

At the recent CILIP Youth Libraries Group Conference, Jonathan Douglas (Head of Learning and Access, MLA) spoke about the *Framework for the Future* national offers. In doing so, he outlined the key policy issues which we need to address as:

- The shift to a skills-based economy
- The crisis in citizenship, identity and community
- The drive to modernise public services
- Vulnerability of children.

The key cultural drivers for libraries, archives and museums are:

- A multi-literate society (by which he meant written, visual, emotional, etc)
- Diversity
- Choice
- Personalisation
- Individualisation, rather than communities
- Value being seen only as a monetary concept.

Investing in knowledge

In *Investing in knowledge* [MLA, 2004c], the MLA give a vision of how they see museums, libraries and archives in 2009:

- “Communities involve themselves in the creation and running of their local integrated museum, library and archive services, supporting community identity and citizenship.
- Museums, libraries and archives play a key part in programmes

tackling social issues such as health, crime reduction and prevention and environmental improvement.

- Local services for local people. Museums, libraries and archives support and reflect diverse cultures. There is no exclusion through age, background or ability. One experiences and learns from the past and creates a record of the present so that the next generation can do the same.” [p5]

Inspiring learning for all

Inspiring learning for all [MLA, 2004b] has been developed to enable libraries, museums and archives to begin to assess their practice against Generic Learning Outcomes [GLOs]. The GLOs are based around five key themes, and have been tested by a number of MAL and other agencies (eg to assess the impact of the Summer Reading Challenge). The themes are:

- Knowledge and Understanding
- Skills
- Attitudes and Values
- Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity
- Activity, Behaviour and Progression.

As their use grows, so there will be developed a body of evidence of the impact of libraries on the wider learning agenda – and this will also relate closely to their role in building community cohesion.

“Access for All” toolkit

In February 2004, MLA published an updated version of their “Access for All” toolkit which looks at how libraries, archives and museums can become more inclusive; it ties in closely to *Inspiring learning for all* objectives and practice (and is due to be further revised to match the Disability toolkits).

Workforce Development Strategy

In its Strategy [MLA, 2004f], MLA have stressed the importance of the development of skills to enable MAL staff to tackle social exclusion and build community cohesion.

F: The South East

Section 12: The Regional context in the South-East
(Government departments and offices; Other organisations)

12. The Regional context in the South-East

This section looks at the range of bodies in the Region, that are concerned with social exclusion, social inclusion and community cohesion.

12.1 Government departments and offices in the South East

12.1.1 Government Office South East [GOSE]

GOSE produced a *Social inclusion statement* [GOSE, n.d.] on behalf of key agencies⁴⁷ in the South East. This Statement is a 'blueprint' for future working across agencies and within communities, and it includes a very useful summary of deprivation within the Region. The Statement takes as its definition of social inclusion that provided by Duffy [1995]:

“an inability (of individuals) to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life; alienation and distance from mainstream society”.

The Home Office Team at GOSE have amongst their current priorities:

- “1. To reduce crime, especially
 - violence (including robbery, domestic violence and hate crime)
 - burglary
 - car crime and
 - anti-social behaviour (ASB)in order to maintain the South East as one of the safest parts of the United Kingdom, in spite of the changing demographics of the region, so that the South East can be recognised internationally as a safe place to live and work
2. To reduce crime in the South East's 12 crime priority areas
3. To reduce the fear of crime
4. To reduce problematic drug use by
 - educating and supporting young people
 - supporting communities to resist drugs
 - increasing access to drug treatment
 - reducing the supply and availability of drugs
5. To promote racial equality and community cohesion, especially in the ethnically mixed areas of the South East
6. To promote civil renewal, community involvement and the engagement of the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in social

⁴⁷ As well as GOSE itself, the other agencies involved were SEERA, the Housing Corporation, the Health Development Agency, RAISE [Regional Action and Involvement in the South East – the regional voluntary/community sector network], SEEDA and the Social Services Inspectorate.

inclusion

7. To ensure a full, effective and timely spend of crime reduction, drugs and VCS funding”

Amongst their additional priorities at the moment are:

1. To reduce the impact on local communities of prolific offenders (including problematical drug users and those leaving treatment, youth custody and prison)
8. To disseminate community cohesion learning and skills
9. To build a fuller picture of local community cohesion issues across the South East
10. To help the Social Inclusion Partnership Southeast (SIPSE) achieve observable outcomes in relation to black and minority ethnic communities and race equality
13. To ensure the success of the Development Fund Community Involvement and Connecting Communities Projects.

