

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

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

For a general overview of work to tackle social exclusion, see the CILIP Community Services Group site at <http://www.cilip.org.uk/groups/csg/si/index.html>.

Network JISCMail lists

With support from Philip Pothan and JISC, we have set up two JISCMail lists, one of which I hope all Network members know about, and one that is new:

- There is a list for Network members only, but which any member of staff in member organisations can join (www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/THE-NETWORK.html)
- The new list is for libraries, museums and archives staff working with looked-after children, and that list is open to anyone (www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/LAC.html).

Did you see ...?

Update

The latest issue¹ of CILIP *Update* has three articles of interest:

- In "Welcome to your library", Helen Carpenter outlines the work being undertaken in five London library authorities with refugees and asylum-seekers (pp40-41)
- In "Developing a needs-based service", John Pateman sets out how to start developing a service that truly meets the needs of local people (pp34-37)

¹ *Update* 3 (5), May 2004.

- In “Teenagers – where do we start?”, John Vincent and Jerry Hurst look at public library provision for teenagers.

Literacy and Social Inclusion

The National Literacy Trust’s Literacy and Social Inclusion project has just produced a discussion paper² on its findings so far. The paper is available at www.literacytrust.org.uk/socialinclusion/policychallenge.html/.

Please send responses by 25 June 2004 to Viv Bird (viv.bird@literacytrust.org.uk).

The Russell Commission

Just in case you haven’t seen this, on 17 March 2004 the Government announced its intention to establish a Commission headed by Ian Russell of Scottish Power. This Commission has been asked to report back to the Home Secretary on the way forward for a National Youth Volunteering Strategy, building on existing expertise and experience. This framework will help increase the level of community participation by young people across the UK and deliver the following tangible benefits:-

- Volunteers will develop their skills and contribute in an active way to their local communities.
- The capacity of communities and of voluntary organisations will be enhanced.
- Society at large will be more cohesive, and through skills development the UK’s competitive advantage will increase.

Further information is available at: russell.commission@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

Contact a Family

The well-known Contact a Family *Directory*³ is now available in an online subscription version as well as in printed form.

Further information from www.cafamily.org.uk.⁴

Kiran Talking Newspapers

Kiran Talking Newspapers provide a range of free postal tape services to visually impaired people. Titles include:

² *Literacy and social inclusion: the policy challenge – a discussion paper*. National Literacy Trust, 2004.

³ *Contact a Family directory of specific conditions and rare disorders*. Contact a Family, 2004.

⁴ Thanks to Southend’s email information bulletin, *Access Matters*, for alerting me to this item and the following one. If you would like to subscribe to this free library bulletin, email access@southend.gov.uk, with ‘subscribe access matters’ in the subject line.

- *Kiran*, a weekly digest of news in Gujarati
- *Aalo*, a monthly Bengali newsletter
- *Roshni*, a monthly newspaper in Hindustani.

Further information from The Secretary, Kiran Talking Newspapers, 8 Cameron House, 80 Pond Lane, London NW10 2HT
Tel: 020 8445 7177 (Jayant Patel)

Refugees' and asylum-seekers' stories

In case you have not seen this⁵, there is a listing of sources of testimonies by refugees and asylum-seekers at:

<http://www.icar.org.uk/content/res/reallive.html>

Visual Awareness Training for Frontline Workers

ALM London⁶, in partnership with RNIB, is running two one-day courses for frontline staff working with the public in archives, libraries, museums and galleries, who wish to increase their awareness of the barriers to access faced by blind and partially-sighted people, and to develop practical strategies to address these issues within their organisations.

The days are:

- Museums and Galleries: Friday 11 June, 9.30am-4pm
- Archives and Libraries: Tuesday 14 September, 9.30am-4pm.

Further information is available from: Catherine Hills at RNIB, 105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE
Tel: 020 7391 2328; Fax: 020 7388 2034; Email: catherine.hills@rnib.org.uk.

“Moving Here” Training Manual

“Moving Here”, the project led by The National Archives, has launched a new training manual to enable learners of all ages to become confident IT users.

The manual uses the award-winning Website to make learning sessions both interesting and fun. It will help trainers running IT skills workshops, as well as being an easy-to-use self-help tool to take new IT learners through basic skills required to get the most out of the Internet.

The “Moving Here” Website focuses on the histories and experiences of Caribbean, Irish, Jewish and South Asian immigrants to England over the past 200 years – and

⁵ Thanks to Helen Carpenter for alerting me to this.

⁶ Just in case you've missed it, ALM London is the new Regional Agency for London – further information available at www.almlondon.org.uk.

includes over 200 stories posted by users from the UK and as far a field as Iran and Australia. In using “Moving Here” as a means to teach IT skills, the manual makes learning sessions of particular relevance to communities who feature on the site.