Amongst the Special issues in relation to local authorities and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships [CDRPs] established under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 is:

4. To ensure that proper attention is given to high-risk families and children most at risk (eg siblings of prolific offenders, children of drug taking parents and looked-after children) and that young people under the age of 25 have better access to drug education, prevention and treatment services

Finally, issues which apply to individual GOSE areas include:

1. In Thames Valley:

- to reduce crime in the crime priority areas of Reading, Slough, Oxford and South Buckinghamshire
- to future-proof the growth area of Milton Keynes/Aylesbury
- to support the intensive Criminal Justice Intervention Programmes (CJIP) in Reading and Slough
- to support Slough's development of community cohesion
- to encourage Milton Keynes, Oxford, Reading and Wycombe to have a community cohesion strategy
- to promote community engagement in respect of IND's Bicester accommodation centre
- to follow up the sub regional VCS compact event

2. In Hampshire and the Isle of Wight:

- to reduce crime in the crime priority areas of Southampton and Portsmouth
- to encourage Portsmouth and Southampton to have a community cohesion strategy
- to follow up on the sub regional VCS compact event

3. In Surrey and East and West Sussex:

- reduce crime in the crime priority areas of Hastings, Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne and Spelthorne
- to make Clacket Lane a safe motorway service station
- to encourage Brighton & Hove, Crawley, Hastings and Woking to have a community cohesion strategy
- to hold a sub regional VCS compact promotion event

4. In Kent:

- to reduce crime in the crime priority areas of Dartford & Gravesham BCU and Medway
- to future-proof the growth area of Ashford and the Thames Gateway
- to encourage Ashford, Dover, Thanet and the Thames Gateway to have a community cohesion strategy
- to hold a sub regional VCS compact promotion event

[GOSE Website]

12.1.1.1 The GOSE Community Cohesion Network

The Government Office for the South East has been given the regional responsibility by the Home Office to support local authorities and other agencies in promoting community cohesion; gather good regional information on issues affecting community cohesion in the SE and ensure SE agencies learn about good practice from each other and from the Home Office-funded national pathfinder programme. GOSE is keen that consideration of community cohesion should be wider than race equality and should encompass faith, gender, age and such concerns as economic disadvantage and rural issues⁴⁸.

Membership of the network is made up of colleagues with responsibility for local community cohesion strategies from 14 priority local authorities and their police partners; representatives from other regional organisations that have a particular interest in community cohesion and GOSE colleagues with the regional lead on community cohesion. The network meets on a bi-monthly basis and GOSE's community policy team manages administrative arrangements.

12.1.2 South East England Cultural Consortium [SEEC]

The cultural agenda

Established in 2000, the SEEC published its first strategic statement in 2001 [SEEC, 2001] and used this as the basis for developing an initial work

⁴⁸ According to Julie Wootton [2004], the Network Coordinator, they are looking at anything that could lead to "community tension" (eg intergenerational conflict, issues about Travellers, problems with a military presence).

programme which was published as *The cultural agenda* in 2002 [SEEC, 2002]⁴⁹. In defining culture [p1], SEEC sees “cultural activity as fundamental to people's health, well-being, and the quality of life in the Region”. They also see cultural activities as “key drivers of prosperity and social cohesion, not merely the effects of these ...” [p1].

The document lists 14 Objectives. Of particular relevance are:

- Objective 2 – Ensure culture plays its full role in urban and rural renaissance
- Objective 4 – Work to ensure better public understanding of the cultural dividend by gathering and promoting evidence demonstrating the contribution culture makes to economic, social and environmental well-being
- Objective 5 – Promote and develop the use of cultural activities to combat social exclusion [see below]

Under Objective 5 [p6], the document states:

“One of the Consortium's core aims, in support of the South East Region Social Inclusion Statement, is to promote the development and use of cultural activities in engaging groups at risk of exclusion, celebrating the diversity of the Region and releasing the potential of all communities to contribute to and share in the Region's success ...

It then goes on to list seven actions to be taken:

5.1 “Strive to ensure that cultural activities play a full role in helping to achieve the Social Inclusion Statement's aim of reducing the gap between the 119 most deprived wards and the rest of the Region by 10% by 2010.

5.2 Ensure that all local and regional strategies and plans recognise the value of culture as a tool to further social inclusion, reduce health inequalities and promote neighbourhood renewal, and specify measures to maximise inclusion and participation in the cultural life of the community.

5.3 Produce an annual compendium statement, for the purposes of information sharing and advocacy, demonstrating the actions being undertaken by the regional cultural agencies to promote social inclusion.

5.4 Promote coherent strategies for targeting funding and other support towards groups at particular risk of exclusion.

5.5 Collate and review existing regional research into levels of participation, and barriers to participation, to enable priorities for action and further research to be identified.

5.6 Promote the adoption of workforce development plans within the cultural sector that both recruit from target communities and address the skills gap in order to build a workforce able to provide an inclusive service.

⁴⁹ *The cultural agenda* is currently under review.

5.7 Identify and collate instances of the significant contributions made by ethnic minorities, including those granted asylum, to the cultural life of the Region, and showcase these through publication and advocacy.” [p6]

The cultural sector and the emerging South East Plan

The SEECC is particularly keen to see a cultural dimension added to the South East Plan, and they commissioned Oxford Brookes University to produce a report [Elson and Downing, 2004], identifying key cultural issues of significance to the Plan. The report includes a section on the priorities of agencies in the South East, including SEMLAC.

The report indicates the importance of culture, but suggests that “much existing cultural activity is disparate and unco-ordinated [sic] ... Agencies should think in terms of the following sequence:

- How supportable is the background evidence;
- Which strategy frameworks and policy vehicles are likely to be most successful in implementation; and
- What policies for cultural aspects should be included in the SEPlan?” [Elson and Downing, 2004, p26]

The report also recommends:

- “Culture proofing” the Plan – listing areas within “the cultural spectrum that the Plan could be expected to cover, and then investigating policy documents for this content as they emerge” (p26)
- SEECC should produce a response to the Growth Areas developments (including types of cultural provision appropriate at city, town and neighbourhood levels and for groupings of rural settlements
- Re-evaluating plans for service delivery and development to include the possibility of innovative mixes and types of facility. The report mentions:
 - “Discovery centre
 - Healthy living centre
 - Culture hub
 - Sub regional multi-sports hub
 - Ideas shop
 - Multi sports club
 - Innovation centre
 - Museum hub” [p27]
- Preparing a report to evaluate and celebrate the delivery of the cultural contribution in the Region.

12.1.3 South East England Development Agency [SEEDA]

In their *Regional economic strategy* [SEEDA, 2001), SEEDA identified that, although the South East is the second most prosperous region in the UK, there are pockets of severe deprivation.

“In particular, the coastal fringes of the region are performing significantly below regional and national average levels. In addition, deprivation exists in some urban areas, including the Thames Valley – arguably the most prosperous sub-region of the South East ...

... the South East has the lowest ILO unemployment rate in the UK but, in absolute terms, the region has the third highest number of unemployed people in England ...” [p44]

The SEEDA report also identified high levels of essential/basic skills needs, with, in addition, over 600,000 people of working age having no qualifications.