The training session takes you through some of the 170,000 images, documents, film and sound clips that have been collated from 30 heritage organisations and which are available online for the first time. By the end of the session you will have learned basic skills such as how to use a mouse and navigate around the site, as well as more interactive skills such as sending an e-postcard and adding your own story to the site.

The training manual is downloadable from the Moving Here homepage, www.movinghere.org.uk, and through a link from the People's Network Website www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk⁷.

“Out of the Past – Stories from the Archives”

On 29 June, The National Archives is putting on an evening event, exploring gay and lesbian history with Sarah Waters and a panel of researchers, who are working on the history of sexuality, talking about the lost stories they have uncovered in the archives and discussing their work.

“Out of the Past” will be from 6.30-8.30pm. Tickets are free, but must be booked in advance.

Further information from the Interpretation Team, tel: 020 8392 5202
Email: events@nationalarchives.gov.uk
Website: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/events.

Modernising British local government

Just in case you haven't come across this, John Stewart's latest book⁸ reassesses the Modernising programme, and is a very useful summary of the various strands (eg new political structures; the role of Councillors; management; regionalism; finance). Its coverage of social exclusion is a bit thin, but it does place this within the overall local and central government contexts.

Digital equality

An important new report⁹ from Citizens Online has been published, which is intended to be a “state-of-the-nation” assessment of digital inclusion.

⁷ Thanks to Helen Wood for this piece.

⁸ John Stewart. *Modernising British local government: an assessment of Labour's reform programme*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003 (ISBN 0-333-96464-0).

⁹ Gail Bradbrook, John Fisher *et al.* *Digital equality: reviewing digital inclusion activity and mapping the way forwards*. Citizens Online, 2004. The report is available at: <http://www.citizensonline.org.uk/pdf/DigitalEquality1.pdf>.

As the report states:

“ICT use is now acknowledged as the third basic life skill after literacy and numeracy.

However, despite a raft of initiatives and campaigns, including the creation of 6000 UK online centres, more than a third of Adults have never surfed the WWW and 50% of UJK homes don't have Internet access.”

The report looks at the “5 Cs” of digital inclusion – connectivity, capability, content, confidence and continuity – ICT use by communities, and government, industry and community/local perspectives¹⁰.

Numeracy Briefing

Simon Boyd Publishing Limited has launched a new in-depth update for numeracy practitioners. To be published three times a year with approximately 24 pages per issue, *Numeracy Briefing* will provide vital support for those delivering numeracy to adult learners and to managers planning provision. Further information is available at: www.basicskillsbulletin.co.uk/numeracy/.¹¹

Gypsies and Travellers Strategy

The CRE have just published their strategy¹²: details at http://www.cre.gov.uk/publs/connections/conn_04sp_g&t.html

“Are they invisible?”

On 20 April, the Access Network organised a one-day course to look at how library services can support and work with people who have learning disabilities.

John Vincent gave the introduction and overview, and John's talk is on The Network Website¹³.

Jonathan Wicks and **Christopher Prole** (Essex Libraries and Essex Social Services respectively) then talked about their successful partnership approach to provision, which has developed strong and on-going links between the two service areas, with training and awareness-raising for staff, and very positive outcomes for service users.

Muriel Hill (Enfield Library Service) talked about the “It's my life” project (another successful partnership, this time between the Library Service and Enfield Disability

¹⁰ Thanks to David Owen, Share the Vision, for drawing this to my attention.

¹¹ Thanks to Ufi's *Widening participation bulletin* for bringing this to my attention.

¹² *Gypsies and Travellers strategy 2004-7*. CRE, 2004.

¹³ At www.seapn.org.uk on the “Resources & Talks” page.

Action) which has been successfully using computers to assist people with learning disabilities to write a life-story book.

Sue Cornish (Kensington & Chelsea Libraries) then talked about the work they have been doing with local organisation, People First (which organises events and activities for people with learning disabilities), and which led to the creation of the BOOST project [Building On Our Skills Together] which is supporting basic skills development.

Finally, **Gill Irvine** (Lancashire Libraries) talked about their successful "Smile" project¹⁴ for children and young people with special educational needs, and parents, carers and professionals. "Smile" Centres have trained staff and work in partnership (eg with Mencap) to provide collections of relevant materials.

From this, Lancashire have gone on to establish 15 "People's Centres" which contain adaptive equipment and software for people who may have difficulty in using computers in libraries¹⁵.

This was a fascinating day, looking at an area of work that does not receive a great deal of coverage. There were requests for the Access Network to re-run the course elsewhere in the country – let's hope they do.

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

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¹⁴ Further information is available at www.smile.lancashire.gov.uk.

¹⁵ Further information is available at www.people.lancashire.gov.uk.