One in 11 South East residents were living in areas that are amongst England's most deprived localities: this includes over half the population of Thanet, over one third of the population of Southampton, and over ¼ of the population of Brighton and Hove.

SEEDA's key priorities for 2003-2006 include:

- Promoting workplace learning, and encouraging work life balance
- Maximising employability and involvement for all, especially groups facing exclusion, discrimination and labour market disadvantage
- Implementing a comprehensive network of basic skills provision
- Developing and promoting models for social dialogue, and encouraging 'smarter' ways of working
- building communities' capacity through regional networks and community managed organisations
- Harnessing creative, culture and sports activities to support neighbourhood renewal.

[from SEEDA, 2003, quoted in Thebridge, Nankivell and Kane, 2004]

12.1.4 South East England Regional Assembly [SEERA]

SEERA defined its contribution to the development of Regional policies to tackle social exclusion via a time-limited Select Committee which reported in September 2000 [SEERA, 2000].

The report re-emphasised that social inclusion

“is also a key dimension of the aspiration for well-being that lies at the heart of the Assembly's vision for the region.” [p1]

There were 22 findings, of which the following are the most significant:

- i) Social inclusion is not the same as neighbourhood renewal.
- ii) Social exclusion is an individual/household problem, and needs to be tackled on that basis; neighbourhood or community measures can be vital in reinforcing individually targeted measures, but they are not a substitute for them.
- iv) The fact that there is no critical mass of deprivation in an area does not diminish the experience of social exclusion for those who are excluded.
- ix) The socially excluded are often also politically excluded ...
- xiii) Physical exclusion is a significant dimension of social exclusion: adequate and affordable public transport is a high priority.
- xv) Health is a key issue at the heart of social exclusion.
- xvi) Faith communities could play a powerful role in promoting social inclusion.
- xxii) Social inclusion efforts are required across the region as a whole, while job creation initiatives should be focused on the acknowledged priority areas.

[pp2-3]

These definitions are drawn together in the SEERA Plenary Session (April 2004) Discussion Paper [SEERA, 2004a] as:

“The term social inclusion to tackling the exclusion of individuals, neighbourhoods, districts and communities of interest.” [p2]

This paper also identifies a number of “key challenges that may contribute further to the problems of exclusion in the South East, including:

- An ageing population, including increased numbers of very old and frail people ...
- More single parents and single person households, and more step-families.
- An enduring risk of persistent poverty among certain groups of the population, such as those with mental ill-health, those with chaotic lifestyles, children leaving care and some ex-prisoners with the associated risks this brings including long term unemployment, ill-health, poor housing or homelessness and low educational achievement.
- Acute problems for some ethnic minority including the low educational attainment of some Caribbean boys and the persistent poverty of some Pakistani/Bangladeshi families.
- The continued polarisation of work – between work-rich and work-poor households and between highly skilled and highly paid and low-skilled and low paid workers often with insecure employment.
- An increasing digital divide i.e. Those with or without access and abilities to use new technologies such as the Internet.” [pp3-4]

The report then looks at three key policy themes: health; education and skills; and culture and sport [pp7-15]. It raises concerns about access, and makes a strong case for the importance of culture – but, in the end, focuses primarily on the role of sports, rather than libraries (or museums or archives).

In its Integrated Regional Framework⁵⁰, [SEERA, 2004b], the Regional Assembly highlighted a number of “issues and conflicts” which need to be addressed. These include:

- reducing social exclusion and poverty and spreading economic benefits more widely
- improving the overall levels of health of people living in the region
- adapting to the needs of an ageing population
- improving educational attainment and skills levels.

The Framework also includes indicators which may be used to demonstrate that the various objectives are being met – however, this does not have any specifically related to libraries (or other cultural agencies).

SEERA have also contributed to the Planning Statement regarding the Thames Gateway [ODPM, 2004b], which states:

“Balanced communities will only evolve if they have the schools, health facilities, cultural and leisure facilities and other community services that together offer a good quality of life” [p21]

12.1.5 The South East Museums, Libraries and Archives Council [SEMLAC]

SEMLAC is the Regional Agency for the South East. Its strategy document, *Realising our potential* [SEMLAC, 2002a and 2002b], sets out its aims and direction for 2002-2006, and there is further information available on the Website at: www.semlac.org.uk.

12.2 Other Regional organisations

There has also been some specific research, looking at issues of race and gender in the school-to-work transition for young people in Reading and Slough [Bowlby, Lloyd Evans and Roche, 2004].

12.3 Libraries in the South-East and their contribution to the Regional Agendas

There is a useful summary of library provision in the South East, giving number and types of libraries, and providing links to their Websites (where applicable) on the SEMLAC Website at www.semlac.org.uk/libraries.html and www.semlac.org.uk/libraries1.html.

⁵⁰ The purpose of the Integrated Regional Framework is to establish a shared regional vision and set of objectives.

G: Resources

Section 15: Bibliography; Websites; Emails, telephone discussions, etc

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ALM London

<http://lmal.org.uk>

CASE

<http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case/>

Civil Renewal Unit

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/active/civil/index.html

Commission for Racial Equality

www.cre.gov.uk

Community Cohesion Unit

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/org/dob/direct/ccu.html

Community Development Foundation

www.cdf.org.uk

DCMS

www.culture.gov.uk

Defra

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DWP

www.dwp.gov.uk

Futurebuilders

www.futurebuilders-england.org.uk

Government Office for the South East

www.go-se.gov.uk

Higher Education South East

www.hese.ac.uk

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Home Office

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

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Not for the likes of you

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Appendix 2: Recommendations from the Cattle Report

“6.1 The rights – and in particular – the responsibilities of citizenship need to be more clearly established and we would expect to see some, or all, of the issues identified in Chapter 5, strongly featured. This should then be formalised into a form of statement of allegiance.

6.2 However, this should follow an honest and open national debate, led by Government and heavily influenced by younger people. We believe that this should be initiated very quickly and lead directly to a programme of action.

6.3 The debate should ensure that in particular, it can relate to the most disadvantaged and disaffected groups.

6.4 We believe that this is a huge task in itself but, and as our list of recommendations demonstrates, there is much to be done to ensure that many further practical steps are now taken. We therefore propose that a powerful Task Force be established to oversee the development and implementation stages.

6.5 Strong local leadership is an essential part of community cohesion and the Local Government Association should prepare guidance notes based on best practice. An inter-agency support group should also be established with a wide range of local representatives to assist the Task Force proposed in section 5.1.

6.6 As part of the Community Strategy, each local area should prepare a plan to improve community cohesion, following a local debate, based on the themes identified in this report and other local factors. This should be run in parallel with the national debate and each should inform the other.

6.7 Local political and community leaders should also prepare a communication strategy which enables community cohesion plans to be articulated, constantly updated and translated into an action plan with measurable outcomes. This should require the establishment of various cross community fora, involving representatives of sections of the community and charged with developing new approaches to fostering understanding and collaboration.

6.8 These approaches should be developed on a more localised area basis, wherever practicable.

6.9 The community cohesion strategy for each area should include a new and vigorous approach to recruitment, and career progression, in all key agencies, such as the police, local authorities, health authorities and regeneration agencies. Challenging and measurable targets should be set. This work should be co-ordinated at a local level and linked to initiatives by private sector employers (see Chapter 5.13) This should also attempt to tackle some of the 'post code discrimination' faced by potential employees on some (predominantly white) estates.

6.10 Extensive diversity education and training in all key agencies will also be required, to recognisable standards. It should be undertaken by local communities themselves as part of a programme of cross cultural contact.

6.11 Each mainstream political party must re-visit its code of conduct and the measures it takes to enforce it at a local level, in respect of community relations. It is suggested that a cross-party statement be prepared to set standards of behaviour and that this be established as an expectation for all local councillors, candidates and party activists. This should not attempt to silence debate, but ensure that the debate is conducted in a responsible manner. This should be in place prior to the local elections in May 2002.

6.12 Training and development for councillors and community leaders should be mandatory and greatly extended in this area. Political parties should also provide diversity education and training.

6.13 The conduct and probity of all those involved in local politics needs to be re-examined and a specific initiative should be undertaken by the Local Government Standards Board and other representatives from the local government community to pro-actively and positively concerns such as 'sweetheart deals' and 'back home' politics.

6.14 The concept of probity will require redefinition or clarification to specifically tackle the problem of the provision of mono-cultural community facilities in exchange for political allegiance from specific communities.

6.15 Each LSP should draw up a communications strategy which ensures a much fuller understanding of its programmes and priorities. This should include a training package for LSP members and formal links to a network of community organisations across the area. Resources will be required to facilitate this, but for the most part these can be provided through the capacity building elements of regeneration programmes.

6.16 However, LSPS should avoid linking each member to particular groups or areas which may lead to the development a silo mentality which mitigates [sic] against a partnership approach. The emphasis should also be firmly on inclusive communications, not simply on those areas that are the focus of the latest initiative.

6.17 The accreditation process should be amended to ensure that it will depend not only upon the representative nature of its members, but a more strategic approach to diversity issues, expressed through its community cohesion plan.

6.18 April 2003 should be established as a target for the production of the Community Cohesion component of the Community Strategy.

6.19 All LSPs should ensure that their Regeneration Strategy and other plans clearly locate all initiatives within an overall framework with so that it is easier for particular communities to test the equity of future plans.

6.20 Central Government and its agencies should relate funding to mainstream resources by developing 'Regeneration PSAs' negotiated through one regional body, (presumably Government Offices or a stronger RCU) which can develop longer term approaches with less reliance on initiatives, embracing all partner bodies.

6.21 This regional body should broker funding on behalf of others utilising a common system of application and monitoring, as part of longer term regeneration agreements.

6.22 All such agreements (and the strategies upon which they depend) should be scrutinised for the impact that they will have upon community cohesion.

6.23 Local partnerships should be asked to consider plans and funding applications specifically to address community cohesion in their area. We believe that imaginative approaches to this, for example, through sports and arts programmes, should be developed. LSPs should also automatically consider the impact of all proposals in respect of community cohesion.

6.24 Local partnerships should also be asked to develop a wide range of thematic bids as a more flexible and more equitable approach to regeneration, which whilst still allowing for area treatment, can focus on specific needs in all local communities. We would suggest that these are targeted at the needs of younger people, in particular and that they attempt to redress some of the acute problems of segregation of, and lack of contact between, particular communities. They must, of course, also recognise that poverty and deprivation have to be the primary focus of regeneration plans.

6.25 The impact of changes to ethnicity indicators should be re-considered, with a view to ensuring that needs are addressed and that funding changes are managed. This applies, in particular, to support for improving educational achievement.

6.26 A very frank and honest analysis of the nature of the separation of each community should be undertaken at a local level to underpin the production of a Community Cohesion Strategy (see Chapter 5.1 above).

6.27 Programmes must be devised, as part of the Community Cohesion Strategy, with support at a national level, to promote contact and understanding between and within, the black and ethnic minorities, and the white community and faiths.

6.28 Other recommendations on this issue are contained under each of the relevant section headings. Many involve educational measures and should take the opportunity to do some powerful 'myth busting'.

6.29 A well resourced programme of engaging young people in the decision making process affecting their communities should be established, possibly by developing the Youth Parliament scheme. The form of engagement should respect the needs and style of young people, not replicate existing institutions.

The aim should be to develop a permanent and robust infrastructure, with direct access to policy makers at a national and local level.

6.30 Resources should be made available to young persons groups themselves, on an executive basis, providing that they cross cultural and other boundaries (in line with our recommendations for all community groups).

6.31 However, a major review of youth services is now urgently required, with new provision developed on a more joined up basis. A stronger linkage between school based programmes (and outreach work), the voluntary sector and the various statutory services is essential.

6.32 We believe that some aspects of youth provision should be considered for a clear statutory role, to a given national standard. This must take account of resource requirements and but may gain efficiency and clarity from the rationalisation of existing services.

6.33 However, new methods of service delivery seem to offer a greater prospect of success and there must be a clear aim of reaching out to disaffected youth in more engaging ways, perhaps by using peers, positive role models and individual capacity building programmes.

6.34 The production of a Community Cohesion Strategy (see Chapter 5.2 above) should embrace the school citizenship curriculum (a compulsory subject from September 2002), but not limited to it. It should also ensure the active support of parents and embrace the cross-community programmes recommended in relation to schools.

6.35 Summer provision should be developed into an all year round service as part of mainstream provision.

6.36 All schools should be under a statutory duty to promote a respect for, and an understanding of, the cultures in the school and neighbouring areas, through a programme of cross-cultural contact. This could be an expansion of the introduction of citizenship education from September 2002. Schools should not be afraid to discuss difficult areas and the young people we met wanted to this opportunity and should be given a safe environment in which to do so.

6.37 This duty would also entail twinning between schools to compensate for lack of contact with other cultures in the school environment. This should embrace both curriculum and non-curriculum areas and should be recognised as a demanding but, potentially very worthwhile, requirement.

6.38 All schools should consider ways in which they might ensure that their intake is representative of the range of cultures and ethnicity in their local communities. Ideally admissions policies should avoid more than 75% of pupils from one culture or ethnic background in multi-cultural areas. They will need in any case to adopt a positive approach to the new duty under the race relations legislation.

6.39 Church and faith leaders should take advantage of their special arrangements and voluntarily limit the faith intake in both new and existing independent and state sector schools. This should again be by offering, at least 25% of, places to other faiths or denominations and would immediately be more inclusive and create a better representation of all cultures or ethnicities. This would be consistent with Lord Dearing's recent report in respect of CoE schools. It would also be consistent with the desire of church leaders to promote religious tolerance and understanding and help to embed the new discrimination legislation. In some cases, this may similarly require support.

6.40 All schools should ensure that, in teaching programmes and their daily activities, they respect the needs of different faith and cultures that make up the school and be inspected to this effect.

6.41 Supplementary schools should be funded principally for basic education, such as literacy and incentivised to provide cross cultural programmes. Pre-school programmes can also provide an opportunity for cross-cultural development.

6.42 A review of FE and HE on an area by area basis should be undertaken to ensure that opportunities are equally available to all sections of the community and that barriers are addressed.

6.43 The recruitment of ethnic minority teachers and governors also requires review, as does diversity training for all staff and governors. The problem of the lack of male teachers also needs to be addressed and could help significantly with later problems of disaffected youth.

6.44 Each community should review the present arrangements for cross cultural joint working, with a view to maximising contact, awareness and inter-community activities.

6.45 Funding bodies should presume against separate funding for distinct communities, and require collaborative working, save for those circumstances where the need for funding is genuinely only evident in one section of the community and can only be provided separately. Funding should allow for this change to take place over a period of time.

6.46 Funding should therefore, be generally be provided on a thematic basis, for example in respect of immigration advice, literacy, capacity building etc., and based on needs across communities.

6.47 Funding and support should not follow an assumption that all black and ethnic minority needs are greater than other sections of the community, nor should a similar assumption be made where the bid is predominantly featuring the white community. Bids should be based on evidenced need, on a thematic basis, rather than particular communities and should not generally relate to areas that reinforce cultural boundaries (see also regeneration funding above).

6.48 Representation should be drawn from both white and non-white communities and the white community should be encouraged to develop a leadership capacity in the same way as the black and ethnic minority communities.

6.49 Further study (and action programmes) will be required to tackle those high risk areas, for example, in white areas where racism and intolerance is likely to develop and for youths of Pakistani origin where disaffection is clearly a problem at present. Islamaphobia also needs to be addressed as part of this work.

6.50 Local authorities and police authorities should establish a protocol of support and ensure that there are clear agreements in place to enable serious problems of both criminality and tensions between communities to be tackled with the strong backing of both sides.

6.51 A good practice guide on communications systems with all sections of the community should be developed, particularly with young people.

6.52 This should embrace some of the arrangements presented to us which has required the reorganisation of police duties and of the designation of clear 'patch responsibilities'. This was seen to facilitate a network of formal and informal contacts between the police and community.

6.53 It is important that the lack of financial rewards and career progression within, the field of community policing, especially in difficult inner city areas, is addressed.

6.54 A more pro-active approach with regard to the banning of potentially inflammatory marches, demonstrations and assemblies could apparently be taken by some forces and clear guidance should be issued nationally in this respect.

6.55 Models of diversity training should be examined to ensure an appropriate level of quality.

6.56 New and more radical measures need to be taken in respect of ethnic minority recruitment and several suggestions were put forward to us which should be evaluated.

6.57 Housing agencies must urgently assess their allocation systems and development programmes with a view to ensuring more contact between different communities and to reducing tension. They must also consider the impact on other services, such as youth provision and health. It is also essential that more ambitious and creative strategies are developed to provide more mixed housing areas, with supportive mechanisms for minorities facing intimidation and harassment.

6.58 The impact of housing policies and programmes on school catchment areas in particular, should be subject to review and a significant part of each local Community Cohesion Strategy.

6.59 The problem of low demand housing in the North West should be separately considered and pilot programmes developed to attempt to re-establish viable housing markets and stem decline. The impact of economic strategies on housing markets will also need to be carefully considered.

6.60 Housing expenditure is capital intensive and represents a long term investment in the social infrastructure. As such it possibly distorts regeneration programmes and may lead to an overconcentration on area based programmes. We believe some separate identification of funding is desirable with a clearer focus on regeneration from thematic people-led schemes whilst not detracting from the target to tackle poor housing in the social sector.

6.61 Regeneration and other programmes should consider employment and training initiatives (including basic skills) as priority programmes. These represent an ideal opportunity for thematic cross-cultural approaches, based on the needs of all communities.

6.62 The emphasis should switch over time to school based schemes (and outreach from schools) to prevent disaffection and under achievement at the earliest possible stage.

6.63 Local authorities, LSCs, the Employment Service and other agencies should pioneer compacts with local employers (including those representing SMEs and the self employed) to ensure fair choice of all occupations.

6.64 A revision of existing employment initiatives is also required.

6.65 A similar initiative should be taken with representatives of different communities to attempt to provide a more positive approach to the promotion of non-typical careers (including the Police and statutory agencies), on a voluntary basis.

6.66 We recommend that discussions be held with a range of regional newspaper editors (and media representatives) to establish a voluntary code of guidance, facilitated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and their representative bodies, on all aspects of community cohesion.

6.67 We also recommend that this be developed into an opportunity to facilitate the debate referred to in Chapter 5.1.”

Appendix 3: Project contacts

Julie Wootton (GOSE Community Cohesion Network)

Appendix 4: Other sources of information

Helen Carpenter (Urban Explorers)
Adrian Clement (then CILIP Information Team)
Guy Daines (CILIP)
Gill Harris (London Borough of Tower Hamlets)
Kevin Harris (Community Development Foundation)
Frances Hendrix (Laser Foundation)
Catherine Herman (Independent Consultant)
Kathy Hubbard (London Borough of Enfield)
David Hughes (University of Bristol)
Stephanie Kenna (British Library)
Kathy Lemaire (School Library Association)
Robert Morkot (University of Exeter)
Dave Muddiman (Leeds Metropolitan University)
John Pateman (Lincolnshire County Council)
Julie Ryder (Independent Consultant)
Cathy Walters (British Library)

IDeA
Local Government Association
Community Cohesion Unit